



Meals on Wheels
Australia

Meals on Wheels Australia Social Impact Report

The Power of Meaningful
Customer–Volunteer
Connection

July 2022

Prepared by



HUBER
SOCIAL

Meals on Wheels





Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Why Measure Social Impact?	5
The Purpose of Meals on Wheels® Australia	6
Organisation Summary	7
Meals on Wheels® Australia Impact Thesis	8
Measurement Approach	9
Key Findings	11
Meals on Wheels® Australia Customers	12
• Demographics	13
• Overall Wellbeing Impact Findings	16
• Predictors of Wellbeing	24
• Open Feedback	25
• Recommendations	26
Meals on Wheels® Australia Volunteers	27
• Demographics	28
• Overall Wellbeing Impact Findings	29
• Predictors of Wellbeing	34
• Open Feedback	36
• Recommendations	37
Get in Touch	38
Appendix	39
1. The Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework	40
2. Data Transparency Page	41
3. Pilot Measurement Considerations	42
4. Predictors of Wellbeing Table	43
5. Quality of Relationship Shifts	44

Disclaimer

This document has been produced solely for use by Meals on Wheels® Australia and is to be shared at their discretion. Huber Social does not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage whatsoever occasioned to any other party resulting from the unauthorised circulation, reproduction or use of this document.



Executive Summary

Meals on Wheels® (MoW) has long been a household name across the world when it comes to meal delivery, but what is less understood is the contribution the organisation makes to building community and social connection through its volunteer-driven and connection-focused model.

Meals on Wheels® Australia (MoWA) has partnered with Huber Social to measure the social impact of the service, with a specific focus on understanding the broader benefits of the MoW model beyond nutrition. The goal for this process was twofold – obtain evidence that MoWA has real impact beyond basic meal delivery, and better understand the key drivers of success in order to ensure the service is as effective as possible and resources are focused to have the most impact. There are clear social and economic gains for the way the elderly are supported in Australia if services such as MoWA are able to assist people to live independently in their homes for longer.

The first measurement is considered a pilot and foundation for MoWA to build upon and includes data collected from South Australia (across the state), Queensland (South Brisbane and Marlin Coast) and New South Wales (Tweed). This initial measurement yielded the following key findings:

For customers:

- **Majority of MoWA customers have less than one meaningful social connection a day** – only 19.8% 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. 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 53%, 81%, and 97% 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.

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** – MoWA volunteers who have been volunteering for at least six years reported significantly higher scores across factors related to their sense of belonging.

The Opportunity

In addition to demonstrating the broader social impact of the MoW model, these findings offer an area of focus for MoWA – the importance of the relationship between customers and volunteers. While this factor was found to have the strongest relationship with overall wellbeing and program outcomes, it was also an area with clear room for improvement, with 41.9% of customers reporting they didn't know their volunteers very well at all. This represents the biggest opportunity for MoWA to increase the wellbeing of their customers and maximise their impact.



Building **Community** and Sustaining **Independence**

Life expectancy in Australia continues to increase, along with our 65 years and older population, which is projected to more than double by 2057.¹ Given these changes in longevity, there is a desire to ensure that these added years of life are 'good years of life', where people are enabled and supported to experience healthy, independent and dignified lives.

However, wellbeing in later life can be threatened by feelings of loneliness and social isolation. The 2021 Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety found that older people place a higher value on having a sense of belonging and connection with their local community, with in-person interactions particularly valued.²

Meals on Wheels® Australia (MoWA) supports older Australians and others who may be experiencing challenges to living independently in their homes. Beyond providing nutritious meals, the Meals on Wheels service seeks to address two of the biggest threats to successful ageing – social isolation and loss of independence.

To support its existing evidence base, MoWA has partnered with Huber Social to measure its social impact for both customers and its volunteers. The aim of this measurement



program is to understand the impact MoWA has on the overall wellbeing of those delivering and receiving its services, as well as an understanding of which aspects of the MoWA service model best support the wellbeing of its customers and volunteers.

This report presents the results of the first (pilot) measurement of MoWA's social impact. It provides key insights into the MoWA delivery model and identifies opportunities for MoWA to improve its approach to maximise its impact.

"Every week is like a big surprise, and I receive my delicious lunch. It is the best part of the day. I meet the nice people who deliver our meal and some chat with us. It is friendly and enjoyable. "

- MoWA Customer

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2014. Australian population statistics, 2014. ABS. cat. No. 3105.065.001. Canberra: ABS. online: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australia-at-a-glance/contents/demographics-of-older-australians/australia-changing-age-and-gender-profile>

2. Pagone G. & Briggs, L., Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Final Report: Care, Dignity and Respect, Volume 1: Summary and recommendations. p.100: Online: <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-03/final-report-executive-summary.pdf>



Why Measure Social Impact?

Huber Social was engaged to measure the social impact of Meals on Wheels® Australia to demonstrate the impact of the MoWA program and identify any opportunities to maximise effectiveness and better allocate resources.

1. Measure

To measure the impact of Meals on Wheels® Australia, Huber Social measures the shift in overall wellbeing and program outcomes for people who engage with their services - in this case, both customers and volunteers.

Measurement provides a data driven approach for MoWA to articulate their social impact to internal and external stakeholders.

2. Maximise

Beyond a focus on target outcomes, Huber Social's approach considers the holistic needs of a person to be in the best position to fulfil their potential.

This approach identifies opportunities to refine MoWA programming (if required) and utilisation of resources to maximise the organisation's impact on customer and volunteer wellbeing.

Why Wellbeing?

Measures overall progress and supports the systematic solving of social issues

Ultimately, the goal of all social impact is to put people in the best position to fulfil their potential and achieve wellbeing. It is therefore important to measure wellbeing to ensure that overall, programs are having a positive impact. To measure social impact, Huber Social therefore measures a shift in overall wellbeing and the specific program outcomes that contribute to it.*

Taking a wellbeing approach also provides a whole-of-life understanding of a person's needs. Instead of starting with the issue at hand, which tends to focus on the crisis end of a problem and places artificial limitations on the needs of people, strengthening wellbeing supports building a person's capability and opportunity to fulfil their potential, thus working to systematically address social issues.



**For details of how Huber Social measures wellbeing, please refer to Appendix 1, the Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework*



MEALS ON WHEELS AUSTRALIA PURPOSE

Uniting Meals on
Wheels to nourish
communities





Meals on Wheels Australia Program Summary

Meals on Wheels® has been supporting the health and wellbeing of older Australians for over 65 years.

The international Meals on Wheels service model seeks to strengthen communities by providing support for people to live independently while maintaining community connection. The service model comprises provision of a prepared, nutrient-dense meal, delivered to the consumer at home or in a congregate setting, predominantly by volunteers. The meal serves as a vehicle for social engagement and interaction, building relationships and enabling monitoring of the consumer's well-being. Unlike other meal delivery services, which simply deliver the meal and leave, contact with a volunteer is built into the Meals on Wheels® Australia approach. Through the services provided by its volunteer workforce, Meals on Wheels provides the conditions to live a healthy lifestyle in older age by:

- Delivering nutritional and healthy food to sustain health and wellness;
- Facilitating reliable and trusted social contact; and
- Monitoring and responding to a customer's holistic wellbeing needs as part of a 'more than just a meal' service model.

In addition to meal delivery, many services across the country offer a range of entry-level home support services that complements the meal delivery service.

This measurement project will focus specifically on the meal delivery service. This pilot measurement seeks to measure and understand the social value which Meals on Wheels® Australia creates beyond the provision of meals. Insights and learning from this pilot project in three locations: South Australia, Queensland (Brisbane South and Marlin Coast), and NSW (Tweed Heads) will be used to inform service delivery in these locations and across the country.





