

**ARMIDALE / URALLA MEALS
On WHEELS INC.**

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Office Hours:

Mon to Thurs - 9am to 3pm

Fridays - 9am - 2pm

Closed on Public Holidays

Armidale Uralla Meals on Wheels gratefully receives funding from the federal government under the Department of Health's Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP).

Management Committee:

Simon McMillan - President

Maryann Munsie (Uralla) - Vice President

Judy Fisher - 2nd Vice President

Carole Peacock - Treasurer

Natasha Little (Uralla) - Secretary

Committee Members: Martin Hazell / Sandra Stroud

David Breusch / Kim Johnston / Barbie Connah

Kerryn Williams - Manager (*ex officio*)



Australian Government
Department of Health



We are a registered Charity under the Australian Charities & Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC).

From the President

Bad debts. They're something that some people don't like to talk about in polite conversation; even less than politics and religion. Well, the time has come for me to talk about them in our Newsletter.

The funding we receive from the federal Department of Health is intended to cover the cost of employing our staff in the kitchen and the office, and to pay for rent and electricity, and a range of other operational expenses. **Our contract with the Department stipulates that their funding cannot be used to pay for the food we supply to you**, which is why each month we send out invoices for the meals we have delivered in the previous month. As a not-for-profit organisation we rely on prompt payment of the invoices so that we can meet the bills that come in to us for the ingredients of your meals. **We can't afford to go broke**, because that would mean the end of the service we provide.

I'm happy to report that nearly all of our clients pay promptly, thank you, but there is an increasing few who think they can ignore our requests for payment. No longer. If you have an overdue account with us, and haven't been in touch regarding a payment strategy, then we will be forced to consider stopping meal deliveries or commencing debt recovery procedures. Neither option appeals to me nor the Management Committee, but we can't let the inaction of a few people prejudice the service we provide to all our other clients.

Simon McMillan

Meal delivery numbers

We thought you might be interested to know that in the 12 months from January 1st and December 31st 2022, Armidale Uralla Meals on Wheels distributed **60,598** food items to our clients. That's an average of over **5,000 items per month** or over 200 items per delivery day - includes hot, chilled, frozen meals, desserts, fruit, soups, sandwiches, salads and smoothies. **No wonder we are so busy!**



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**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

**Aged Care
Reform continues**

**From the
Manager's Desk...**

In Memoriam

**MORE than just a
meal!**

**Displaying House
Numbers**

**From the
President**

Armidale/Uralla Meals on Wheels

Summer 2022-23 Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2023

Aged Care Reform continues...

It's difficult to provide an update on where the Reform agenda is up to. Small steps are progressing in some areas but some of the 'big picture' planning remains unclear.

We know the structure of how funding is distributed and administered will change, but the Department is yet to clarify how. There are many groups (including Meals on Wheels) lobbying the federal government around their proposed model raising their concerns for how overly-complex things may become for aged care consumers.

Having said that, I have found an excellent summary of the Program changes that will be in place from July 2024, which was provided by NSW carer Gateway. I have included this an insert with this newsletter with this information. When we have any more details from the Department of Health, we will certainly pass them on to you as soon as possible.

Some of our regular clients are still not registered with MyAgedCare

AUMOW is a funded aged care service provider and it is a requirement of our grant funding that all our clients are registered with My Aged Care. While it may seem excessive to go through this process to access a meal, it is the government's way of understanding the need for services which then assists with understanding how much they need to allocate in the Aged Care budgets for service providers.

In the future our funding will be more clearly determined by how many people we provide services to. So this means that every meal we distribute to someone who is NOT registered with MyAgedCare, we do not receive a subsidy for. We will be required to charge anyone who is not registered with our service, the unsubsidized meal fee. *NB: We should already be doing this, but we give people the subsidized meal price expecting that they will get registered with MyAgedCare.* In the future, this will have an adverse impact on our bottom line so we will not be able to do this any more.

We have the opportunity now to submit the names of any regular customers who are not currently registered with MyAgedCare, to be added to the list of people we support regularly.

If you are not registered with MyAgedCare, we will be in contact with you shortly. For anyone you know who might need aged care services like ours, please ask them to consider that registering with MyAgedCare now could make any future journey into the aged care sector much easier.

COVID remains active. As you are aware, COVID remains active in the Armidale community with very high numbers across New England reported for January. We are still required to have a COVID Safety Plan in place to protect our staff, volunteers and clients. We remain vigilant about sanitizing, wearing a mask at all times when attending Meals on Wheels or delivering meals.

We ask that our clients continue to advise us if they test positive so we can ensure No Contact Deliveries are in place. Thank you for your help!

From the Manager's Desk....



Kerryn Williams
Manager

Hello everyone, I think I just managed to get this newsletter out on the last day of summer!

A quick Thank You for everyone who sent back the Social Impact Surveys. We were asked if our service would participate in this data collection - both our clients and the volunteers, because collecting it's important that studies like this have a wide range of participants - not just people from the city! We will pass on some of the results of the survey as they are provided.

