

Media Release



**For immediate release
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Taking a Step Towards Heart Health

In celebration of Heart Week, a Heart Foundation initiative, Coalfields Healthy Heartbeat has arranged a free community walking event to be held on Sunday April 29 at Chinaman's Hollow and Peace Park, Weston.

Caitlin Bialek from Samaritans Coalfields Healthy Heartbeat said, "We'd love for people from the Cessnock community to take this opportunity to join us in our Heart Week event."

"The loop around the park takes 20 to 30 minutes which is the amount of exercise recommended by the Heart Foundation to reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke," she said.

Heart Week's theme this year is 'physical activity' and Ms Bialek hopes the event will show the community how easy it can be to be active.

"Unfortunately, 40% of people in the Cessnock Local Government Area are considered to be physically inactive, which puts them at risk of heart disease and stroke. It only takes 30 minutes of exercise per day to reduce that risk and gain a whole range of other health benefits at the same time," Ms Bialek said.

"This walk is an example of the easy and social ways people can incorporate physical activity in their life."

The research shows that Cessnock is not alone when it comes to being at risk of heart disease and high blood pressure.

Heart Foundation's National CEO Adjunct Professor John Kelly said a quarter of Australian adults are at risk of heart attack or stroke by having high blood pressure that is either untreated or treated inadequately.

"More than four million Australians are walking around like a ticking time-bomb, either not knowing that their blood pressure is dangerously high, or unaware that their treatment is not working well enough," he said.

"The good news is that simple changes like being physically active, as well as eating a healthy diet, and not smoking helps reduce high blood pressure," he said.

Registration for the Samaritans Coalfields Healthy Heartbeat walking event will be held on the day from 9:45am for a 10am start.

No matter your age or physical fitness, everyone is encouraged to attend this fun community event. Contact chhb@samaritans.org.au for more information.

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Media Contact: To arrange a photo opportunity and/or interview with Caitlin Bialek from Samaritans in Cessnock, please contact Samaritans Communication team on 4960 7100 or 0425 324 974. Media are welcome to attend the event.