Meals on Wheels Australia Impact Thesis

The Meals on Wheels® Australia Impact Thesis outlines the hypothesised impact it has on customer and volunteer wellbeing. Through measuring each level of impact, Meals on Wheels® Australia can use a data driven approach to demonstrate what works and what is needed to maximise impact and outcomes.

1. Impact

The overall impact of Meals on Wheels® Australia program is to improve people's wellbeing by ensuring they are well-nourished and able to thrive within their communities.



2. Outcomes

Meals on Wheels® Australia achieves this impact by building capabilities and providing access to opportunities across the following areas for customers and volunteers:

Customers

- Belonging and connection
- Nourishment
- Self-determination
- Holistic wellness
- Life skills
- Resilience
- Access to societal structures and services

Volunteers

- Belonging and connection
- Purpose
- Confidence
- Enjoyment
- Leadership
- Life skills
- Resilience



3. Outputs

Meals on Wheels® Australia delivers the following outputs:

- Meals delivered
- Customers reached
- Volunteers engaged



4. Activities

The above outputs are achieved through:

- Meal production
- Meal delivery
- Wellbeing checks
- Volunteer recruitment, training and engagement



5. Resources

The above activities require:

- Funding
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Facilities
- Vehicles



Measurement Approach

Huber Social and Meals on Wheels® Australia worked in collaboration to develop a measurement system that allows the organisation to measure its impact and understand ways to maximise it. The goal was to create a clear articulation of the organisation's social impact and inform program design and delivery.

Methods

To determine the impact of Meals on Wheels® Australia, Huber Social measured the shift in the subjective wellbeing of customers and volunteers. To understand what may influence customer and volunteer wellbeing, Huber Social used a co-design approach to identify factors related to personal capabilities and access to opportunities that should be included in measurement, thus creating the Meals on Wheels® Australia Impact Thesis. Further information on the Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework is contained in Appendix 1.

Tools

Huber Social used a combination of primary and secondary data sources; primary data was collected using self-report surveys. Surveys were developed to measure the key program outcomes identified in the MoWA Impact Thesis. Where possible, relevant secondary data from MoW databases was used.

Distribution

There were two key methods of distribution of surveys to customers across the four services that took part in the pilot. Meals on Wheels® South Australia (MoWSA), being the largest service in the pilot and the only service with a state-wide structure, posted surveys to a chosen sample of customers. Customers returned their survey using a reply-paid envelope provided to them. In Marlin Coast, Tweed and Brisbane South, surveys were delivered directly to customers by their volunteers who also collected them upon completion.

Volunteer surveys were distributed via email across all pilot services. Brisbane South, Marlin Coast and Tweed additionally offered a paper option to volunteers.

Comparison of Sample Sites

Across all sites, 1019 responses were collected from customers, made up of 744 from South Australia, 122 from South Brisbane (QLD), 31 from Marlin Coast (QLD) and 122 from Tweed (NSW). 890 responses were collected from volunteers, made up of 792 from South Australia, 29 from South Brisbane (QLD), 20 from Marlin Coast (QLD) and 49 from Tweed (NSW).

With such large variation in the size of the datasets from each site, analysis was undertaken to understand if the data could be considered as an aggregate sample or if it would need to be assessed separately by location. Comparative analysis found no statistically significant differences between responses from all pilot sites. Therefore, despite the higher proportion of responses from South Australia, the results can still be considered as a single sample, as they are not different in a statistical sense.



Measurement Methodology

For this pilot measurement, several hypotheses were tested to understand the impact of Meals on Wheels® Australia on both customers and volunteers.

Customers

The following dimensions of service were considered for customers:

- **Number of visits** – defined by number of meal deliveries on average each week.
- **Location of home** – defined by geographic characteristics of customer's home (rural/ regional or urban).
- **Living arrangements** – defined by with whom the customer lives (single, couple, with family, with friends, or other).
- **Social engagement** – defined by number of meaningful social interactions a customer has on average each week, apart from MoWA delivery.
- **Length of visits** – defined by how much time on average a volunteer spends with a customer when delivering a meal. Visits ranged from no time to 10 minutes or more. It should be noted that due to COVID-19 procedures, for many customers their volunteer was required to leave the meals on the doorstep.
- **Quality of relationship with volunteers** – defined by how well a customer feels they know their volunteer, ranging from 'not at all' to 'very well'.
- **Time in program** – defined by the length of time a customer has been receiving their Meals on Wheels service. Customers were categorised into three measurement groups: (1) those who are about to or have just begun receiving meals, (2) those who have been receiving meals for three months, and (3) those who have been receiving meals for a year or more.

Volunteers

The following dimensions of service were considered for volunteers:

- **Time commitment** – defined by the average among of time spent volunteering with MoWA each month. Volunteers were grouped in three categories: (1) Less than five hours a month, (2) 5-15 hours a month, or (3) 15 or more hours a month.
- **Time in program** – defined by average length of time as a volunteer, in years.





Key Findings: **The Impact of Meals on Wheels**

1. Majority of Meals on Wheels customers have less than one meaningful social connection a day

Only 19.8% of MoWA customers report having one or more meaningful social connections a day.

2. 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. Specifically, knowing your volunteer better was associated with higher wellbeing.

3. Stronger relationships associated with better outcomes

In addition to being associated with higher wellbeing, scores for MoWA's target outcomes also increased in line with higher quality relationships between customers and volunteers. 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 53%, 81%, and 97% of factors measured, respectively.

4. Length of visit matters; number of visits does not

Analysis found that customers who received visits of two minutes or more had 4% higher wellbeing than those whose visits were less than two minutes. Factors related to access to services and life skills also scored significantly higher among those with longer visits.

While it may seem counterintuitive, analysis found that there was no significant difference between customer wellbeing and number of volunteer visits per week. This suggests that it is the quality of connection with volunteers rather than quantity that has the biggest effect.

5. Meals on Wheels volunteers have higher wellbeing than other Australians - including other volunteers

When compared with a sample of Australians with comparable demographic characteristics, MoWA volunteers were found to have 10% higher wellbeing. Even when compared to non-MoWA volunteers of a similar age group and volunteer time commitment, MoWA volunteers still report having 4% higher overall wellbeing.

6. Meals on Wheels volunteers feel they belong

MoWA volunteers who have been volunteering for at least six years reported significantly higher scores across factors related to their sense of belonging. These results suggest that MoWA is successful at creating community connection among their volunteers.



Meals on Wheels Customers

To understand the social impact of Meals on Wheels® Australia services, it was first necessary to determine whether MoWA services have an impact beyond meal provision and nutrition. Does the volunteer-driven service model - which provides opportunities for social connection and regular check-ins - achieve more than simply delivering nutritional meals?

Beyond this primary aim, there were also a number of aspects of the MoWA service model that were investigated to understand their effect on overall wellbeing.

This measurement project found that MoWA does offer benefits to its customers beyond access to healthy food and improved nutrition; however, this can vary widely for customers depending on the nature of the service received.

The following section explores the impact of MoWA services on customer wellbeing and identifies ways in which the service can be optimised and resources best utilised to support customer wellbeing.





Meals on Wheels Australia

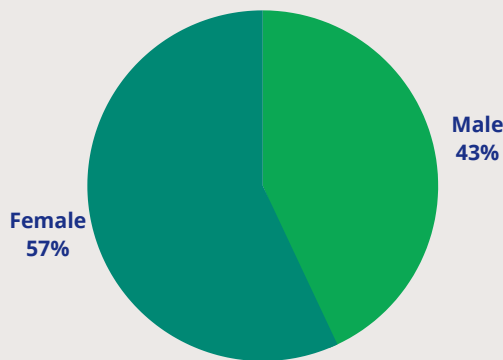
Customer Demographics

The Meals on Wheels® Australia Wellbeing Survey received responses from 1019 customers of the service across the pilot measurements in South Australia, Queensland (South Brisbane and Marlin Coast) and NSW (Tweed Heads). The average age of customer participants was 81 years.

