



**Western Cape  
Government**

Department of Health & Wellness

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# **WOW! CHAMPION PICNIC REPORT**

**FEBRUARY 2024**

Towards Increasing Wellness

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness is dedicated to addressing the increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, heart diseases, and certain cancers. Embracing a wellness approach allows for proactive measures to empower individuals and communities to manage their own health and well-being effectively. We have embraced a collaborative approach, deeply integrated within both governmental and societal spheres, to address this issue comprehensively. As part of this initiative, the Western Cape on Wellness (WoW!) program has been launched in 2015, actively ongoing, and presently under evaluation.
- 1.2 The WoW! program is dedicated to fostering a vibrant culture of healthy living throughout the Western Cape. It empowers individuals with an opportunity to actively participate in this movement by becoming a volunteer Wellness Champion to initiate their own WoW! group. Alternatively, individuals can become Wellness Influencers, contributing to support the co-creation of wellness-enabling environments.
- 1.3 The WoW! program is a collaborative effort between the Western Cape Department of Health and its partners. Its primary objective is to enhance supported self-management, empowering individuals to proactively prevent, reduce, and effectively manage NCDs.
- 1.4 Furthermore, the program focuses on improving wellness holistically by addressing the behavioural and social/structural determinants that contribute to NCDs. The overarching aim is to mobilise the entire society towards a collective commitment to building a healthier society. The Western Cape Government Health and Wellness, in collaboration with Cape Nature initiative symbolises a visionary approach to public health, striving to co-create enabling environments that foster supported self-management, prevent and control non-communicable diseases (NCDs), while promoting overall wellness.
- 1.5 The picnic held on February 23, 2023, at Green Point Park in Green Point marked a significant gathering of wellness champions from various sectors and

locations within the Western Cape Province. With 41 WoW! champions in attendance, the occasion provided a pivotal platform for collaboration and engagement in physical activities. The purpose of the picnic was to gather WoW! champions and celebrate their achievements, as well as to collectively envision and strategize for cultivating wellness across the province in 2024.

- 1.6 By convening these champions, the event aimed to foster a spirit of community and collaboration, encouraging them to share their experiences, ideas, and insights.
- 1.7 The picnic served as a platform for networking, relationship-building, and the exchange of best practices, ultimately strengthening the foundation for a unified approach to wellness advocacy throughout 2024.
- 1.8 Key highlights of the picnic program included physical activities such as egg relay race, three-legged relay race & beep test run, designed to encourage teamwork and enhance fitness.
- 1.9 Following these activities, prizes (yoga mats, skipping ropes, t-shirts and stress balls) were awarded to recognise the dedication and enthusiasm of the winning teams.
- 1.10 Additionally, champions were presented with an appreciation pack, which included a WoW! draw-string bag, water bottle, and lanyard. This gesture was part of the WoW! rebranding launch and served as a token of appreciation for their role as wellness ambassadors within their communities.

This report provides a detailed overview of the event, including its objectives, activities, and the overall impact on the participants and the wellness community.

## 2. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY CHAMPIONS

Throughout the picnic, WoW! champions engaged in discussions addressing various challenges they encounter, shedding light on areas that require attention and potential solutions.

These challenges were as follows:

- 2.1 Difficulty in arranging transportation for participants to attend events and activities, delaying participation from some individuals due to logistical constraints.
- 2.2 Difficulties in securing appropriate venues for wellness events, including availability, affordability, and accessibility, which hinder the effective hosting of gatherings.
- 2.3 Difficulties in encouraging consistent participation from community members in wellness initiatives, requiring innovative strategies to increase engagement and involvement.
- 2.4 Limited access to essential equipment and resources required for conducting wellness activities, causing barriers to implementing programs effectively.
- 2.5 Struggling to balance the schedules of WoW! champions who may have varying work or personal commitments, making it challenging to coordinate collective efforts and events.
- 2.6 Identifying appropriate incentives or rewards and acknowledge the efforts of participants, ensuring that their contributions to wellness initiatives are duly recognised and appreciated.

Encountering financial constraints in funding wellness programs and activities, which can hinder the implementation and sustainability of such initiatives. Overall, the discussion emphasized the importance of collaborative problem-solving and resource-sharing among WoW! champions to effectively address these challenges and progress towards the shared objective of cultivating wellness throughout the province.

### 3. HIGHLIGHTS AND SUCCESS STORIES

During the picnic WoW! Champions were given a platform to showcase their remarkable achievements and success stories of their wellness groups, demonstrating their dedication and the impact they have made in promoting health and wellness across the province.

Here are the key highlights and success stories discussed during the event:

- 3.1 Consistent participation in wellness events and activities, indicating an increasing level of community engagement and interest in promoting healthier lifestyles.
- 3.2 Successful hosting of various wellness events, including workshops, health talks, Zumba classes, yoga sessions, and community outreaches, offering valuable resources and support to participants.
- 3.3 Demonstrated progress in improving health outcomes among participants through regular exercise, healthy lifestyle choices, and access of available wellness programs.
- 3.4 Positive outcomes from initiatives such as the Biggest Loser challenge, motivating individuals to achieve their fitness goals and adopt healthier habits.
- 3.5 Effective workshops conducted by the Educational Care Unit (ECU), equipping individuals with knowledge and skills to enhance their overall well-being.
- 3.6 Implementation of innovative ideas and strategies to promote wellness, such as involving patients in waiting rooms, which fostered community engagement and participation.
- 3.7 Promotion of social cohesion through activities like WOW! networking, visiting schools for talks and training, and engaging in community outreach initiatives.
- 3.8 Continuous growth in membership, indicating the expansion and reach of wellness programs to a broader audience.
- 3.9 Successful team-building activities and exercises aimed at fostering camaraderie and collaboration among participants.
- 3.10 Increasing participation of senior citizens through activities like line dancing, African aerobics, and senior club gatherings, fostering active aging and social interactions.
- 3.11 Increased community talks and engagements, spreading awareness and knowledge about health and wellness topics to a broader audience.

