

Welcome to a new decade!



Nobbys Lighthouse at sunrise. Source: Ilya Genkin

It's hard to believe we will be speaking about the years ahead as "the 20s". That being said, a new decade and a new year bring the opportunity for new beginnings and a chance to set new goals and aspirations. At Mercy Services our goals are quite clearly to work hard every day to reach for exceptional care in whatever we are doing for our clients and residents.

To do this takes a commitment from all of the staff and volunteers who strive to do better every day they come to work. To ensure that our efforts are where it counts, we strongly encourage you to send through your feedback, on what we do well, how we can improve, and what we do badly.

Mercy Services have a number of ways to provide feedback, so you can choose an option you feel the most comfortable with:

- Simply talking to one of our staff or volunteers when you see them
- It can be as easy as making a phone call to 4962 6680
- Emailing us at office@mercyservices.org.au
- Providing feedback through our website www.mercyservices.org.au/contact-us
- Or writing a letter to me at Mercy Services, 13 Brooks Street, West Wallsend NSW 2286

Any feedback received by our team will help us improve the services we deliver.

While we continue to strive towards improving our services, our volunteers and staff also thrive on positive feedback - if we do a good job, we like to hear about that too. I would like to thank you if you have provided positive feedback in the past, as it does make a big difference to our team. The individuals and teams who receive those comments, really enjoy it when people take the time to thank or compliment us on a job well done.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to get in contact with one of the team, we would be happy to answer your questions.

www.mercyservices.org.au

We hope the year is one full of positive experiences and opportunities, and we look forward in playing some part in that with you.

Tony Bidstrup, CEO

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Ready, Set ... Bingo!

The staff at the Newcastle Elderly Citizens Centre had the pleasure of welcoming the Headstart ABI Services ladies group to the Centre on 29 January. The ladies enjoyed bingo and a wonderful chicken lunch, complete with banoffee pies for dessert. A special thank you to Suzie for calling the bingo.



A celebration of 2019

There was much joy and merriment at the Clients' Christmas Party on 16 December.

A special thank you to those volunteers that donated their time for our clients Christmas party. This is the second year we have held one big party for Transport, West Wallsend and Tighes Hill clients.

It takes a lot of planning to get over 100 people transported to and from the venue but our Community Transport team do an amazing job and this year we provided extra volunteers on all the buses which makes life easier for our drivers.

Special mention to the big guy in the red suit who brought joy to many and sat through a lot of photos. If you had a photo taken with Santa and would like a copy, please contact us on 4962 6680.



*"In all our work we strive to provide compassionate, respectful, high quality and environmentally sustainable practices."
Part of Mercy Services Mission Statement*

Meet Falkor, the Llama



Did you know that animal visits in aged care has many benefits? Research shows regular interaction with therapy dogs can help to reduce blood pressure, manage pain, stimulate the memory and boosts morale of residents living in aged care.

At Singleton Aged Care, they certainly know the benefits of having animals visit the residents. That's why they arranged for a visit from Falkor, the Llama.

Falkor, and his owner from the Llama Collective, came to visit on Tuesday, 28 January much to the delight of residents and staff. There were many cuddles, lots of llama kisses and an abundance of smiles all round.

Caring for our Koalas

The women of Holyoake, Mercy Services Woman's Group on Friday mornings at Tighes Hill have adopted a Koala named Paul from the Port Macquarie Koala Sanctuary.

Paul was rescued after the fires at the Lake Innes Nature Reserve, near Port Macquarie in November 2019. He was severely burnt and traumatised. Paul is reportedly doing well at the moment and hopefully will be set free in the Port Macquarie area in the future when there is appropriate healthy habitat available for him to be freed in.

The Holyoake Women will be given regular updates on Paul's progress and all are invited to visit Paul, to wish him well, when they are visiting in Port Macquarie.



"We must strive to do ordinary things extraordinarily well."
Catherine McAuley, Foundress, Sisters of Mercy

A meal with music warms the spirit

The Tighes Hill Day Centre clients joined in with the Newcastle Elderly Citizens Centre clients for a lunch that comprised a wonderful meal and some great entertainment on the 28th of January.

Lunch was a meal of lamb chops and veggies, with panacotta and peaches for dessert.

Entertainment was provided by the Italian Cowboy. What a wonderful day out for everyone.