Gender

The majority of respondents were female (57%).

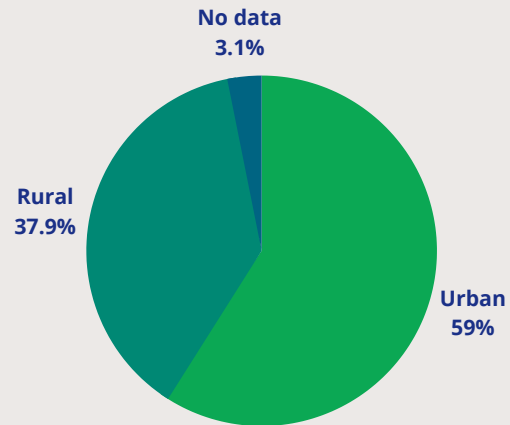
All responses, by gender



Location

Almost two thirds (59%) of respondents live in urban areas of South Australia, Queensland & New South Wales.

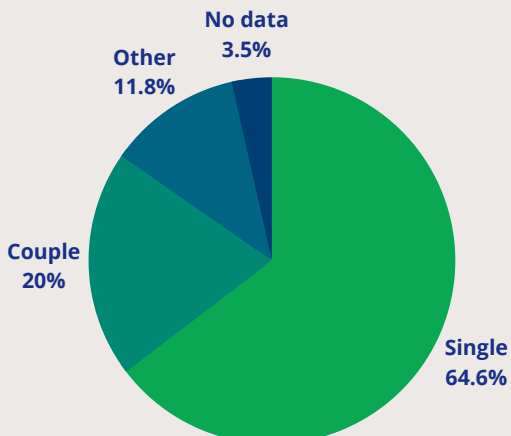
All responses, by location



Household Composition

The majority (64%) of customers live on their own. Other household types include family, sole parent, and group accommodations.

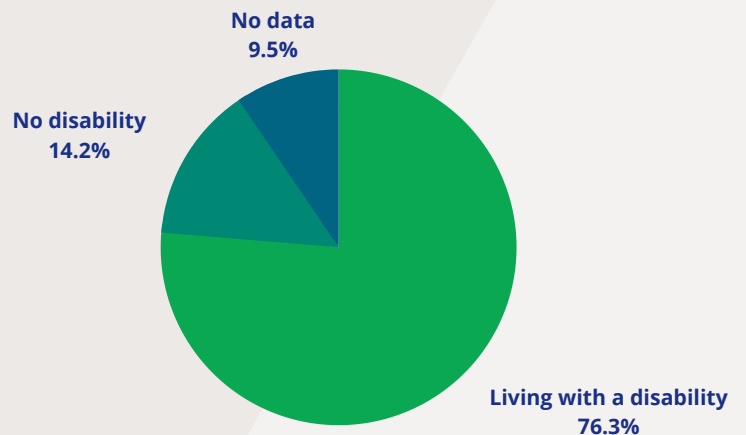
All responses, by household type



Living with a Disability

Three quarters (73%) of all respondents live with a physical, psychiatric, or sensory disability.

All responses, by disability status





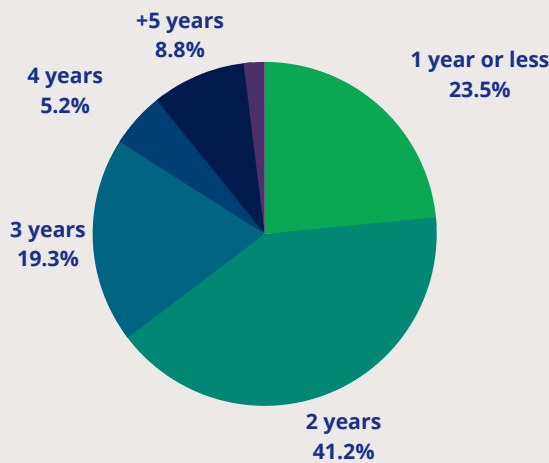
Meals on Wheels Australia Service Dimensions

In addition to Meals on Wheels® Australia customer demographics, data was collected with respect to various dimensions of their MoWA service. Out of all respondents, 88% reported that they intended to receive their Meals on Wheels service for the long-term (rather than a short-term need).

Years Receiving Meals

The largest group (41%) of customer respondents have been receiving MoWA services for two years.

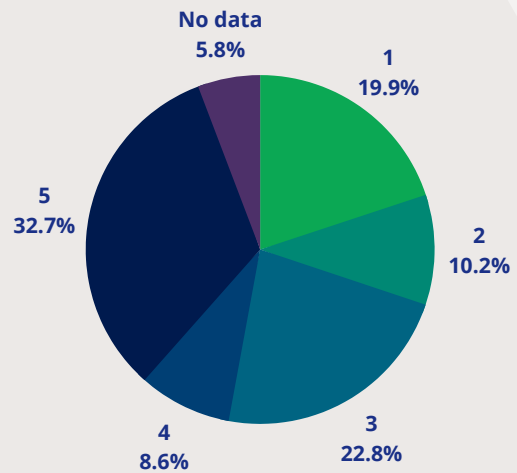
All responses, by years of service



Number of Visits per Week

The most common frequency of delivery was five days a week (32%).

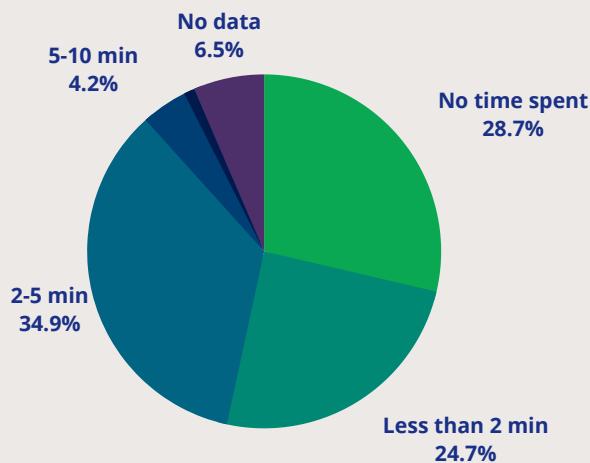
All responses, by visits per week



Duration of Visits

More than half (53%) of customers report that their volunteer visits last for less than two minutes.

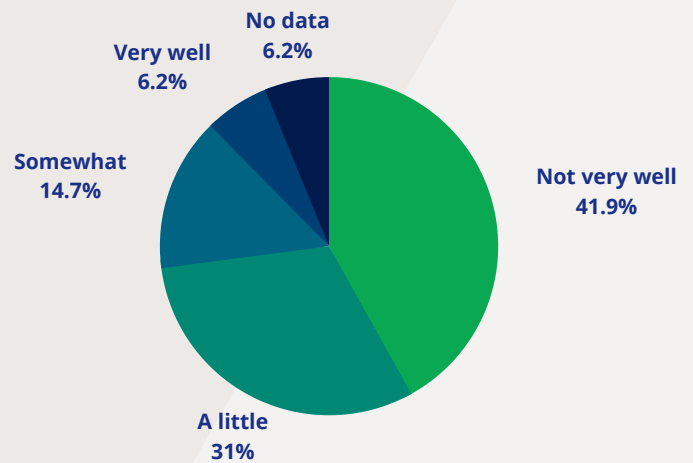
All responses, by duration of visit



Connection with Volunteer

Less than a quarter (21%) of customers report knowing their volunteer somewhat or very well.

