

**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

In the last issue of this Newsletter, I talked about the very few of our clients who seem to think that Meals on Wheels provides them with a "free lunch".

Because of this view, in some cases, they have incurred overdue accounts amounting to hundreds of dollars.

I'm confident that most of my readers are unlikely to share this attitude or level of debt, but you are still affected by it all the same.

If Meals on Wheel's financial circumstances deteriorate because of the attitude of the few it's possible that we may be in breach of solvency requirements, and have to be wound up. I don't want that to happen on my watch, and we're pursuing our "naughty" debtors accordingly.

All the same, it's worth noting that under the Charter of Care Recipients' Rights and Responsibilities there's a clause that states "Each care recipient has the responsibility to pay any fees as specified in the agreement or to negotiate an alternative arrangement with the provider if any changes occur in his or her financial circumstances." That's the basis of the action we're taking in regard to our recalcitrant debtors.

Simon McMillan

COVID remains very active!

We have a very large supply of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) here at the office so please do not hesitate to contact us if you need some. They are FREE - they were donated to us to support our volunteers and our clients to remain COVID safe.

Please call us 6772 8970 if you would like a supply of tests at home.



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Mary!

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Armidale/Uralla Meals on Wheels

Autumn 2023 Newsletter

MAY 2023

Happy 95th Birthday to Mary!

Regulars on Run 11 would know Mary as she is the first stop at Sunnycove each day. Mary's son Brian keeps us up-to-date of goings on in Mary's life because we are considered an important part of it, which is lovely. We recently received an update from Brian and have permission to use parts of his email so we can share a wonderful story of how Mary is able to remain at home with the services and supports she needs from her family and her Aged Care Services.

Mary's 95th Birthday was celebrated with family enjoying a quiet luncheon at her favourite Chinese restaurant.

Now on a Level 4 Home Care Package, she has services 3 times a day plus Meals on Wheels and her Vitalcall, which are the difference between her being able to remain in her home - not in a home.

An RN calls in each week, as too a hairdresser when required! Podiatrist, hearing, and Dr appointments are facilitated.

Brian takes her to the club on Wednesdays and Sundays, (she has formed the opinion that pokies are rigged.) She has cards Tuesday, Fridays and Saturday, Physio at home on Thursday mornings and a cleaning service Friday morning.

Brian's family hosts her for lunch after the club each Sunday and it's then back home to "watch" her footy.

She is legally blind, her hearing isn't good so a phone call to her during "The Chase" is um...challenging Brian reports!

She has had COVID and reckoned it was a lot of nonsense and her Fisherman's friends fixed it!

She has had a few stays in hospital but each time has repaired, recovered, and resumed. We change between walker and wheelchair depending on the day. She is in good spirits and still has her marbles, though is understandably weary. I don't know how long she can stay at home but there is no better place for her at this moment.

She is warm, safe, and loved and is embraced by her neighbours, carers, and care managers.

Best Wishes to Mary!



Do YOU have a story to share? If you would like to contribute ANYTHING to our newsletter - something of general interest or a story you want to share - please let us know!

From the Manager's Desk....



Kerry Williams
Manager

Hello everyone,

As I write this, it is the end of May and chill is really starting to bite with some extremely nasty frosts already! Please use all the tips and tools you know for keeping your house warm: shut doors to rooms you are not using; use door-snakes to prevent cold draughts; use your curtains and blinds to help reduce the cold coming in through your glass windows - all of these things will help.

I have had the great pleasure of addressing several groups in recent months to tell them how great our Meals on Wheels service is!

In March I spoke to the **Armidale Rotary Club** and in April I spoke to the **Armidale Branch of National Seniors**. It's always nice to be able to provide a different perspective around the work we do - particularly how much the service has changed since the 'good old days' when the volunteers would drive around with a thermos of hot soup and eskies packed with generic meals that everyone were given whether they liked it or not!

Following the federal budget in May, the Government has decided to defer the start of the new aged care program until July 1st 2025.

This decision has both positive and negative implications for us.

The negative for us, is that we remain in limbo for another 12 months when we were starting to become optimistic of the possibility of progressive change about a year from now.