Mens Activity Shed every Thursday

Did you know that Mercy Services has their own Mens Shed here at West Wallsend where some pretty amazing things happen? Every Thursday the guys meet around 10am, whether they drive themselves or are picked up by our bus. Most of the world's biggest issues are solved around the table at morning tea or over a game of UNO or Dominoes. Once a fortnight the guys join in with our Day Centre ladies for some musical entertainment and then

escape (quickly) back to the Shed for a hot lunch cooked on site. If you enjoy to tinker, the Shed is fully equipped for woodwork activities and our dedicated volunteers are there each week to support you. It is surrounded by a beautiful garden and orchard that you can wander safely around or do a spot of gardening if that's your passion. If this sounds like something you may, or someone you know may be interested in please call us on 4962 6680.



"We believe in offering services that recognise and honour the whole person: body, mind, heart and spirit"
Part of the Mercy Services Philosophy Statement

Off to a great start

The Newcastle Elderly Citizens Centre kicked off 2020 with a performance from Phil Sievers on the 23rd of January.

Phil is always a favourite of our clients and now we can offer air conditioned comfort while enjoying the live entertainment.



Shopping Bags

Do you go shopping with the Community Transport team?

If you do, don't forget to label your shopping bags.

To help our volunteers in making sure you get the right shopping bag after an outing, please label your name clearly on all bags.

Remember ... we have a maximum of 4 bags per person.



Lots to do at West Wallsend

If your New Year resolution is to get out of the house more, have a look at some of the exciting activities we have planned over the next few months at the West Wallsend Day Centre.

We have "chair yoga" and "Beat It Drumming" which is proving very popular with our clients. This is gentle exercise designed to assist with balance, coordination combined with music that you will enjoy humming along to.

Our shopping buses have started back and visit Jesmond, Toronto, Wallsend and Mt Hutton shopping centres. These are a great opportunity to catch up with friends, top up your groceries and enjoy a cuppa.

All of our buses have a volunteer on board to ensure you have a safe and comfortable trip and to assist if needed. There is something for everyone at West Wallsend, to find out more give Grace a call on 49441916 and we can send you out a calendar.

Can you spare some time?

Do you have some spare time in your week and would like to make some new friends?

We are seeking volunteers to assist on our shopping buses in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie. You can choose to volunteer once a week or fortnightly depending on what time you have available.

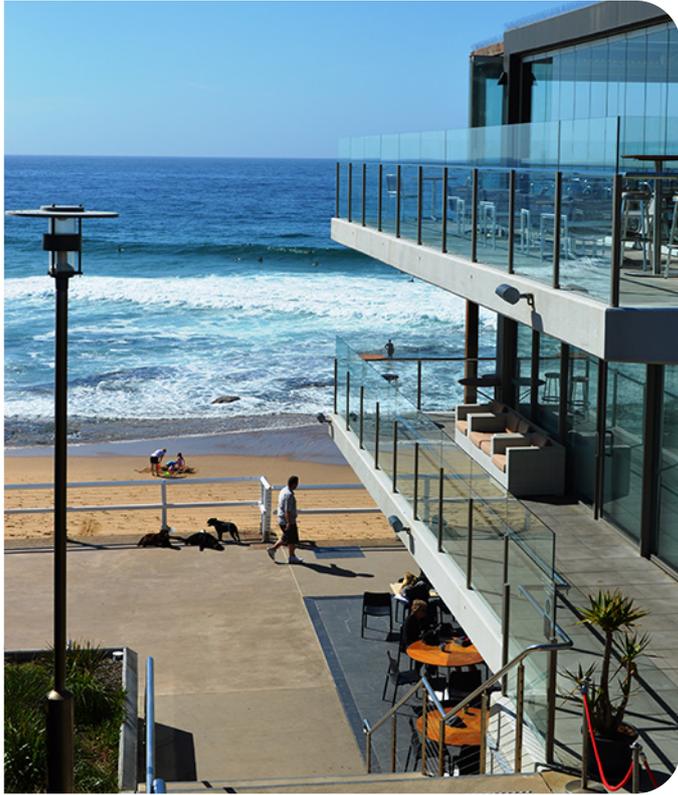
All volunteers are reimbursed for their mileage and out of pocket expenses related to their role.

If you, or someone you know, is interested please contact Karen on 4944 1918. We would love to hear from you.