There is plenty going on in the health and aged care sectors at the moment. I would like to congratulate The New England Division of General Practice, New England Visions 2030 and Adam Marshall M.P. who might have started to make inroads into the future of our GP Workforce. This issue impacts every single person in our area but we know that older people have a heavy reliance on their GP and that access is difficult right now. Fingers crossed we see some real progress soon!

On that note, if you do have a GP appointment, make sure you take the time you need to discuss all your health needs. If you have ANY issues with food, it can be beneficial to speak with a dietitian or nutritionist and your GP can refer you for these services. If any foods make you feel a bit bloated, nauseous or in any way unwell, there is a problem. You could simply avoid that food or you could also investigate what the issue is so you can make informed decisions about the foods you eat. You may have an intolerance to something which can develop over time so it's worth investigating.

I recently joined with Tamworth and Inverell Meals on Wheels services to have a meeting with our federal MP Barnaby Joyce. We were able to discuss our concerns about the aged care reform process and he was keen to engage in any way he could to help us as we seek further clarity on the future of our services.

The Department of Health are not very forthcoming with details about our funding model in the future, which makes it difficult for us to plan ahead.

We are committed to continuing a high quality service for our clients and to also support you through the changes that are coming to the aged care sector. We will keep you informed whenever we have any more information to share. We have to remain positive that the changes that are coming will mean that aged care services are easier to navigate for consumers, their carers and family.

Kerryn Williams, Manager



In Memoriam

Our condolences and thoughts to the loved ones of the following clients whom we have been proud to serve whether it be for a long time or a short time, recently or a while ago, who have passed away in the last few months and are all sadly missed. Other people who have also been involved in our service in the past include:

Dr Mark Henschke, Norma Faint (Uralla Driver);

Elvin (Tommy) Frost ~ Ellen (Betty) Miller (Uralla) (95) ~ Jack Williams (101) ~ Terry Cooper ~ Pat Lawrence ~ Alison Hoddinott (91) ~ Judy Wilford ~ Pam Carlon (92, Uralla, Ex-Driver) ~ John Martin ~ Jim Winckel ~ Garry Jackson ~ Frank McClenaghan (90) ~ Esma McRae (91) ~ Neville Handebo ~ Theo Duim ~ Lloyd Hodges ~ Margaret Saint ~ Diana Gray ~ Ross Lamont ~ Dr Marian Stone ~

More than Just a Meal!!

We work so hard to ensure we have appropriate services in place for all of our clients, and that we send you the food you choose and can eat safely. In addition to this, we know that our wellbeing checks are valued by our clients and their family members, especially family who live far away but rely on our meal delivery to check-in with you.

Our wellbeing checks are why need to have an emergency contact for you that is current. If a friend or neighbour has a spare key to get into your house, we need to know who that is, so we can call them if we need to.

If you do not have someone with a spare key, please consider a secure key lockbox at your door, so that we can access your home if there was an emergency situation or you needed help. You can buy these at hardware shops to place a spare key inside so that people (with the code you choose) can get the key and access your home should that be necessary.

If you have a medi-alert necklace or bracelet PLEASE WEAR IT! It provides you no help whatsoever if it's sitting on the kitchen bench or bedside table.

Obviously no-one expects to have a fall or a medical episode where they may need help, but it does happen. Our quick response is only possible if we can get to you and help you..

There are so many tools available to help you remain safe and independent at home, but you need to use them. Getting a medical alert is not relinquishing any of your independence, in fact it's really the opposite! Think about some of the conversations you have had with young people, usually your kids when they were growing into young adults and desperately yearning to be "Independent". Many of these conversations would have been about making informed, responsible decisions so that they would be safe and well....

Your independence as an older person is no different. It's important to make informed, responsible decisions about your circumstances so you can be safe and independent at home.

Sadly, the people who do not use the tools and supports available to them, will be much more likely to be in care prematurely. It may be difficult to ask for help at times, but think of it as an insurance policy!

Simply being able to press a button if you need help is a hundred times better than the alternative. Knowing you have that safety net in place if you need it? That's a really special kind of independence.

HOW WELL DISPLAYED IS YOUR HOUSE NUMBER?

Can our volunteer drivers find your house easily? Could a courier? What about an ambulance or other emergency service?

This is one of those things that doesn't impact you directly so perhaps it's not high on your radar to think about how well your own house number is displayed.

Is it clear enough to read from the road?

Is it partially concealed by a hedge or tree?

Is it on the house or the mailbox or neither?

You can get cheap adhesive numbers from a hardware store that are very easy to attach and come in a range of colours to suit your house.

Please think about how every minute someone spends looking for your house, is a delay in getting to you—hopefully not for an emergency!

"Don't ever question the value of volunteers. Noah's Ark was built by volunteers; the Titanic was built by professionals."

DAVE GYNN

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