All responses, by knowledge of volunteer



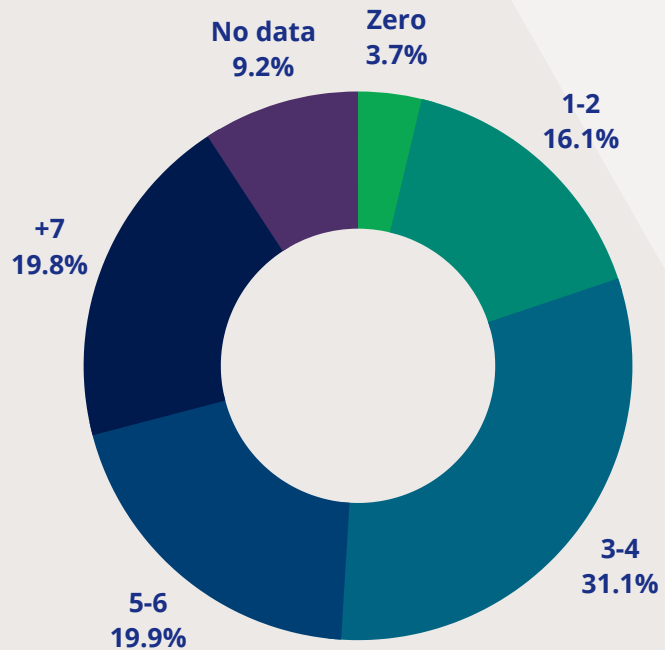


Majority of MoWA Customers Have Less Than One Meaningful Social Connection A Day

To understand their base level of social connection, Meals on Wheels® Australia customers were asked how many meaningful social connections they had per week, (with examples given of time spent with friends, speaking with family or neighbours, at a club, volunteering, church etc.) excluding their Meals on Wheels deliveries.

Only 19.8% of customers responded that they had seven or more meaningful social connections a week, meaning that the vast majority of Meals on Wheels customers average less than one social connection a day, excluding their Meals on Wheels deliveries.

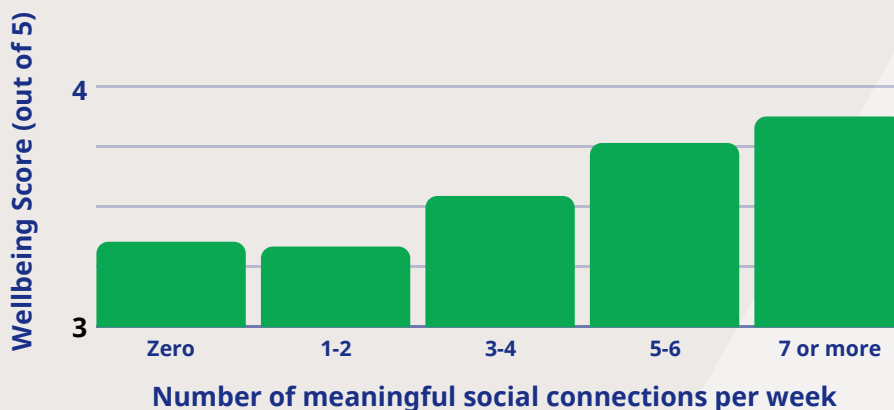
The average number of meaningful social connections (excluding Meals on Wheels visits) reported by Meals on Wheels customers is four per week.



All responses, by number of meaningful social connections per week

Social Connection Linked to Wellbeing

Consistent with a host of research in the field that points to the importance of social connection in the wellbeing of people,¹ analysis found that the number of meaningful social connections in a week had a significant relationship with overall wellbeing, with a higher number of connections associated with higher wellbeing.



1. Holt-Lunstad J, Smith TB, Layton JB (2010) Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review. PLoS Med 7(7): e1000316. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316>

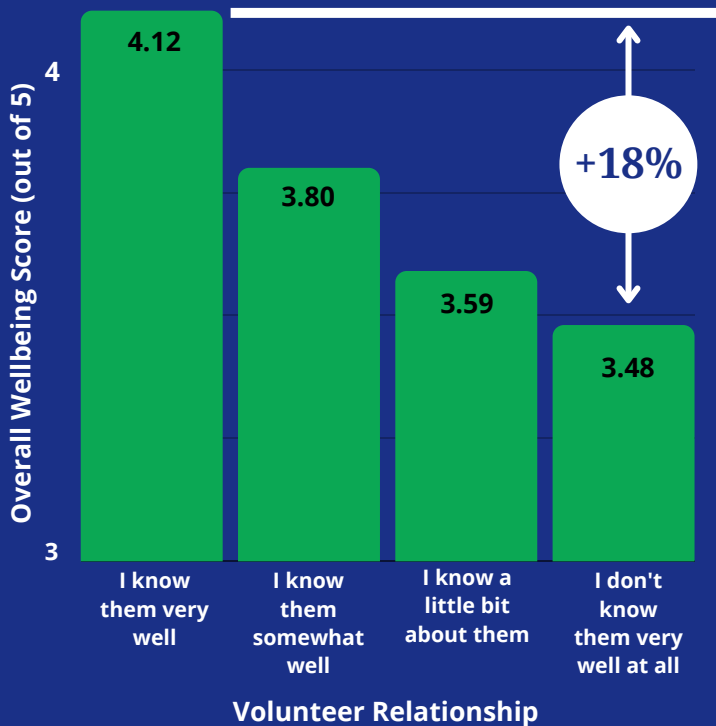


Connection is Key

Of all factors relating to Meals on Wheels® Australia service that were examined, quality of relationship with their volunteers had the strongest relationship with customer wellbeing.

On average, the better customers know their volunteers, the higher their wellbeing.

Customer overall wellbeing, by volunteer relationship



Relationship with wellbeing determined via one-way ANOVA test ($F = 11.8, p < 0.01$). Data includes 956 responses, with $n = 63, 150, 316, 427$ respectively for each column.

