

We Cherish Our Volunteers



The Mercy Community have once again shown their generosity.

On Wednesday, 4 December 2019 over 50 volunteers from across the Mercy Services network came together for a Christmas Lunch at Sacred Spaces Singleton. This is an opportunity for Mercy Services to say 'thank you'.

Thank you for all the hours you give; thank you for the smiles you are putting on our clients' faces; thank you for the raising of our client's spirits; and thank you for being the compassionate and caring volunteers that contribute so much to the organisation.

Mercy Services currently has 86 volunteers across all sites. Last financial year we had 16 in Singleton; 3 in frozen meal delivery; 20 at the day centres; 31 in social support; 11 in shopping buses and social outings; and 5 in community transport. Our volunteers' annual contribution is over 17,000 hours. Again, we say thank you.

Thank You and Merry Christmas

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“Thank you for your dedication and patience” - a message from the CEO

For all associated with Mercy Services through 2019, I want to thank you for your dedication and your patience. For our residents, our clients, our volunteers, and our staff it has been a significant year of change. We are operating in a time of great change as we continue to adjust and improve our services with an aim to meet the needs of our community better to the highest level possible.

This change has been in our teams, but also across our industry in light of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, which affects a significant portion of our services, and the implementation of new Aged Care Standards. The changes have not been in haste, or out of vanity, but entirely out of a desire to raise the standard of care we provide to clients and residents at all times. Some of these changes are still in progress, so the benefits may not yet be visible to those affected, but rest assured we are working hard behind the scenes to rectify any issues.

The Royal Commission released their interim report on 31 October, and for many is an indictment on the services provided by our sector. The interim report states that a fundamental overhaul of the design, objectives, regulation and funding of aged care in Australia is required – not merely patching up. The Royal Commission has highlighted that there have been no less than 35 major public reviews into the sector in the last 40 years, yet instances of substandard care recur at distressingly frequent intervals, across Australia. As a result of the interim report, the federal government has committed to an additional 10,000 Home Care Packages for those looking to continue their care at home. Widely anticipated changes to residential aged care have not yet been addressed by the government, who appear to be waiting until the final report from the Royal Commission before announcing changes there. We will continue to update our staff, volunteers, clients and residents as the Royal Commission progresses. The Royal Commission has in its report said they are “committed to systemic reform”, and Mercy Services wholeheartedly supports this and will continue to move with the required changes. Anything that results in better, safer, more

accessible services to our clients and residents is worth doing.

This year saw the introduction of new Aged Care Quality Standards. With an emphasis on dignity and choice, these standards are ‘people centred’. There are 42 individual areas needing to be met, within eight standards. With these standards effective in July 2019, significant work went into adjusting and assessing what we were already providing, to be assured that our services meet the needs of our residents and clients across our organisation, and we continue to find areas we believe will improve the care we deliver across the organisation. We are delighted to report that in October, our Residential Facility in Singleton was visited by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and the resulting report confirmed we have met all 42 criteria and as such have a full three year accreditation granted.

Mercy Services remains committed to the pursuit of exceptional care, and 2020 is shaping up to be another year of growth and continuous improvement across the organisation. We will continue fostering new talent with our Community Care Assistant training program next year, and will be implementing a number of system changes designed to minimise the paperwork burden on staff, so that they can provide more care, with a clearer focus on your needs, and improved accountability when changes are required.

As we ring in the Christmas season and new year, please take time to focus on the things that bring you joy. There may be some lovely moments, and perhaps some difficult ones. Take good care of yourself and those who matter to you. Try to balance time spent with others with some gentle time and space with yourself.

On behalf of Mercy Services, I’d like to extend my personal and genuine appreciation to each and every one you for your valuable contributions to this community in 2019 and look forward to the challenges and changes 2020 will undoubtedly bring.

Tony Bidstrup, Chief Executive Officer

“In all our work we strive to provide compassionate, respectful, high quality and environmentally sustainable practices.”

Part of Mercy Services Mission Statement

Celebrating the Christmas Spirit



Mens Shed created garden ornaments and Christmas trees.

Whilst the evening was quite warm, people were grateful for the 'slushy' option while purchasing their meal from the barbecue manned by volunteers.

Santa and his helper made an appearance and were warmly greeted by all the children.

The team at Singleton Mercy Aged Care thank all volunteers, participants, family members and the Singleton community for supporting this event and helping to bring the Christmas spirit to the residents.

On 11 December the Christmas spirit well and truly arrived at the Singleton Mercy Aged Care.

An evening of Christmas carols and twilight markets was held for the enjoyment of residents, family and community.

This event is a major fundraising activity for the Aged Care centre and the community did not disappoint.

Volunteers created home made baked items, they sold potted plants, Christmas decorations and the Resident



Celebrating Christmas at the Newcastle Elderly Citizens Centre

On 12 December supporters and clients of the Newcastle Elderly Citizens Centre came together to celebrate Christmas. There was live music, great food and everyone was feeling very festive. Management of the Centre took the opportunity to thank everyone for their support throughout the year and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.