*"A good beginning is of great importance. You must waste some time with visitors."
Catherine McAuley, Foundress, Sisters of Mercy*

Men's Outing Group



Need a break from the house? Like to chat with other men about the meaning of life?

Well, this may be the group for you.

The Men's Outing Group is much more than just getting some exercise, it's an opportunity to meet new people, visit some of the secret spots around Newcastle and Lake Macquarie and revive your senses. The Group enjoy finding locations where they can have a wander at their own pace, enjoy morning tea together and join in for game of cards or other activities.

This group is ideal if you feel yourself becoming a bit forgetful and would like that extra support to get out of the house. You don't have to worry about anything, we provide morning tea and will pick you up at your door and deliver you home. Our Coordinator, Eddie, will make you feel safe and comfortable and one of our volunteers is always on hand to assist.

If you would like to know more about this group please contact us on 4962 6680, we would love to hear from you.

Friday Social Outings

Fancy a day out that includes McDonalds for morning tea, a pleasant drive to a place of interest followed by lunch at the pub or club? Our Friday Social Outings Group could be the group for you!

The day starts around 8:30am when Eddie, our Coordinator, will pick you up in our air conditioned bus and you will return home about 2:30pm.

The group decides where they want to go for a drive and what they feel like for lunch. This day out is great for people whom may be unable to leave the house on their own and miss catching up with other people. Please call us a call on 4962 6680 to find out more.



*"We can never say 'it is enough'".
Catherine McAuley, Foundress, Sisters of Mercy*

Welcome to the 'Mercy family'

There's a new face at the Singleton Aged Care. Graeme Andrews has joined the 'Mercy Family' as the Clinical Manager in early January.

Graeme has a strong career in this industry but says that even though he's only been at Singleton for a matter of weeks, he feels like one of the family already.

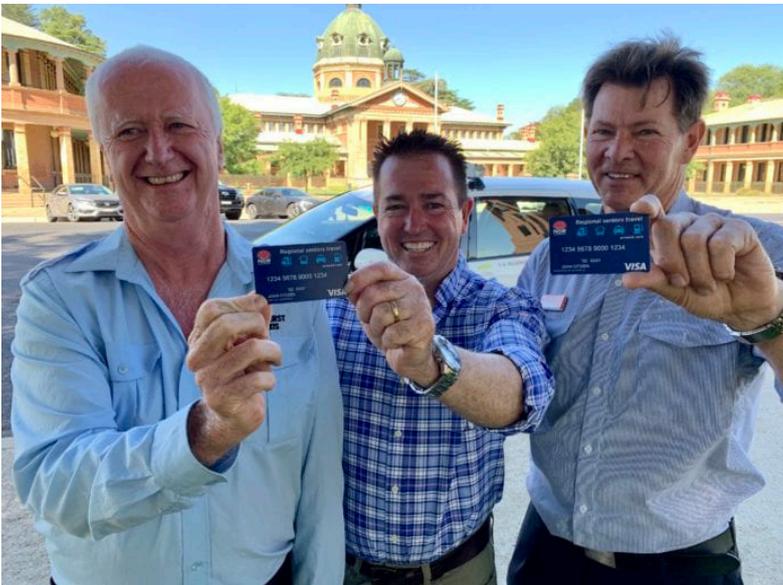
Graeme's role as a Clinical Manager sees him looking after the clinical care and governance of the residents. But that doesn't mean he's always in the office. Graeme has lots of interaction with the residents and says that spending time with the residents is one of the most enjoyable parts of his job.

Graeme expressed his appreciation at the genuineness and open communication that Mercy Services displays and says that it is this level of care that makes Mercy Services so special.

Welcome to the 'family' Graeme.



Seniors eligible for new Travel Card



L to R: Taxi Driver Paul Shanahan, Paul Toole MP and Phil Baker from NSW TrainLink. Photo: NBN News

Travelling from place to place has just got a whole lot easier for older Australians living in regional NSW, with the NSW State Government rolling out a new seniors travel card.

The card is available to any senior living outside Sydney, Newcastle or Wollongong. The card is a travel card with a value of \$250 that can be used for taxis, fuel and pre-booked NSW TrainLink Regional services and other coach services.