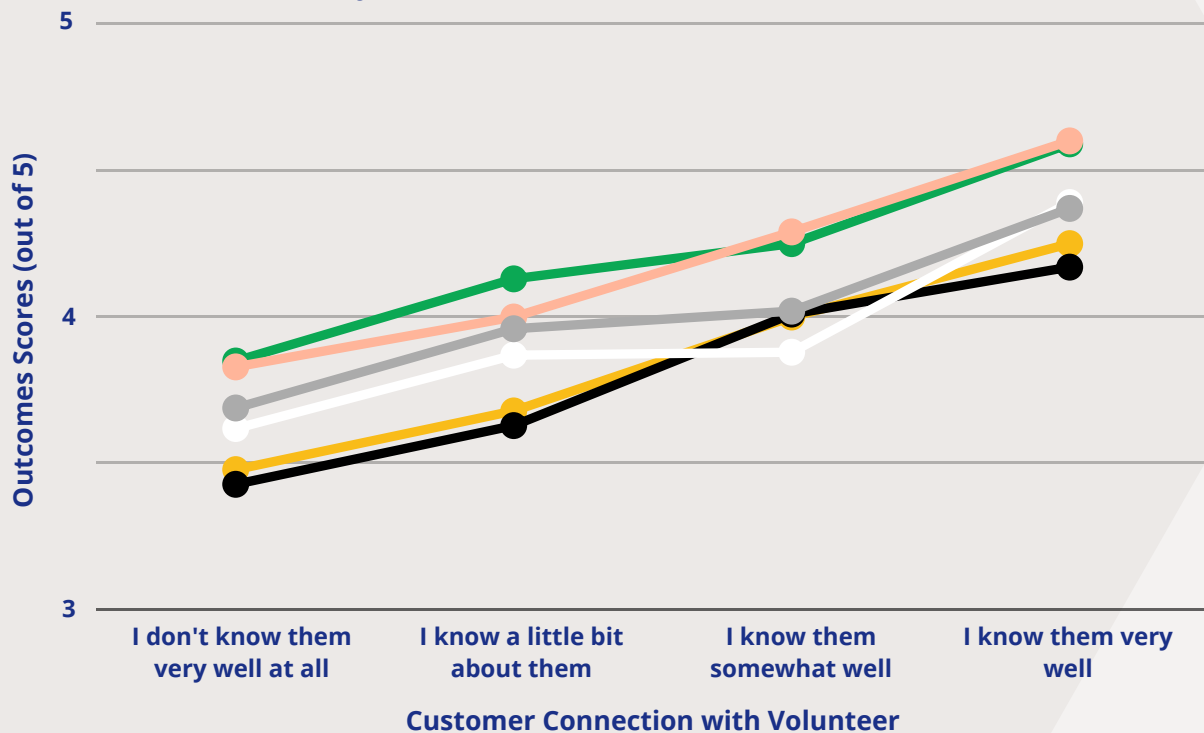


Stronger Relationships Associated with Better Outcomes

In addition to being associated with higher wellbeing, higher quality relationships between customers and volunteers are associated with higher scores across Meals on Wheels® Australia's target outcomes. Across the 36 factors measured, customers who know their volunteers a little, somewhat, and very well were found to have significant positive improvements in 53%, 81%, and 97% of the factors measured respectively, compared to customers who do not know their volunteer at all. More information about these key program outcome improvements can be found in Appendix 5.

The following are some highlights of the significant gains achieved for Meals on Wheels® Australia customers:

Key Program Outcomes Scores, by Customer's Connection with Volunteer



Outcomes with Largest Improvements

+22%

Feeling part of a community*

+20%

Feeling accepted by one's community*

+21%

Finding it easy to share one's thoughts and feelings with other people

+19%

Belief that community service providers can help with one's current situation

+21%

Having a sense of purpose in life*

+18%

Having things to hope for*

*Denotes a predictor of wellbeing, a factor that has a strong correlation with overall wellbeing. See page 24 for details.



"It has made a great impact on my life. I have lost the ability to plan, organise and decide what to eat. You have taken away my anxiety and my health is improving. It gives me something to look forward to each day."

- Meals on Wheels customer





Length of Visit Matters to Customer Wellbeing

One of the project's aims was to understand whether there is a difference in customers' overall wellbeing based on the duration and frequency of Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteer visits. Responses for visit length ranged from no time at all to more than 10 minutes, and frequency ranged from one to five days per week. Different services included in the pilot had different service models, ranging from delivering one to five times a week.

Visit Duration

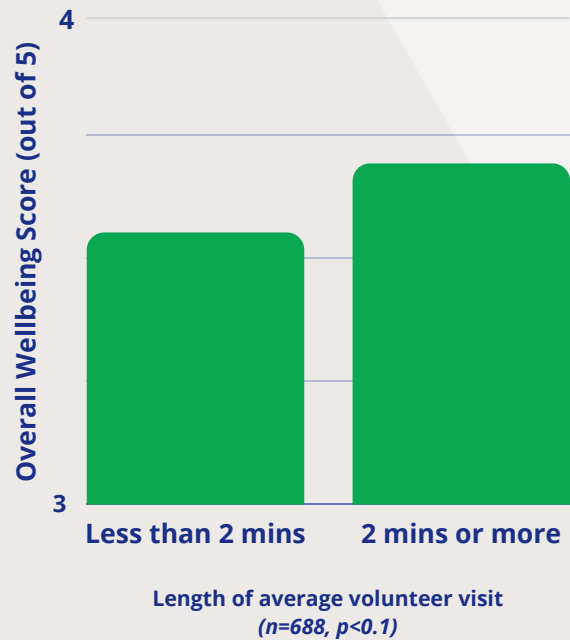
Analysis found that customers whose volunteers spent two minutes or more socialising with them during a meal delivery have 4% higher overall wellbeing compared to customers with volunteer visits under two minutes. Customers with longer visits also reported knowing their volunteer 44% better than customers with shorter visits, which may contribute to their higher wellbeing status.

This information suggests that it's worth making time to connect with customers as it seems to have a positive impact on their overall wellbeing. It should be noted that sample sizes for measurement groups with visits over five minutes were small; additional data collection on this subject will deepen understanding of benefits of longer visit times.

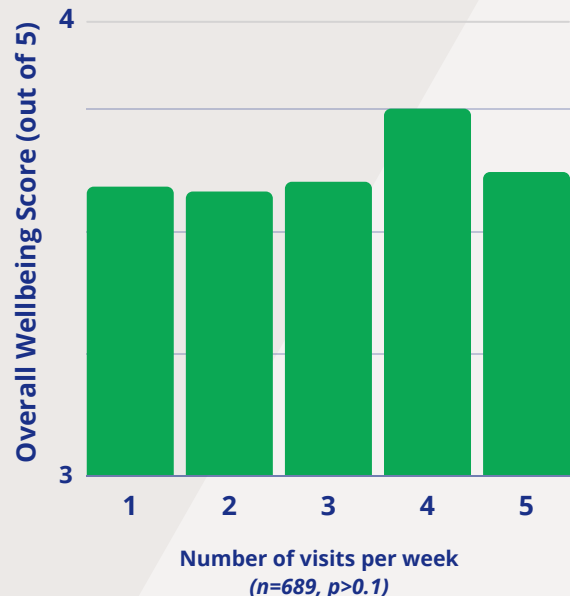
Visit Frequency

Analysis found that there was no statistically significant difference between customer wellbeing and number of volunteer visits per week. This suggests that quality of interaction is more important to customers than frequency of visit. This highlights an opportunity for further investigation.

Overall Wellbeing, by Duration of Visit



Overall Wellbeing, by Frequency of Visit





Longer Visits Associated with Increased Access to Services and Life Skills

In addition to having higher overall wellbeing, customers with volunteer visits of two minutes or longer also scored higher across a range of all factors when compared to those whose volunteer visits are an average of two minutes or less. The biggest differences were seen in factors under the outcomes of access to services and life skills. Most importantly, customers with longer visits felt more confident that community services providers could help them in their current situation, indicating a higher level of trust in Meals on Wheels® Australia's ability to support their customers.

Below are some of factors that scored significantly higher among those who received longer visits compared with those of two minutes or less:

Access to Services



Belief in Community Services

+7%

Belief in community services to support one in need



Knowledge of Local Services

+7%

Knowledge of how to access local support services



Access to Financial Services

+6%

Access to local financial support services

Life Skills



Communication Skills

+7%

Finding it easy to share thoughts and feelings with others



Self-Respect

+6%

Feeling one's opinions are heard and respected*



Relationship Skills

+5%

Ability to maintain positive relationships*

Analysis compared MoWA customers with volunteer visits of two minutes or less (n=544) to MoWA customers with volunteer visits of two minutes or more (n=409). All shifts reported are statistically significant to level p<0.001, meaning there is a 99% confidence level that the results are not due to chance or error.

**Denotes a predictor of wellbeing, a factor that has a strong correlation with overall wellbeing. See page 24 for details.*



Overall Wellbeing Stays Consistent Over Time Receiving Services

Regardless of whether someone has just begun receiving services or whether they have been receiving them for several years, overall wellbeing was found to be consistent among MoWA customers with respect to time receiving services. It should be noted that for this pilot measurement, baseline data consisted of responses from customers who had already been receiving MoWA services for at least one month, so the wellbeing of these customers may have already begun to improve thanks to the initial benefits of MoWA service enrolment. Future measurement with baseline data from customers before they begin receiving services may alter these initial findings.

