



**Meals on Wheels**  
Eurobodalla

## VOLUNTEER WORKER NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022

The last two years have been so far from 'normal' as we could expect them to be, so it is no wonder that we all want our 'normal' to return. But I fear that we will be living with this new life for some time to come. As a result, we must get on with it and make sure we are doing what we can to look after ourselves, our family and friends, and those community members we give time to serve and those who are our neighbours.

To do this we must follow the health orders even though they change often and at times can confuse us.

It is so much easier to sit where we do and to say that the various levels of Government are not doing enough, are making mistakes, and are not caring. But I for one would not like to have been in their shoes over the last two years and faced with the growing Covid outbreak. Hindsight is a wonderful thing and maybe things could have been done differently but decisions were made with information as it was known and that is all they could do.

However, we have learnt many lessons and we now build on these to protect ourselves and our community. Our organisation has been monitoring its response each month with the Board looking at my recommendations and adopting them as we address the situation.

At the January Board meeting the following was agreed and we will review the situation at the February Board meeting on Monday 21<sup>st</sup>.

I recommend that we adopt these as our policy.

- ✚ I recommend that only fully vaccinated staff and volunteers be engaged in our work especially when in contact with clients.
- ✚ I recommend that all Group Social Support continues under the present procedures (masks on the bus, temperature checks, distancing as much as possible, hand sanitiser to be available and used).
- ✚ I recommend that Individual Social Support services continue using fully vaccinated volunteers and offer all services.
- ✚ I recommend that Hand Sanitiser must be used by staff in the office, by packers and delivery teams when working with meals.
- ✚ I recommend that we still have people using the QR codes at all distribution centres.
- ✚ I recommend that staff/volunteers who deliver meals may NOT enter the home of clients, unless there is a disability, and the client cannot manage the task of carrying their meals to the freezer.
- ✚ I recommend that we review this again in February.

We are continuing to ask our clients for proof of vaccination too, especially the Out and About clients who will meet in a group situation and where we need them so clients may enter premises (clubs, shops etc). We have noted this is voluntary and that information will be kept secure according to the Privacy Act. The clients are being very helpful.

I must thank volunteers for their care and concern for our clients and for each other. This is greatly appreciated.



### CHRISTMAS BEEN AND GONE

Our clients were very happy with their calendars and pens, with the Christmas cards by the students at Broulee Public School and by your care and attention when you delivered their meals.

Our Out and About clients loved their Christmas party and even the visit from Santa to the Malua Bay gathering!

Thank you for your smiles, interest, and support of them at this time.

It is important that on such occasions we give such support especially when they may not see family or friends.



To enhance further what we are doing, we have secured filters for the Meals on Wheels masks that we have issued to you. These will be distributed as we see you and each pack will have two filters and some instructions for their use. We hope this additional layer of support will assist everyone in their work.

As you will have gathered from the recommendations we have started Out and About again. This started on Monday 24 January, and everyone was very pleased to be back. Two clients and one volunteer have not started yet as they did catch the virus and need to make sure it has passed. We have asked that they do not rush back to the group. We need to take every precaution for each of our clients.

To start the group, we had to have staff. You may recall that Chelsea Terry finished in October to start a role in another Aged Care group; then Keith Dornan went overseas to visit his parents in Ireland for Christmas and decided he would not return to us when he arrived home; and Karen Welsh retired.

We have been fortunate to employ Sheena Prince and Kelley Hill to take over the coordination of Out and About. They started on Monday 17 January and spent that week completing induction and orientation sessions to have knowledge for their new role. They started with clients on Monday 24 January and learnt a lot more!!

I have been delighted to welcome Sheena and Kelley to the team and even more pleased to have volunteers and clients welcome them with open arms and comment on what wonderful people we have appointed. We hope this association continues to grow and develop as they have so many ideas and so much enthusiasm.

Our Individual Social Support is under way, and we are trying hard to meet requests for assistance with shopping, taking folk to appointments and courtyard gardening. Our clients are just like the rest of us, keen to be keeping their life as 'normal' as possible. We can assist you with a fuel voucher at \$5 per job.

Our Wallaga Elders Social group which meets once a month is not starting back until April; and our PALZ Group (Professionals with Alzheimer's) which has spaces for new members will also restart in April.



The meals side of our organisation has not stopped and thanks to all who helped over the new year period. We are continuing with our new system of transporting our meals to volunteers at three locations in Batemans Bay and will probably do this for at least another month. We will also continue to pack for all areas from the Moruya freezer each Tuesday and appreciate the work of our packers.

There are some areas where we could use some more assistance and we ask you again if you are able or interested in helping in any of these fields.

- ☺ Assisting clients through our Individual Social Support with shopping, transport, or gardening.
- ☺ Joining our Out and About team and helping with the social interaction and activities we provide.
- ☺ Know of any person who may benefit from our Bimonthly PALZ meetings
- ☺ Like to take one of our cars and our Batemans Bay meals to the three drop off points each Wednesday morning.
- ☺ Like to be our Work Health and Safety officer.



If you can assist in any of these areas, please contact me at the office (44744464) to discuss the commitment and your availability. This would be greatly appreciated by our organisation, our clients, and our coordinators.

We are looking forward to a great year in 2022 and are grateful for your assistance, support and smiles.

Alan Russell,  
Manager

