

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

All volunteers have been informed that approval has been given to return volunteer services to Warrigal under the guidelines of additional precautions and mandatory volunteer training to be completed.

It is exciting to see more activities starting to recommence within our homes after nearly 12 months of restricted access.

Although there has been no community transmission of COVID-19 for over 30 days, Warrigal continues to be vigilant and on alert with Winter approaching and as we enter the flu season.

I will be visiting homes, meeting volunteers and seeing the activities you are involved in over the coming weeks and months. I look forward to catching up with you and seeing the wonderful work you all do at Warrigal to enhance the lives of our residents.

Michelle Chate, Volunteer Coordinator



ROYAL COMMISSION into Aged Care

As you probably now know, the Royal Commission released its final report on Aged Care. We've already had an increase in news stories across all forms of media as a result. As the Royal Commission has uncovered some horrible stories of abuse and neglect we can expect some of the coverage to be distressing and even heartbreaking. The harm and neglect some people have suffered is appalling.

Understandably there is some negativity towards the industry. Some of it is even towards charities like Warrigal with good people like you. Please don't take this personally. It's not really aimed at you (or us) but is rather an expression of the helplessness people feel about one of the richest countries in the world having one of the poorest aged care systems. The lack of funding and staffing leads to anger and frustration, with some people expressing it in the wrong ways to the wrong people. We at Warrigal are suffering the same poor system, but we are committed to the best care possible for every older person who chooses us for their care.

Anger and frustration is not The Warrigal Way. At Warrigal we try not to personalise these things but try to stay focussed on our very important usual daily work. Hold your head high knowing that Warrigal works as one team supporting each other and striving to support older Australians to have great lives. So keep doing what you do best and focus on providing care for our residents and customers. They each deserve the best day possible. We can make that happen for them, despite the 'noise'.

In the mean time, my team and I will be working out what the Royal Commission's report means for Warrigal. It means a lot of change over the next few years, hopefully mostly for the best.

If you or anyone in your family feel concerned or distressed by what you hear, you are invited to contact our staff support line and speak confidentially to a professional person on 1300 361 008.

Thank you for the work you do helping older people have great lives.

Mark Sewell, CEO

Latest update on COVID-19

taken from letters to families from Craig Smith
(Executive Leader, Service Integrated Communities)

- Over the past few weeks we have seen the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine program with residents living in residential aged care home in the priority 1a group, which are being coordinated by geographical areas.
- The Aged Care Royal Commission recommendations have now been released. The report recommends a complete overhaul to the aged care system, with a focus on quality, flexibility and consumer control. While a response from the Government to the recommendations is not required until the end of May, we embrace the findings and have commenced a process of reviewing the recommendations to be prepared for their implementation.

You can read the full letters on our website warrigal.com.au under latest communication to families.



On Sunday 21 February Warrigal volunteer, Scott Matthews, took part in the Illawarra Memory Walk and Jog which raises much needed funds for those living with dementia.

As a Pastoral Care volunteer, Scott provides emotional and spiritual support to residents and has a gift of engaging those living with dementia.

During his 6km run, Scott's motivation and thoughts were for our Warrigal residents who are living with dementia.

The Memory Walk and Jog raised over \$65,000 for dementia support. Well done Scott.



UPCYCLING

ideas from the Op Shop

Bear's snuffle mat has been made from old t-shirts purchased from the Op Shop. The shirts were cut into strips and tied onto a rubber mat with holes in it.

The snuffle mat is an interactive treat mat that slows down fast eaters as they sniff and search for hidden treats. Why buy new, when you can upcycle and make it yourself.



OP SHOP DONATIONS

The Warrigal Op Shop is running low on **MEN'S CLOTHING**. If you have any clothing donations please deliver them to the Op Shop, George Street, Warilla.

Opening times

Wednesday to Thursday
9.30am - 2.00pm

All proceeds made at the Op Shop go towards purchasing resources and equipment for the residents within our homes.



COVID-19 vaccine questions answered

The Department of Health have provided accurate, evidence-based answers to questions about COVID-19 vaccines. Over the coming weeks we will share some of these with you to assist you with staying informed.

Question 1:

Can COVID-19 vaccines give you COVID-19?

