

Dear Volunteer

Some of you may recently have read an article in the *South Coast Register* in the Letter to The Editor Section stating that Meals on Wheels is finished. I would like to say that we are definitely not finished. In fact we are moving forward with a plan to increase and improve our Service. I would like to share with you part of the letter I wrote in reply, as well as some other information.

Meals on Wheels services in Australia were invariably established by those citizens who recognised a need in their own communities and acted on that need. It is hard to believe in 2019 that Meals on Wheels was once considered a radical concept, as it has become a mainstream program and a cornerstone of many communities. A regular delivery of nutritious meals has been a major contributor to tens of thousands of older people and people with a disability remaining in their own homes.

We are still here and still supporting our local community. We have more customers and we are delivering more meals than ever. Yes, there are more competitors but the best thing about Meals on Wheels is that all of our meals meet the National Meal Guidelines 2016, and we have over 400 friendly volunteers that visit our customers on meal delivery days. Only customers who are receiving a Home Care package incur an administration fee, which is paid for by their package provider. This cost is not passed on to the consumer.

Many of our local Meals on Wheels also offer other activities such as group outings. We are also introducing a new program, which involves sharing a meal with our more isolated and housebound clients.

We are developing a Meal Distribution Centre so that we can improve our services to our

community. This improves, not diminishes, our local options. Our community-based kitchens at Huskisson and Shoalhaven Heads will still continue to cook and serve delicious meals.

By having a Meal Distribution Centre, and purchasing from a wide range of meals suppliers, we can ensure that there will be a wider variety of meals available. This will give our customers more choice. The only meals suppliers that we will partner with will be those that have been approved as meeting the National Meal Guidelines.

We expect that the introduction of the Centre will have similar benefits for our customers as did the introduction of Meals Distribution Centres in six other regions across NSW. These Meal Distribution Centres have enabled the local Meals on Wheels services to have increased control over food products offered to the consumers in terms of nutrition, variety and specialised meals such as vegetarian, low-salt and gluten free. The customers will also have more choice and affordability of their meals. This choice and affordability can only improve the lives of people who receive meals.

So if you have any questions about Meals on Wheels and what is happening please ask me. There are other changes happening. For instance we recently developed a new website. Please check it out at <https://northshoalhavenmeals.org.au/> We are also hoping to introduce a private section on the website that is just for our volunteers so please visit the website and let us know if you would like to see anything added to it. Also don't forget to like us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/northshoalhavenmealscooperative/> as we really do need more friends.

Are you caring for someone with dementia?

Good nutrition is important for people with dementia, especially for people who become agitated or walk a lot. Increased activity can increase nutritional needs.

Some of the eating patterns people develop are

- Poor appetite
- Refusing to eat
- Always hungry
- Forgotten they have eaten
- Eating slowly
- Not recognising food

Some ideas that may help are

- Add some extra flavour even if it is salt or sugar
- Serve favourites, even if they are the same every meal
- Serve easy to eat foods
- Switch to small meals more often
- Leave non-perishable food where it can be seen e.g. fruit, biscuits, fruit cake
- Finger foods e.g. sandwiches

How food is presented can assist with improved eating.

- Keep table settings simple. Serve food on a plain coloured plate or on a neutral background such as a single colour placemat.
- Have water available in a glass at each meal to encourage drinking
- Sitting with the person and engaging them in quiet conversation can improve their food intake. Research has shown that people eat more when they have company

Information from Fair Trading



Fair Trading has a team of staff who make presentations to community groups to talk about scams and consumer rights under the law. Contact them to see when they will next be in your region.

<https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/>

We recently informed the clients via their newsletter that there is a scam where a person phones and states they are from MY AGED CARE and asks for their personal details as well as banking details so they can put funds into their account. We let the clients know that MY AGED CARE may phone, but they will never ask for banking details and would never deposit funds direct into their account. Just in case you get any questions about this issue.

Feedback

We have recently been asking for feedback from consumers at their annual reviews. Some of my favourite feedback has been “**Amazing people who go the extra mile. Kind, decent people who are owed a depth of gratitude**”. “**Everyone is absolutely wonderful. Don’t know what I’d do without it**”. “**Thank you to magic people who cook and deliver meals**”. “**Always respectful**”. So, thank you to all of our 400 volunteers. You truly are the lifeline of this organisation and our service would not exist without your dedication, commitment and hard work. Please don’t forget to always have a Compliments, Complaints form when visiting consumers.

