

Volunteer Update

Over the past few months, our volunteer program has grown to over **600** volunteers across Warrigal. This growth reflects the generosity of so many people in our communities who give their time each week to make a meaningful difference in the lives of older people.

I am very excited to share that Warrigal has been accredited as an **Exemplary Volunteer Involving Organisation** (EVIO) for 2026 to 2029, having successfully met the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. This EVIO endorsement recognises organisations that demonstrate excellence and reflects Warrigal's commitment to best practice across recruitment, support, management and recognition of volunteers. This achievement belongs to all of you. Thank you for the care, dedication and heart you bring to Warrigal each and every day.

What continues to stand out to me is the heart of our volunteer community. Your warm smiles, friendly hellos and the time you give so freely each week truly help create a world where older people feel **known, loved, and connected**.

We will be celebrating Volunteer Week in May, and I look forward to seeing you at our two events in the Northern and Southern regions.

Michelle Chate
Volunteer Manager



Wrapped in Kindness

A heartfelt thank you to Kerry Wright, a family member of one of our Warrigal Central staff, who is generously handknitting beautiful blankets for residents across Warrigal. One of these was gifted to Elise at Calwell, who was absolutely delighted. "I'm looking forward to using it in winter, which is just around the corner as it gets cold here in Canberra." It's thoughtful, handmade gifts like these that bring comfort, warmth and genuine joy to our residents.



A Ride to Remember

Stirling Volunteer Delcia recently made a resident's dream come true with a very special Sunday outing. On a beautiful autumn afternoon in Canberra, she took Judith for a drive in a 2002 Porsche 911. With the top down they cruised through the Molonglo Valley, enjoying the sunshine and fresh air while staying snug and comfortable. It was a simple yet meaningful moment that shows how small things can make the biggest difference, creating joy through connection, fresh air and the feeling of the wind in your hair.

Warrigal Care Auxiliary Celebrates 50 Years

The Warrigal Care Auxiliary proudly celebrated an incredible milestone, marking 50 years of dedication, community spirit and generosity. Since its beginnings, the Auxiliary has played a vital role in enhancing the lives of residents, with the beloved Op Shop at Warilla standing as a cornerstone of their efforts. Over the past five decades, an outstanding \$1.7 million has been raised and reinvested into Warrigal, funding equipment, furnishings and experiences that go beyond everyday care.



A special celebration was recently held at Warrigal Central to honour this remarkable achievement, attended by Chris Homer, Mayor of Shellharbour and Anna Watson, Shellharbour MP. During the event, the Auxiliary President was presented with a commemorative plaque in recognition of their leadership and contribution. Current volunteers received certificates of appreciation, and following the event, past volunteers were also acknowledged with certificates, ensuring their legacy and impact continue to be recognised.



This milestone is a true testament to the passion and commitment of generations of volunteers whose efforts have made a lasting difference. The Warrigal Care Auxiliary remains a shining example of what can be achieved through community, compassion and a shared purpose.



You can read the full article and view the gallery [HERE](#).

In the Spotlight

Our celebration was proudly showcased on **WIN News Illawarra**, highlighting the incredible contribution of our volunteers and the impact they have made over the decades. You can watch the segment [HERE](#).



The story was also shared in **Region Illawarra**, helping to spread the word about the Auxiliary's inspiring journey and achievements. It's wonderful to see our volunteers recognised in the wider community for the difference they continue to make. You can read the full article [HERE](#).



Eddy's Corner

There were plenty of smiles at our Goulburn home this Easter, thanks to a thoughtful visit from Eddy and his mum, Tori. Tori is a member of **Soroptimist International of Goulburn**, whose members kindly created Easter cards for residents. Eddy and Tori delivered the cards, along with two special Pokémon drawings.

Eddy has become a familiar and much loved visitor, with residents always asking when he will be back. Tori shared that Eddy loves revisiting rooms where his drawings are still proudly displayed and gets excited when residents remember him. And when they don't, he is just as happy to remind them that he created the drawings.

There has even been a special request for Tori to do a ballet performance, something everyone is already looking forward to!



Soroptimist International of Goulburn



Tori and Eddy



Eddy and Sandy, Resident

Inspiring Young Volunteers at Calwell



We recently had the pleasure of welcoming two outstanding young volunteers, Krish and Ahan, to our Warrigal Calwell care home. Over four days, the boys made a wonderful impression, showing respect, enthusiasm and maturity beyond their years. They integrated seamlessly with our Lifestyle and Allied Health teams, building strong connections with staff and residents.

During their time with us, Krish and Ahan were involved in a wide range of activities. They supported our April Falls Program and joined in the Silly Shoes Parade, helped wash over 22 mobility aids during the Mobility Aids Car Wash, assisted with setting up the gym space, supported exercise classes, joined the outdoor walking program and contributed to daily tasks across the home. Most importantly, they spent meaningful time with residents, listening to their stories, engaging in conversation and encouraging participation, bringing genuine joy to those around them.

Krish and Ahan are fantastic role models, and their time at Calwell has given them valuable insight into aged care while strengthening important values such as empathy, respect, teamwork and community service. Their experience highlights the powerful impact young volunteers can have, and we thank them for the difference they made in such a short time.

Nidhi Sharma, Allied Team Leader



The Power of One on One

Why Engagement Matters

Sometimes the most meaningful thing you can offer a resident is simply your undivided attention.

One on one engagement is any activity or conversation you share with a single resident, guided by what that person enjoys and is able to do. It is one of the most personal ways you can make a difference at Warrigal.

Who benefits most?

Residents who feel overwhelmed in groups, those with limited mobility, and residents living with cognitive decline or communication difficulties often have fewer chances to connect on their own terms. Your visit can change that.

What might you do together?

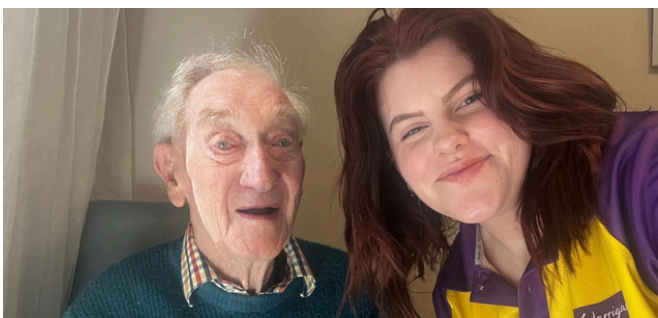
You do not need to arrive with a plan. Some ideas to get you started: listen to favourite music, look through old photographs and hear the stories behind them, share a simple card game or puzzle, read aloud from a book or magazine, or try a sensory activity such as scented oils or nature sounds for residents who communicate less verbally.

Follow the resident's lead. The more you get to know someone, the richer your visits will become.

A few things to keep in mind

Take your cues from the resident and always put their comfort first. If you notice something during your visit, a song that lights them up, a topic that brings joy, or any sign of discomfort, let the Lifestyle Team know. Your observations genuinely help.

You do not need to do anything extraordinary. Showing up and treating someone as an individual is the heart of one on one engagement.



We are proud to partner with Palliative Care ACT to bring a compassionate volunteer service into our Warrigal ACT homes at Hughes, Calwell and Stirling. Through this partnership, specially trained volunteers support residents living with a life limiting illness, as well as their families and carers, by offering companionship, comfort and a listening ear during a deeply personal time. This service complements the care provided by our teams and reflects our shared commitment to ensuring residents feel **known, loved, and connected** in a truly meaningful way.

www.pallcareact.org.au

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