Answer:

No. None of the approved vaccines in Australia contain the live virus.

Question 2:

Can COVID-19 vaccines alter my DNA?

Answer:

COVID-19 vaccines do not alter your DNA. Some of the new COVID-19 vaccines use a fragment of Messenger RNA (mRNA) to instruct your body to make an immune response against COVID-19.

Question 3:

Will the COVID-19 vaccine work if coronavirus mutates?

Answer:

All viruses mutate, this does not mean the vaccine will not be effective on new variants. It may mean that we may need booster shots or it may mean we need to be vaccinated again like we are for the flu vaccine every year. Researchers are still investigating this, but they do know the virus has not mutated enough to make the current vaccines ineffective.

Want more information? Head over to <https://www.health.gov.au>



Volunteer Training Reminder

It is now a requirement for all staff and volunteers to complete the following training prior to returning to volunteer duties:

- PPE (Department of Health)
- Infection Control (Warrigal eXplore)
- COVID (Warrigal eXplore)

The above training will take approximately 40 minutes to read and complete.

If you need the training modules resent to you, please contact me on 0436 806 723 OR email: mchate@warrigal.com.au

Volunteer Positions Vacant

Role: BUS DRIVER

Hours: 4-6 hours

Duties:

- Drive customers to and from their home to various destinations as scheduled by the Village Community Coordinator or Service Manager.
- Assist customers under staff supervision.
- Police Check (*paid for by Warrigal*)
- Report vehicle maintenance issues to the Fleet Officer.

Essential:

- LR licence (*equivalent or higher*)
- Driving Assessment with ABC Driving School (*paid for by Warrigal*)
- Complete relevant volunteer training.



Role: GARDENING ASSISTANT
(Mt Warrigal, Albion Park Rail)

Hours: Flexible

Duties:

- Weeding, sweeping, cleaning outdoor areas.
- Planting of seeds and plants.
- Watering of gardens and pots.
- Tidying outdoor spaces and furniture.
- Police Check (*paid for by Warrigal*)

Essential:

- A strong commitment to working with older people.
- Complete relevant volunteer training.

If you or anyone you know are interested in any advertised positions, please contact Michelle Chate, Volunteer Coordinator, mchate@warrigal.com.au or 0436 806 723

MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS

Sonya & Scamp ~ pet therapy



Meet Sonya and 11 year young Scamp who visit the residents at our Warilla home every Monday morning to provide pet therapy.

When Scamp gets dressed in his purple jacket and name badge he knows it's volunteering day.

As soon as he walks through the doors of our Warilla home he is eager to get working!

Scamp leads the way with Sonya in toe and is busy doing room visits. Then it's straight to the activities room to meet and greet the residents, soaking up all the attention and pats, with a smile on his face and little tail wagging.

Sonya also volunteers at the Warrigal Op Shop and is Secretary on the Warrigal Auxiliary.



CONNECT-19 PROGRAM

During 2020 Warrigal launched the CONNECT-19 program to combat social isolation in older people during the global pandemic. We received a grant from the NSW Government to purchase Samsung Tablets and engage volunteers to provide social calls and technology support to eligible participants.

The six month program has been a huge success thanks to the many volunteers who assisted. We were able to provide the following to older people within our care homes, villages and community:

- Deployed 204 Samsung Tablets to eligible participants.
- Provided technology assistance to over 558 participants. Many thanks to Living Connected for your additional support to make this happen.
- Volunteers making on-going social telephone calls to over 539 participants. These connections are still continuing.
- A total of 2,015 older people participated in the program.
- Over 235 volunteers provided social calls, wrote letters, sent emails, conducted video calls and provided technology assistance to participants in the Illawarra and Southern Highlands.
- *More highlights in the April's newsletter.*

Shaz assists Warrigal Social



Meet Shaz who has been volunteering at Warrigal twice a week since 2018 and is an invaluable asset to the Warrigal Social team.

Shaz assists customers on bus outings, plays games, sets up activities, serves morning teas, chats and listens to customers and provides assistance with anything and everything that needs to be done.

The staff say "Shaz has a positive and friendly attitude. She is a listening ear, has a good sense of humour and brings fun and laughter to our customers. She is a lovely person to be around and is a friend to all the customers and staff."

