



VOLUNTEERS NEWSLETTER MARCH 2025

Greetings to all our volunteers and thank you for your continued service to our large and diverse organisation.

Recently the Board accepted the name '**Meals and Community Services**' to cover the work completed by Eurobodalla Meals on Wheels. This phrase will start appearing on new signage at our various locations. I think that it highlights the meals programme we offer and lets people know that we are 'More than just a meal' as we offer community services. These services are through our Group and Individual Social Support activities, the Special interest Groups, the Wallaga Elders Social Group (WESG) and we will restart our PALZ (Professionals with Alzheimer's) Group shortly. Please let me know if you wish to know about any of these community services, as some of them are specific to a particular location.

I have started to supply more detailed information to our clients about the new **Aged Care Act**. This has been passed by the Federal Parliament and comes into law on 1 July 2025. This is particularly so for our clients who are on Home Care Packages (HCP). Our Commonwealth Home Support (CHSP) clients will not be affected until at least 1 July 2027.

You may have read or heard through various media outlets that there will be a new system put into place. This is called Support@Home (S@H). Some of our clients on Home Care Packages may move across to this new system, while others will stay with their HCP provider.

This will see us having several more arms to our financial work....accounts for CHSP clients, accounts for HCP clients and accounts for S@H clients.

There will also be a new level of reporting for the Government requiring a whole revision of our client management system over the next few months once they know what they would like to know!!

There is a hope that CHSP clients may also move to S@H, which would see a great deal of our funding go with them...but this is a story for another day!!

The following information was supplied to our clients on the new Support@Home. I think it is important that you are aware of this information, should any client speak to you about the changes. I have continued to put information in each of our offices about the new Aged Care Act which you may like to read and become familiar with. The new Act has clients at its core whereas the present Act comments about providers and what can and cannot be done for and with our clients.

There is a new **Statement of Rights** guiding our clients under the following principles:

- ✓ **Choice and control**
- ✓ **Get the services you need**
- ✓ **Safe services that work well**
- ✓ **Safe and private information**
- ✓ **Get information and speak up**
- ✓ **Get support from other people.**



A great deal of information has 'been coming' but finally on Friday the 209 pages of the programme manual for Support@Home was released. This is the first set of 'Rules' from the

Government on how the Aged Care Act will be implemented. A lot needs to be looked at in this area.

Each month, I report to the Government on our outputs. This is called the **DEX report**. At present it notes our outputs....the number of meals we distribute and the number of hours of support we provide. But this is going to be added to.



Some of the new areas we will be asked to comment upon include

- how long you are in contact with our clients when delivering meals
- whether a client cancels their service (meals or social support)
- whether everyone is registered with My Aged Care (MAC).
- how many volunteers we have

This will require a revision of our **client management system** and reporting activities. It will require us to look at some of our present processes and make changes.

This will be costly to upgrade the system, but we are hopeful that our application for a Grant to assist with the upgrade, training and having someone to just transfer information before the end of May, occurs.

There will need to be some training for our volunteers, and we are looking at options to make the data collection easy! More to come on this as we learn what is required.

One of the issues when a huge new Act is replacing another is the rules and regulations required. There are many commenting that while the new Act is exciting and what the Royal Commission into Aged Care wanted, the writing of the rules is still happening and therefore there is still much we do not know. This makes it difficult to be fully ready for 1 July 2025!

But we have some good news of events happening within our organisation.

- **Sussex Inlet** has been undergoing an upgrade. The walls were painted a while ago and now the flooring has been replaced. Shortly there will be new signage and new freezers. Our Open Day has been held over until this work is completed, then we shall 'show it off'.
- **Ulladulla** is preparing for new freezers, and this will enhance the working of the kitchen area. New signage is being planned as well.
- **Batemans Bay** will be getting some of the old freezers from these two sites, and a sign above the roller door telling everyone what we do. The large bus is about to be replaced

There will be **freezers** available for anyone interested in an upright freezer. Please let Michele (Sussex Inlet), Laura (Ulladulla) or Kelley (Batemans Bay) know if you may like one. We will see what can be distributed and when. I will discuss with the Board, at its March meeting, the cost of the freezers, but I am sure we will be most generous.

Volunteers assisted at the Moruya Rodeo on 1 January at the gate. We received \$8000 for our work which will be used to support our volunteers. We did have support from the Batemans Bay Community Picnic group, and we have given them a share of the funds.

There is much happening in Aged Care and at Eurobodalla Meals on Wheels, and we thank you for your generous efforts.

Alan Russell,
Manager



Remember: Meals and Community Services (MACS) is what we provide