



VOLUNTEERS NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2025

**Volunteer Survey
Was due back 25
July.**

**This has been
extended to 11
August.**

**I would like to hear
your thoughts.**

Greetings to all our volunteers.

Too often we can feel alone in the world and for our older community members this is very much an issue.

Thank you to you for your assistance at breaking down the social isolation felt by many of our clients, and even by ourselves from time to time.

Being involved in a group, with friends and family is important for all of us, and a study has shown the benefits of being connected and involved.

The Meals on Wheels Australia website has this

Social connection

You may have heard the saying that Meals on Wheels is *'more than a meal.'* This is because through a friendly chat and smile, our essential service reduces the social isolation risk of one in four older Australians who live alone.

Meals on Wheels volunteers form meaningful connections with you and genuinely care about how you're feeling and what you've been up to! Every delivery is an opportunity to catch up and check-in with one another.

Human connection is more important than ever and for some older Australians, a Meals on Wheels volunteer is the only person they see all day... sometimes all week. In fact, many Meals on Wheels customers say they find the smiley face and friendly conversation they have with the volunteers at each delivery, more important than the meal itself.

Through the social and wellbeing checks performed at each delivery, Meals on Wheels keeps you connected to your community and living independently and well in the comfort of your home.

Meals on Wheels Australia partnered with Huber Social to measure the social impact of the service. They produced two reports -2022 and 2023. Some of the findings maybe of interest

For customers:

- Majority of MoWA customers have less than one meaningful social connection a day – only 20% of MoWA customers report having one or more meaningful social connections a day.
- Connection is key – of all factors relating to MoWA service that were examined, how well customers know their volunteers had the strongest relationship with wellbeing.



Board of Directors
is pleased to invite you to the
The Volunteers' High Tea

Wednesday 24th September 2025

2pm to 4pm

@ Moruya Jockey Club

*Donnelly Drive at North Head Moruya
opposite the Moruya Airport*

Catering – Moruya Rotary Club

**R.S.V.P. Tuesday 22nd August 2025
on 4474 4464**

*Transport will be available from
Ulladulla*

Please advise any dietary needs

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING
Volunteers like you are the life blood of
Meals on Wheels

*Please Note: The bar will not be
operational.*

- Specifically, knowing your volunteer better was associated with higher wellbeing.
- Connected customers have the most improved outcomes – of the 36 factors measured, when compared to customers who do not know their volunteer at all, customers who know their volunteers a little, somewhat, and very well were found to have significant positive improvements in 42%, 72%, and 83% of factors measured, respectively.
- Length of visit matters, but frequency does not – visits of two minutes or more were associated with higher wellbeing, while the number of visits per week was not found to have a significant relationship with outcomes.
- Customers living alone know their volunteers better and receive greater benefit from the service - those living alone saw greater improvements across key outcomes than others.

For Volunteers

- MoWA volunteers have higher wellbeing than other Australians – when compared with a sample of comparable Australians, MoWA volunteers were found to have 10% higher wellbeing.
- When compared to volunteers of a similar age group and volunteer time commitment in a different organisation, MoWA volunteers still report having 4% higher overall wellbeing.
- Volunteering with MoWA builds a sense of belonging – long term MoWA volunteers reported significantly higher scores across factors related to their sense of belonging.

This information is of interest as we celebrate the work you do every time you pull on our shirt and go to see our clients. You are making a difference to their lives and to your own.

It makes me wonder if the data we are having to collect for the Government will make them more aware of your role and the valuable contribution volunteers make to the community. A little while ago it was calculated that a volunteer is worth \$41 an hour. If we start to calculate what our service provides each week, month and year it is huge. Put all this together, knowing that Meals on Wheels across Australia has a larger workforce than Bunnings, then we are very valuable to the Government. The data therefore will highlight this fact...even if it is a pain to have to fill out the start and finish time when we visit each client.

But let us celebrate what we do when we have High Tea. Please remember to RSVP by 22nd August.

In the Volunteer Survey there were questions for those in the northern area about High Tea and where it may be held in the future. I hope we have responses to that question to guide our planning.

The development of our next Strategic Plan has started. Do you have any thoughts on these three questions...if so please let me know.

- **What can we do better within our organisation?**
- **How can we serve the community better?**
- **What else could we provide for members of the community?**

Later we will have more requests for feedback, but these starter questions will get us underway. Thank you for any thoughts you may wish to give and for all you do to break social isolation amongst our older community...it is so important for the wellbeing of our community.

Alan Russell
Manager



**Sussex Inlet
25th Anniversary**

SAVE THE DATE

**Friday 14th
November**

Details to come