Despite this, there were significant shifts for long term MoWA customers across two key outcomes - holistic wellness and nourishment. Below are the top six factors that had the largest shifts as reported by MoWA customers of over a year:



Physical Health

+17%

Having good health overall*



Meal Enjoyment

+6%

Looking forward to enjoying one's meals each day



Purpose

+7%

Having a sense of purpose in life*



Independent Lifestyle

+7%

Belief in one's ability to live an independent life*



Feelings of Anger

+6%

Reduction in feeling angry or frustrated in the past month



Feelings of Happiness

+5%

Increase in feeling happy in the past month*

"I appreciate MoWA very much. It has helped me and my family to live as independently as possible."

- Meals on Wheels Customer

Average overall wellbeing of new MoWA customers (3.55) and those who have been receiving services for a year or more (3.62) was found to be statistically insignificant ($p>0.1$). Outcomes analysis compared new MoWA customers ($n=86$) to long term customers ($n=767$). All shifts reported are statistically significant to level $p<0.05$, meaning there is a 95% confidence level that the results are not due to chance or error.

*Denotes a predictor of wellbeing, a factor that has a strong correlation with overall wellbeing. See page 24 for details.



People Living Alone Receive Greater Benefit

Analysis was performed to understand if a person's living arrangement had an impact on their overall wellbeing. The measurement found no significant difference in wellbeing between customers who live on their own and those who live with others.

However, despite the consistency of overall wellbeing, there were more statistically significant shifts between customers who live alone who had just begun their service and those who had been receiving meals for a year or more than for customers than for those who live with family or other people. This suggests that the service has a greater impact on those who live alone than those who live with others. This is important to note considering that the vast majority of MoWA customers live alone (65%).

One of MoWA's stated aims is to support elderly Australians to be able to live independently and stay in their homes for longer. This finding confirms they are making a solid contribution in this area.

Below are some of the key factors that saw greater shifts for people living alone.



Purpose
+12%

Single households

After receiving MoWA services for at least a year customers feel 12% more like their life has purpose.*



Independent Living
+9%

Single households

For those in a single household, after receiving MoWA services for at least a year customers feel 9% more confident in their ability to live an independent life.*



Meal Enjoyment
+8%

Single households

Customers who have been receiving meals from MoWA for a year or more are looking forward more to enjoying their meals.

"Because I live alone, the **friendship
and service is much appreciated."**

- Meals on Wheels customer

Outcomes analysis compared MoWA customers in single (n=46) and multiperson (n=30) households who began receiving MoWA services no more than three months earlier to single (n=550) and multiperson (n=194) households with at least one year of services. All shifts reported are statistically significant to level p<0.1, meaning there is a 90% confidence level that the results are not due to chance or error.

**Denotes a predictor of wellbeing, a factor that has a strong correlation with overall wellbeing. See page 24 for details.*



Customers in Rural Areas Have Greater Trust in Services and Community

Overall wellbeing was found to be the same among Meals on Wheels® Australia customers living in rural and urban areas. However, there were a range of factors that MoWA customers in rural areas on average reported higher scores than their metro-based peers, particularly in relation to trust in services and community.

Below are the top four factors that Meals on Wheels® Australia customers in rural locations reported stronger scores when compared with urban customers:



Belief in Community Services

+5%

Belief in community services to support one in need



Knowledge of Local Services

+5%

Knowledge of how to access local support services



Community Safety

+4%

Feeling safe in one's community*



Communication Skills

+5%

Finding it easy to share thoughts and feelings with others

"It has been essential to my husband and me... We all know the people who deliver the meals so we can chat; country people are the best."

- Meals on Wheels customer, rural location

The difference in average overall wellbeing of MoWA customers in rural (3.65) and urban (3.6) was found to be statistically insignificant (p>0.1). Outcomes analysis compared MoWA customers in rural locations (n=376) to urban locations (n=638). All shifts reported are statistically significant to level p<0.015 meaning there is a 98.5% confidence level that the results are not due to chance or error.

**Denotes a predictor of wellbeing, a factor that has a strong correlation with overall wellbeing. See page 24 for details.*



Predictors of Wellbeing for Meals on Wheels Customers

In order to assist Meals on Wheels® Australia in having the greatest impact upon the wellbeing of its customers, Huber Social has analysed the wellbeing data of all customer respondents to determine which needs have the strongest positive association with high overall wellbeing. These are called predictors of wellbeing. A positive change in these needs is statistically more likely to accompany an increase in overall wellbeing, as compared to needs which do not have a strong association with wellbeing.

36 factors were measured as part of this pilot, including 27 target outcomes for MoWA and 9 factors outside of the MoWA Impact Thesis that were identified as potentially being important to customer wellbeing. Of the 27 factors measured that related to MoWA's target outcomes for customers, 17 were found to have a moderate or strong relationship with overall wellbeing. This suggests that MoWA's service is well-aligned to the needs of their customers.

The following are the top five factors which all had a strong association with wellbeing:



Holistic Wellness - Enjoyment

Enjoy life and having fun



Holistic Wellness - Purpose

Feeling one's life has purpose



Holistic Wellness - Self-Acceptance

Liking oneself



Access to Relationships - Personal Community

Having a strong community of friends and family around oneself



Sense of Connection - Community Belonging

Feeling part of a community

The full list of predictors of wellbeing can be found in Appendix 4.

When a factor mentioned in the report is a predictor of wellbeing, it will be marked with an asterisk (*). These factors are noteworthy, as they have been identified as having the strongest correlation with the overall wellbeing of MoWA customers and areas to focus on for maximum impact.

^This factor was not part of the MoWA Impact Thesis but was measured to understand if there are any factors outside of MoWA's scope that may also be important to customer wellbeing.



Customers **Appreciate** Meals on Wheels

As well as responding to questions about specific factors relating to the organisation's key outcomes, customers also had the chance to offer open-ended feedback about how Meals on Wheels has improved their wellbeing and what they value most from the service. The responses from customers were overwhelmingly positive and demonstrate that the people MoWA serve truly appreciate the physical and social benefits offered by the MoWA approach:

"By supplying the meals it has help me in my daily living knowing I do not always have to prepare a meal. The people delivering the meals always greet you with a smile, ask how you are and have a chat. They I believe would often fill a void in many peoples lives"

"I have extremely bad rheumatism in my hands and feet, so I can now avoid burns and dropped cutlery and crockery. I am very grateful to MoW and the wonderful thoughtful people who work for them"

"Very good indeed. Food is very good. They respect me and I respect them. A beautiful organisation! Thank you very much. Glad it is still going!!"

"Confidence in their regularity is great. These days I look forward to their visit"

"MoW has had a huge impact on my life. As the carer of my 92 year old husband who has many health issues and is very frail needing much help especially in the mornings, MoW has been a life saver for us"



Building Connection Between Customers and Volunteers Should Be the Priority

The findings paint a clear picture of the needs and opportunities of Meals on Wheels® Australia customers. It is clear that social connection is an area of need for Meals on Wheels® Australia customers, with the data finding a meaningful relationship between the strength of the connection customers have with their volunteers and their wellbeing.

However, it was also found that while many customers are benefiting from their connection with a volunteer, there are still many who feel they don't know their volunteers very well at all. This presents a real opportunity to increase social impact through creating stronger connection.

This provides a clear area of focus for Meals on Wheels® Australia to systematically make the service as effective as possible. Are there choices that can be made in volunteer recruitment to encourage volunteers who want to connect to join the service? Can additional training be offered to volunteers in how to build relationships with customers? Are services prioritising time for interaction between customers and volunteers into their service model?

From a customer perspective, are there ways to proactively identify customers who are at risk of social isolation? Once these customers are identified, are there ways to build the amount of meaningful social contact in their lives?

Understanding what customers and volunteers value in a relationship and why connection is made in some instances, but not others are also potential areas for further research and data collection.





Meals on Wheels Volunteers

Volunteers make up the core of Meals on Wheels® Australia's workforce. In addition to Meals on Wheels® Australia's impact on customer wellbeing, the organisation wanted to understand the impact on volunteer wellbeing.