Service NSW – Cost of Living

The NSW Government is helping ease the cost of living with more than 70 rebates and savings.

Browse the available rebates and savings using the Savings Finder. Simply answer 6 questions to find savings relevant to you.

https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/campaign/cost-living?utm_source=newsletter_2171&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ncoss-big-picture-sector-e-news

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.

Aged Care Quality Standards

From 1st July 2019 the government introduced a new single set of standards. The Standards apply to our Meals on Wheels service. The standards should increase the focus on quality outcomes for consumers whilst recognising the diversity of service providers and consumers.

To ensure we have aligned to the new standards we have updated all of our policy and procedures. Our policies are the guidelines that we all work under and they are adopted by the Coop board and will be easily accessible for consumers and volunteers.

All services will receive a paper copy or USB of the Policy and Procedures. We are also putting them up on our website in the members section which you will be able to view. Your Meals on Wheels service will implement these policies throughout the service. Here are just some of the policies we have updated.

1. Donations, Gifts, Benefits and Bequests
2. Abuse
3. Consumer Rights
4. Feedback, Compliments and Complaints
5. Consumer Dignity, Autonomy and Choice
6. Non-response to a Home Visit
7. Privacy and Confidentiality
8. Wellness Approach
9. Volunteer
10. Code of Conduct

If you are interested in having more information about these policies or others please speak to your local Meals on Wheels service or call us at the Coop.

Remember that the happiest people are not those getting more, but those giving more.

Meals 2gether Program

Community Service students from Nowra TAFE have been working with us to develop a new program. The program is looking for volunteers who would like to visit our more isolated or house bound consumers who may not have family or friends living close by.

We are looking for volunteers who might want to work extra hours than they are currently doing. The volunteer would visit a consumer in the volunteer's local area and maybe share a meal, play a game of cards, listen to music, look at photos or just have a chat or a laugh.

If you have spare time please call me, Lisa, on 44225111.

Volunteer Handbook

There have recently been some changes to our volunteer resources and we have updated the volunteer handbook. I'd like to draw your attention to the changes in our insurance policy and what it now covers. If you are driving for Meals on Wheels our insurance company will only cover some out of pocket expenses for drivers who hold comprehensive insurance. That is why you might recently have been asked to sign off on the insurance changes and the Code of Conduct. One thing I would like to mention is that if your driving status, insurance or vehicle has changed, and/or if anything has impacted on your ability to drive please don't forget to immediately advise us of this as we may need to inform our insurance company to ensure that you are still covered by our insurance policy.

We have also been asking all volunteers to sign off on the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct hopefully makes it clear to all people what is expected of them and reduces any confusion.

If you would like a copy of the new handbook please let me know and I will send one to you.

Training

The Community Industry Group and Kiama Council, in partnership with the Kiama Dementia Friendly project, are conducting a three hour Dementia Awareness presentation designed by carers and people living with early on set dementia. Learn about the lived experience, not just a clinical overview, but to gain a practical and thorough insight to the world of dementia. This session will be held on Thursday 26th September at the Nowra Library and there are limited seats. If you are interested, please let me know and I will book you in.

Self-Care

Volunteers are the backbone of any community. They are the supporters of the programs that help us when we are in need. But, when the pressure of a role becomes too much, or we have a bad day, who is it that helps the helper? This is where the importance of *self-care* becomes apparent. Self-care refers to taking the time and energy to care for yourself and help yourself cope with the stressors of life. It is essential that, as a volunteer, you are putting the same care and love towards yourself as you would towards the programs you serve.

Here are a few simple tips to promote self-care:

1. Stay hydrated
2. Get enough sleep
3. Learn to stay no
4. Stay home if you're sick
5. Be kind to yourself
6. Exercise regularly
7. Try to do something you enjoy everyday

On behalf of all the Staff (Terese, Rae, Cheryl (all from Nowra Bomaderry MOWs) Beth and Lisa (both from the Coop) we would like to say thank you for all the support, hard work, generosity and giving so much of your time to Meals on Wheels.

Volunteers we need your help

You will notice a "how to vote page". Could you please pass on to any friends, family or anybody who lives in Kiama electorate and ask them to vote for the Nowra Bomaderry Kitchen Meals on Wheels Upgrade. Thank you.