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Community engagement improving identification of patients at risk of Heart disease

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Introduction /Aim: Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of Australian women, daily 98 Australian men have a heart attack; of which 13 will die. The underlying cause of a heart attack is coronary heart disease (CHD) and high blood pressure is an indicator of such a condition. Most people with high blood pressure and or CHD are unaware until they have a heart attack. A community healthy heart awareness program was initiated to enable general public a free mini health heart check. **Methods:** 3000 public persons ranging from 15 to 85 years old volunteered to have their blood pressure, weight

and height recorded as a mini health check at a public or university event during 2013. Blood pressure measurements were taken by registered health professionals. All consenting participants noted general history and last blood pressure measurement. Participants were then rested prior to blood pressure measurement and recording. Participants found to have an aberrant reading were further assessed and advised to seek medical consult, in some cases on the day of recording. **Results:** Over 50% of participants were found to be in a low range high blood pressure or Prehypertensive state, 25% in the high range and further 25% in acceptable range. The incidence of high range blood pressure **25%** was alarming with many of the participants under 55 years of age and unaware of increased risk of serious health problems, including heart attack and stroke. **Conclusion:** Despite national awareness programs, many people within the local community remain at risk of stroke, coronary heart disease, hypertension or related chronic diseases. The continuing education and opportunity for community to have access to simple free health check may result in identification of those at risk of future CHD.