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

Tighes Hill Day Centre: caring for mind and body

The staff at the Tighes Hill Day Centre recognise that their client's mind and body both need nourishing and care. With that in mind, throughout the month of November there was a range of activities to suit everyone.

The month started off with the Melbourne Cup and was then followed up with an outing to Sal's by the Lake at Warners Bay. Entertainment was provided by Greg Mason, Daniel Arvidson, Adam Price and Sonia Erskine. Music is always popular as clients love to dance with the beat. Physically we got moving with Alicia from Reflections Yoga and then combining the two we had 'Music for Movement' as well as 'Beat it Drum Therapy' with Jo Cook.



Caring for Murrurundi

The staff and residents of the Singleton Mercy Aged Care wanted to do something to help the residents of Murrurundi to the north of Singleton.

Since March 2019, the township of Murrurundi has been without water. They have had to truck in potable water. This puts a huge strain on residents and businesses, all while the farmers and the economy are already struggling.

So, the residents and staff of Singleton Mercy Aged Care put the call out for items to be donated to the residents of Murrurundi and were overwhelmed with support.

Baskets and baskets of items were donated along with \$1,200 in cash. All this was then donated by the residents

and staff on a visit to Murrurundi earlier this month. The items were donated to the 'Pop Up Store' in Murrurundi which is run by volunteers allowing local farmers to go in and collect the items needed free of charge. The volunteers at the Pop Up Store were very grateful for the support and donations.

On the way home, residents stopped in for lunch at a local cafe, 'Nelliebellies' where the owner greeted the group with great cheer and sent them on their way with a box of cakes for afternoon tea.

It was a lovely outing and one that helped others at a time when needed most.



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

Farewell Sue Oakey

Sue Oakey has resigned from the Board of Mercy Services at the end of November.

Serving on the Board from 2005 to 2019, with a brief resignation between 2014 and 2015, Sue has been integral as a Director and previous Chair.

Her contributions will be long remembered.

Mercy Services wishes Sue well in her future endeavours

best
WISHES

Accreditation Achieved

Mercy Aged Care in Singleton has had their accreditation renewed, as they are now fully compliant with all 42 of the new standards. This result was after an unannounced visit from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

The visit required significant time of our staff to meet with the representatives and show exactly what we do for our residents in Singleton.

We will continue to review our processes to ensure that the care we provide is at the highest possible standard, but we simply must thank all those involved in such a brilliant result.



A Time to Remember

On 28 November, the Singleton Mercy Aged Care community came together for a memorial service.

This service acknowledges the lives and contributions of residents who have passed away during the year.

The beautiful service is a wonderful opportunity to pay respects to the community of residents and the way it changes throughout the year.

Thank you to all who attended and paid their respects.

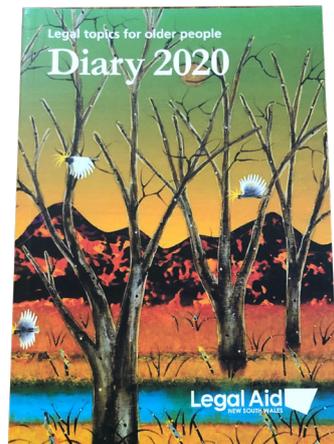


Free Diaries

Free diaries have been arranged for interested clients of Mercy Services.

Printed by Legal Aid NSW, these are being made available at a number of locations, including Mercy Services day centres.

Pick up your free diary for 2020, with the added benefit of resources for seniors on pensions, planning, and everything in between.



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

Christmas Fruit Punch (non-alcoholic)



Ingredients

- 2 cups sugar
- 600ml boiling water
- 6 sprigs mint crushed fresh
- 900ml orange juice fresh
- 600ml cold black tea
- 900ml pineapple juice
- 300ml lemon juice fresh
- 3L dry ginger ale
- 3L lemonade
- 1 cup fresh strawberries chopped fresh
- 1 tray ice cubes to serve

Directions

1. Dissolve sugar in boiling water and add crushed mint. Cool.
2. Remove the crushed mint, then mix the sugar solution, cold tea and juices in a very large bowl.
3. Decant into storage jugs and refrigerate until required.
4. When ready to serve, mix with dry ginger ale and lemonade in roughly equal proportions in a serving jug or glasses.
5. Add ice and a few chopped strawberries and/or mint leaves if desired to garnish.

Christmas Word Search



Cross out all the words on the list. The remaining letters spell out a special Christmas message.

- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| BELLS | SAUCE |
| CANDY CANES | SLED |
| CARDS | STAR |
| CEDAR | STOCKING |
| COLD | TOYS |
| GIFTS | TREE |
| LIGHTS | WREATH |
| NOEL | YULE |
| PARTY | |
| PIE | |
| PINE | |
| SALES | |



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