The \$250 card is valid for 12 months and to receive your card you must be an age pensioner with a valid Pensioner Concession Card or hold a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card issued by either the Department of Human Services or Department of Veterans' Affairs. You must also live outside the Sydney, Newcastle or Wollongong City Council boundaries.

If you would like to apply for your card, visit your local Service NSW Centre.

*"Mercy Services will be a leading provider in compassionate care and quality service".
Part of the Mercy Services Vision Statement*

Chicken and vegetable red curry with rice

Cooking Time: 15 minutes (preparation time 5 minutes) Serves 4



Ingredients

- 1 tbs olive oil
- 1 medium red onion, finely chopped
- 400g lean chicken breast fillets, cut into 1cm pieces
- 1 tbs Thai red curry paste
- 1 green capsicum, halved, seeded, thinly sliced lengthways
- 1 bunch broccolini, chopped
- 2 cup green beans, trimmed and chopped
- 200g snow peas, trimmed and halved diagonally
- 1 medium zucchini, cut into small rounds
- 250ml reduced salt chicken stock
- 1/3 cup reduced fat coconut milk
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 2 cups '90 second quick' brown rice
- Coriander, to garnish

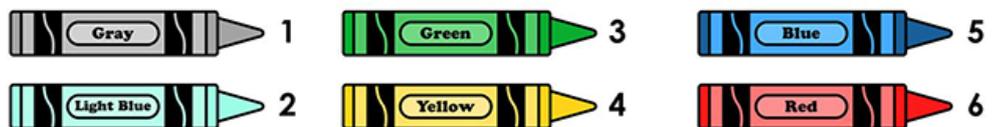
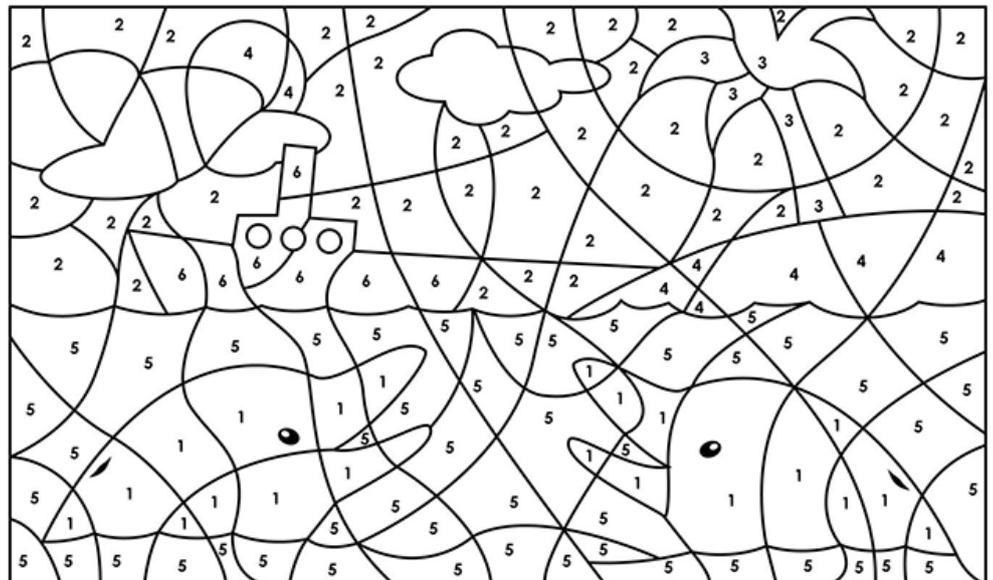
Directions

- 1 Spray a large non-stick frying pan with olive oil and set over medium-high heat. Add onion to the pan and cook for 1-2 minutes, or until just softened. Add chicken and curry paste and stir to coat.
2. Add capsicum, broccolini, green beans, snow peas, zucchini, chicken stock and water to the pan and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10-12 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, combine coconut milk and cornflour in a small bowl. Add to the pan and cook, stirring occasionally for 4-5 minutes or until vegetables are tender and chicken is cooked through.
4. Meanwhile, heat microwave brown rice according to packet instructions.
5. Serve curry with rice and garnish with coriander.

Colour-by-numbers

Colour in the segments of the picture, matching the colours and number.

Once all the segments are coloured in, the image will be revealed.



"Recognising and fostering the dignity of every person ..."
Catherine McAuley, Foundress, Sisters of Mercy