The positive side of this outcome is that the Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHaC) will now have additional time to get this right! We are looking at the biggest overhaul of the aged care sector encompassing both residential care and all services delivered in the home, including Meals on Wheels.

So it's very important that they take the time to develop a compassionate yet robust model to be implemented in a sustainable and financially responsible way.

We are taking every opportunity to participate in consultation processes; providing feedback on draft guidelines and legislation; attending meetings, and seminars with DoHaC; as well as responding to various 'Discussion Papers' and surveys issued by DoHaC seeking our input.

As long as we continue to contribute, we can feel satisfied that we have done everything we can to help shape the future of aged care services.

Kerry Williams, **Manager**

More
than just
a meal

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: Pat Garrahy (driver)**

Yvonne Moore ~ Alan Black ~ Thelma Moore (90) ~ Joan Walker (100) ~ Prue Single ~ Bill Hall (95) Margaret (Carmel) Rogers (97) ~ Andrew Elliott ~ Kath Styles (Uralla) ~ June Taylor (90) ~ Barry Cox ~ Margaret (Joy) Fredericks ~ Aline Christenson (95) ~ Rosiland (Joy) Snell (94) ~ Max Browning ~ Ray Frost ~ Warren Nancarrow ~ Terry Doherty ~ David Commins ~ Audrey Cutler (101) ~ Max Polson (Uralla) ~ Ernest Smith (91) ~ Garry Griggs (Uralla) ~

Some friendly reminders about our service

The service we provide is so important for our clients to be able to remain safe and independent at home. Our volunteers enjoy delivering the meals and have many regular clients they like to check in on each time they deliver to them. The volunteers also benefit from this social contact and from the feeling that they are giving back to their Community.

Occasionally, however, they may encounter a situation that makes them feel uncomfortable or ill-at-ease, which is really not acceptable for people who are giving their time to serve the community.

99% of the time everything runs smoothly, however, we have had a few instances recently that have led us to issue a few polite reminders to our customers.

PETS: please try to remember to restrain your pets when you know our volunteers are coming. Not everyone likes being pounced on by a friendly dog and we have had a few bites over the years!

Also, no-one wants to be responsible for letting a sneaky furry friend out the front door!

DELIVERIES: We usually try to deliver to your preferred entrance and it does help us if you can keep the access clear for our drivers so they are not having to navigate around boxes, bags, shopping, clothes etc.. Don't forget, if you need some assistance with domestic tasks, it's available to you as an aged care consumer.

SMOKING: if you happen to be a smoker, you are not actually permitted to smoke inside when any aged care services are being delivered. It's a workplace health and safety requirement.

WHAT'S APPROPRIATE: There is no polite way to say this other than it would be great if people could be fully dressed when we deliver food. It's a little confronting for our volunteers to have to see anyone in their underwear and your heating costs must be through the roof!

MENUS: Can you PLEASE complete and return your menus as soon as possible. We send them out 3 weeks early for a reason (we need time to process them all manually) and getting them back late often leads to mistakes with the meals we deliver.

CANCELLING: please call the office if you are not going to be home. It's that simple.

USEFUL INFORMATION: whenever a new client starts services with us, we ask for an **emergency contact person**. The reason we ask this is because if there is ever an emergency situation, we may need to access your home to check that you are OK.

Recently we have had 3 separate experiences where volunteers could hear or see a client calling out for help but we couldn't get to them. Multiple calls were made by staff to various contacts who had no idea why we were even calling them and certainly no way of gaining access to the property. In one case the police just called a locksmith to break-in. We're still not sure who paid that bill!

Suffice to say, our service having the phone number for your son or daughter living in Sydney or Brisbane is great, but only if they can actively contribute to a localised response if you need some urgent assistance. Do you have a friend or neighbour with a spare key..? Please let us know.

MEDICAL ALARMS: Nearly without exception, the people who diligently wear their medi-alarms are those who wish they'd had one when they needed it.

We have many clients who do have such a device and refuse to wear it, for various reasons. It's like not paying your insurance policy but then kicking yourself when the house burns down.

If you are at risk of a fall or any kind of medical episode and you have one of these devices please use it. Obviously someone thought it was a good idea for you to have one. It doesn't decrease your level of independence; it provides your family with peace of mind and it could just save your life.