The following section explores the wellbeing of Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers and how volunteer service length and time commitment may relate to it.





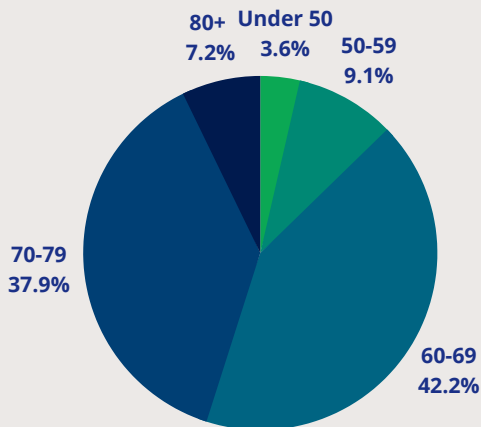
Meals on Wheels Volunteer Demographics

Across the four pilot sites, 890 responses were collected from volunteers. About two-thirds (69%) of volunteer respondents are female, and the majority (79%) are retired. Just under a quarter (21%) of volunteer respondents report at least some cultural ancestry from outside of Australia.

Age

The average age of MoWA volunteer respondents is 68 years old. Respondent ages ranged from 22 years old to 96 years old.

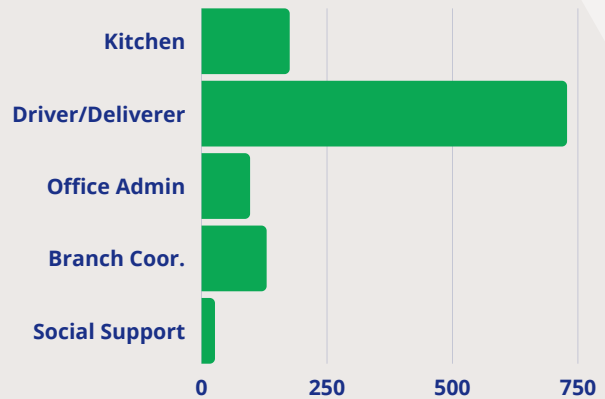
All responses, by age



Volunteer Role

The majority (81%) of respondents are drivers or deliverers. Twenty-six respondents have a role with a social support function.

All responses, by role

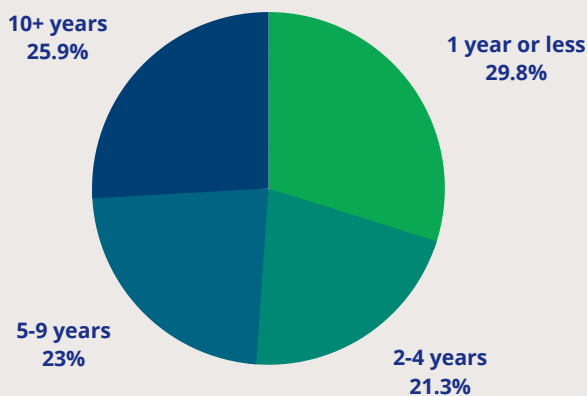


Note: Some volunteers reported having more than one role so there is overlap.

Years of Volunteering

On average, respondents have been volunteering with MoWA for 7.5 years, with the longest being 48 years.

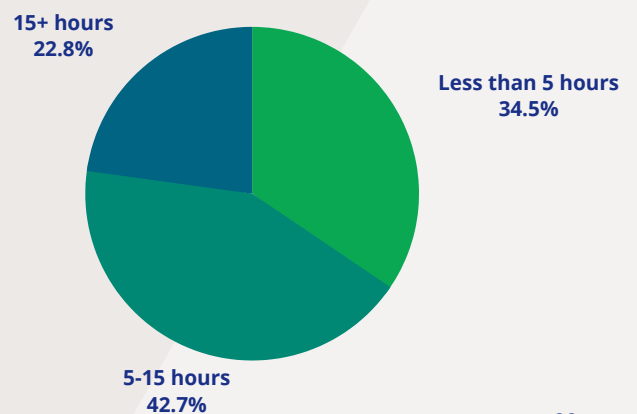
All responses, by years of volunteer service



Time Commitment

The largest group of respondents (43%) spend 5-15 hours per month volunteering with MoWA.

All responses, by time volunteering per month





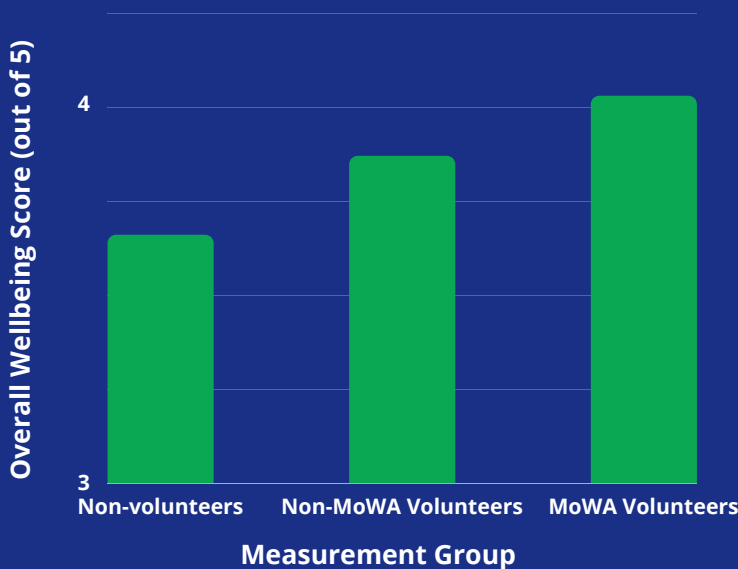
Meals on Wheels Volunteers Have Higher Wellbeing than other Australians

Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers have consistently provided anecdotal evidence of the benefits they find from working with Meals on Wheels. There is now quantitative data to support this qualitative finding.

When compared with a sample of Australians with comparable demographic characteristics, Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers were found to have 10% higher wellbeing. Even when compared to people of a similar age group who volunteered with a different organisation, Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers still report having 4% higher overall wellbeing.

These findings speak not just to the powerful benefits of volunteering in older age, but to the quality of the experience that Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers have during their time with the organisation.

Overall Wellbeing Score, by Volunteer Type



Wellbeing analysis compared MoWA volunteers (n=890), volunteers with another organisation (n=260), and non-volunteers (n=41). Data sampled from Huber Social Wellbeing Database can be considered comparable with respect to age only (all responses included >51 years old); excludes location and other key demographics. All shifts reported are statistically significant to level $p < 0.001$, meaning there is a 99% confidence level that the results are not due to chance or error.



Years of Meals on Wheels Service and Volunteer Wellbeing

Overall wellbeing and years spent volunteering with Meals on Wheels® Australia have a unique relationship, but the age of volunteers plays a key role.

The measurement project found that overall wellbeing and years of volunteer service have a significant and positive relationship, meaning that as years of volunteer service increases, overall wellbeing is likely to do so as well. Volunteers who have been with Meals on Wheels® Australia for six years or more were found to have 6% higher wellbeing than those who have been volunteering for three months or less.

However, when the age of the volunteer is held constant, that relationship disappears. The data also shows that age of volunteer is positively correlated with overall wellbeing. This therefore suggests that volunteers who have spent more time working with Meals on Wheels® Australia are more likely to have higher wellbeing, but this may be due to the fact that they are also more likely to be older than new volunteers.

Time in program analysis compared MoWA volunteers with three months or less of service experience (n=52) and those with six years or more experience (n=383). Overall wellbeing was found to be significantly different ($p < 0.05$) by time in program, but insignificant when holding age constant ($p > 0.1$). There was no significant correlation between years of service and overall wellbeing ($p > 0.1$).





