

Meals on Wheels

KERRY N WILLIAMS

Meals on Wheels is a name familiar to most of us and is at the heart of our local community. It represents helping hands, teamwork and looking out for each other. Focus talks to Kerry N Williams, the new manager of Armidale Uralla Meals on Wheels.



So Kerry, you are new at the helm of Armidale Uralla Meals on Wheels?

Yes, I took over as Manager in April after Jo Heslin left Armidale with her family, after four years of growing this business.

What do you like most about working for Armidale Uralla Meals on Wheels (AUMOW)?

It's a great organisation providing an important service for many in the community and AUMOW has over 50 years' service history. Other than delivery of a nutritious meal, our customers benefit from regular social interaction with our volunteer drivers which is also a valuable wellbeing check that brings peace of mind to both the customer and their families. It's so important that people can choose to remain in their own homes and our meal service helps to make this possible. It's more than just a meal!

Tell us about your people.

Our volunteer drivers are fantastic and continue to generously give their time to provide this service with a smile. I am very lucky to also have amazing staff that are

compassionate and dedicated. It's a big job to create over 2,500 meals a month plus administering a complex roster of menu selections, meal deliveries and volunteer schedules. We enjoy becoming familiar with our customers and their families - it's quite a personal service to prepare a meal for someone and we take great pride in what we do.

So, what sort of food is on the menu?

Fresh, seasonal food! Our menu runs on a three-week rotation; every day offers three main choices including gluten free and vegetarian options. We also offer sandwiches, soups, desserts and protein smoothies which are now popular - particularly for customers who may be recovering from an illness or injury which often coincides with decreased appetite and unexpected weight loss.

Our menu is fairly traditional as we find that more contemporary meals are not as popular - yet. We often try new things and if it doesn't work we adjust the menu. We've just transitioned to our summer menu which includes some more salad options including Caesar of course.

One important point to remember is that although we prepare up to 130 fresh meals

each day in bulk, we serve each person's individual meal specifically for them. This allows us to cater for people's preferences or intolerances - we have customers who might like extra gravy, or prefer not to eat peas - in most cases we can adjust the meal for that person so they get what they want.

Is nutrition important for older people?

Absolutely! It's a common misconception that older people need to eat less. Sadly, malnutrition is actually becoming quite common in older Australians. Maintaining a healthy weight can help older people keep more active, manage their health problems better and live life more. We use National Nutritional Guidelines to ensure our meals are well balanced as well as tasty.

How does someone sign up to get Meals?

Any aged care services subsidised by the federal government, like ours, require a basic referral process to be undertaken. It's

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straight forward and once complete, other services can be accessed more easily in future. People need to call MyAgedCare on 1800 200 422 and they will guide you through the process. Some of our customers are referred by their GP or by family members. You can also

call our office and we will help as much as we can. Customers choose how often they have meals delivered to suit their needs. We have several unsubsidised customers who opt for the convenience of MOW.

And how can someone volunteer with AUMOW?

People can call our office 6772 8970 and speak to our staff about signing-up for a regular delivery run - businesses are welcome - many of our regulars are from local firms and bank branches who allow their staff to "Donate Your Break". We always welcome new volunteers to add to our roster which can be easily organised.

Thanks Kerry N.

ARMIDALE URALLA MEALS ON WHEELS

Nourishing the community since 1966

We provide great meal variety catering for dietary requirements
Frozen Meals available | Enquire now about event catering
Any enquiries please call the office 6772 8970

More than just a meal

YOU CAN JOIN OUR LONG TRADITION OF VOLUNTEERING.

Businesses are encouraged to allow staff to 'Donate Your Break'



Office hours Monday-Friday 9-3
AUMOW Pavilion, Armidale Showgrounds
T: 6772 8970 E: INFO@AUMOW.ORG.AU