These highlights and success stories emphasize the significant impact of wellness champions in promoting healthier lifestyles and fostering a culture of well-being within their communities. Their dedication and efforts serve as inspiring examples for others to follow, contributing to the overall improvement of health and wellness across the province.

## 4. OPPORTUNITIES

The discussions among wellness champions at the picnic also identified several opportunities to further improve and expand their impact on community well-being.

These opportunities include:

- 4.1 Utilizing wellness activities as opportunities for team building and collaboration, fostering unity and cooperation among participants.
- 4.2 Providing tools for activities aimed at stress relief and mental well-being, addressing the increasing demand for stress management.
- 4.3 Continuing to educate community members on health-related topics and wellness practices, empowering them to make informed decisions about their health.
- 4.4 Engaging and empowering youth through wellness programs, equipping them with necessary skills and resources to lead healthy lifestyles and serve as advocates for wellness within their communities.
- 4.5 Expanding outreach efforts to reach vulnerable populations and diminish social gaps in accessing wellness resources and education.
- 4.6 Increasing awareness of wellness initiatives and their benefits within the community, encouraging greater participation and engagement.
- 4.7 Establishing sustainable community food gardens as a means of promoting healthy eating habits, environmental sustainability, and community involvement.
- 4.8 Creating opportunities for increased community interaction through collaborative events, workshops, and activities.

- 4.9 Expanding the WoW! training to health care workers/workplaces to support clinics, old age homes, and frail care facilities, thereby expanding the reach of wellness initiatives and ensuring continued support for vulnerable populations and to foster a culture of health and well-being in the workplace setting.
- 4.10 Maximizing the use of tools provided and training opportunities to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of wellness programs.
- 4.11 Implementing strategies to sustain community involvement and engagement in wellness activities over the long term.
- 4.12 Facilitating networking opportunities among wellness champions to share best practices, resources, and support.
- 4.13 Ensuring that wellness initiatives are inclusive and accessible to individuals of all ages, promoting lifelong health and well-being.
- 4.14 Collaborating with other groups and organizations to visit each other's groups, share experiences, and learn from one another.
- 4.15 Addressing challenges related to venue availability and planning, particularly during winter months, to ensure continuity of wellness activities.

These opportunities identified by wellness champions offer avenues for further development, collaboration, and impact in advancing health and wellness within communities throughout the province. By capitalizing on these opportunities, wellness champions can continue to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals and contribute to the overall well-being of the community.



## 5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 In conclusion, the picnic was an overwhelming success, exceeding our expectations in fulfilling the purpose of the day. By placing champions at the forefront of discussions, we empowered them to share their insights and ideas for enhancing their wellness journey. This participatory approach ensured that their voices were heard and that their needs and aspirations were addressed.
- 5.2 Furthermore, the integration of fun wellness activities added a sense of companionship and teamwork into the gathering, fostering an environment of joy and connection.
- 5.3 Through engaging discussions and interactive activities, attendees left the picnic feeling inspired and motivated to continue their efforts in promoting wellness initiatives throughout the province.
- 5.4 Overall, the picnic served as a reagent for community engagement, collaboration, and empowerment, laying the foundation for continued progress and success in our collective pursuit of well-being.
- 5.5 We look forward to building upon the momentum generated by this event and continuing to support champions in their invaluable work towards a healthier and happier community.

## 6. ANNEXURES

### ANNEXURE A: THE PICNIC PROGRAM

<b>WoW! Champion Picnic</b>			<b>23 February 2024</b>
<b>Venue: Green Point Park, Green Point</b>			
<b>Time: 10:00-14:00</b>			
<b>Time</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Presenter</b>
09h30- 10:00	<b>Arrival &amp; Networking</b>		
10h00 – 10h15	<b>Welcome, Purpose &amp; Introductions</b>	Group Activity	Kelly Fortune
10h15 – 10h30	<b>Message from the Consortium</b>	Message	Vicki Lambert
10h30 – 10h45	<b>Jabulani Dance</b>	Group Activity	Sibekezelo Myaka & Team Bonteheuwel Walking Ladies
10h45 – 11h45	<b>Success stories, highlights &amp; opportunities</b>	Group work and Discussion	Lithakazi Mtabhana & Team
11h45 – 12h45	<b>Wellness Activity</b>	Group Activity	Sibekezelo Myaka & Kelly Fortune
12h45 – 13h25	<b>Snack / Lunch break</b>		
13h25 – 13h45	<b>Launch of WoW! rebranding</b>	Launch	Increasing Wellness Team
13h45 – 14h00	<b>Closing, Thanks &amp; Next steps</b>	Closure	Sibekezelo Myaka



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