Volunteering with Meals on Wheels Builds a Sense of Belonging

Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers who have been volunteering for at least six years reported significantly higher scores across factors related to their sense of belonging and connection. These results suggest that Meals on Wheels® Australia is successful at creating a community amongst their volunteers.

The following factors related to belonging are those with the largest shifts between Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers who have just started and those who have volunteered for six years or more:



Community Connection

+12%

Feeling part of a community



Acceptance

+10%

Feeling accepted by your community*



Personal Community

+8%

Having a strong community of family and friends*



Words of Affirmation

+8%

Having someone that encourages and praises you*

"It has been a wonderful way to connect with other people, both [with] the lady I volunteer with and the people we deliver to."

- Meals on Wheels Volunteer, Driver/Deliverer

Analysis compared MoWA volunteers who began no more than three months earlier (n= 52) to MoWSA volunteers who had been volunteering for five years or more (n=383). All shifts reported are statistically significant to level p<0.05, meaning there is a 95% confidence level that the results are not due to chance or error.

**Denotes a predictor of wellbeing, a factor that has a strong correlation with overall wellbeing. See page 34 for details.*



"I get a **sense of wellbeing** and enjoyment by helping others and feel that I am giving a little back to the **community** while making new **friends**"

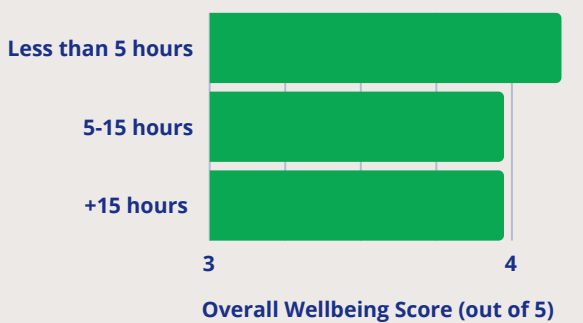
- Meals on Wheels Volunteer,
Driver/Deliverer



Lower Time Commitment Associated with Higher Wellbeing

For MoWA volunteers, the amount of time spent volunteering each month was found to be an indicator of overall wellbeing status. Volunteers who spend less than five hours a month working with MoWA are more likely to have higher overall wellbeing. However it should be noted that at 3.97 out of five, the scores for people who volunteer more than five hours a month are not especially low.

Overall Wellbeing, by Volunteer Hours per Month



MoWA may wish to investigate further if there are specific factors that are influencing this result. One consideration is that this group consists overwhelmingly of drivers who, as is shown below, tend to have slightly higher wellbeing.

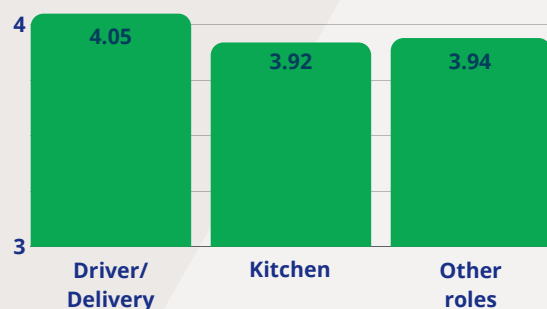
Analysis compared MoWA volunteers who volunteer five hours or less (n= 305), 5-15 hours (n=378), and more than 15 hours per month (n=202). All scores reported are statistically significant to level p<0.01, meaning there is a 99% confidence level that the results are not due to chance or error.

Wellbeing is Highest Among Drivers and Deliverers

Across the volunteer roles, MoWA Drivers and Deliverers were found to have higher wellbeing (+3%) compared to other roles. Kitchen staff were found to have slightly lower wellbeing (-3%) while the lowest scores were from those who indicated they volunteer in a social support capacity (-8%) through various programs such as My W.I.S.E Choice in South Australia. However, with only 26 responses, this was a very small group within the sample and requires further investigation. All these findings were statistically significant to a 90% confidence level. Office administrators and branch coordinators were not found to have different overall wellbeing from other groups.

While it again it is worth noting that even the 'lower' scores are not particularly low, this may be an area Meals on Wheels would like to investigate further to understand what is driving this correlation. Given the finding for customers that knowing their volunteer(s) better is associated with higher wellbeing, it is possible that positive contact with customers contributes to this result among drivers. This is an area that future measurement could focus.

Overall Wellbeing, by Volunteer Role





Predictors of Wellbeing for Meals on Wheels Volunteers

In addition to predictors of wellbeing for Meals on Wheels® Australia customers, Huber Social performed statistical analysis to identify which factors measured have a significant relationship with overall wellbeing of Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers. A positive change in these factors is statistically more likely to accompany an increase in overall wellbeing, as compared to factors which do not have a strong association with wellbeing.

The following are the top five factors which have the strongest association with wellbeing:



Holistic Wellness - Enjoyment

Enjoy life and having fun



Holistic Wellness - Self-Love

Liking oneself



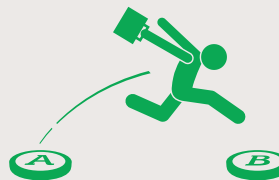
Holistic Wellness - Meaning

Feeling one's life has meaning



Holistic Wellness - Loneliness

Feelings of loneliness or isolation



Life Skills - Job Skills

Having the right skills to secure the job you want[^]

Therefore, a volunteer's overall wellbeing is likely to be higher if they have fun, like themselves, don't feel lonely and have meaning in their life.

When a factor mentioned in the report is a predictor of wellbeing, it will be marked with an asterisk (*). These factors are noteworthy, as they have been identified as having the strongest correlation with the overall wellbeing of Meals on Wheels® Australia volunteers and areas to focus on for maximum impact.

The full list of predictors of wellbeing can be found in Appendix 4 on page 44.

[^] This factor was only measured with people who indicated they were still working.



Wellbeing Varies Across Key Volunteer Characteristics

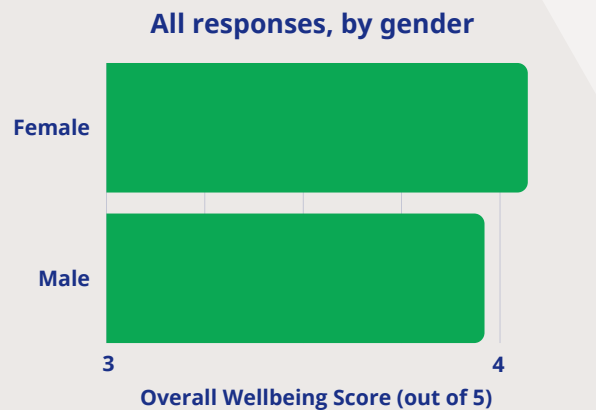
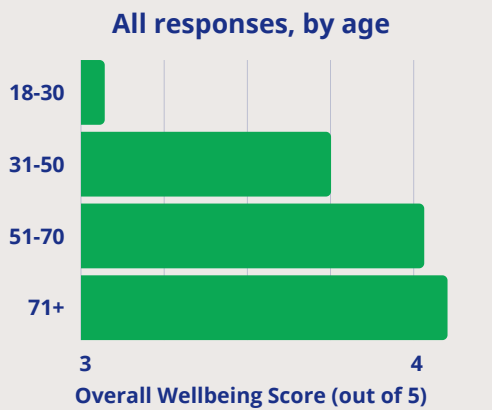
Across certain demographic factors for volunteers, key differences in wellbeing were also detected.* This reinforces the range of wellbeing amongst MoWA volunteers, and highlights the fact that not all MoWA volunteers have begun their wellbeing journey from the same starting point.

Age

Similar to MoWA customers, the project found that overall wellbeing of volunteers has a positive correlation with age of volunteers.

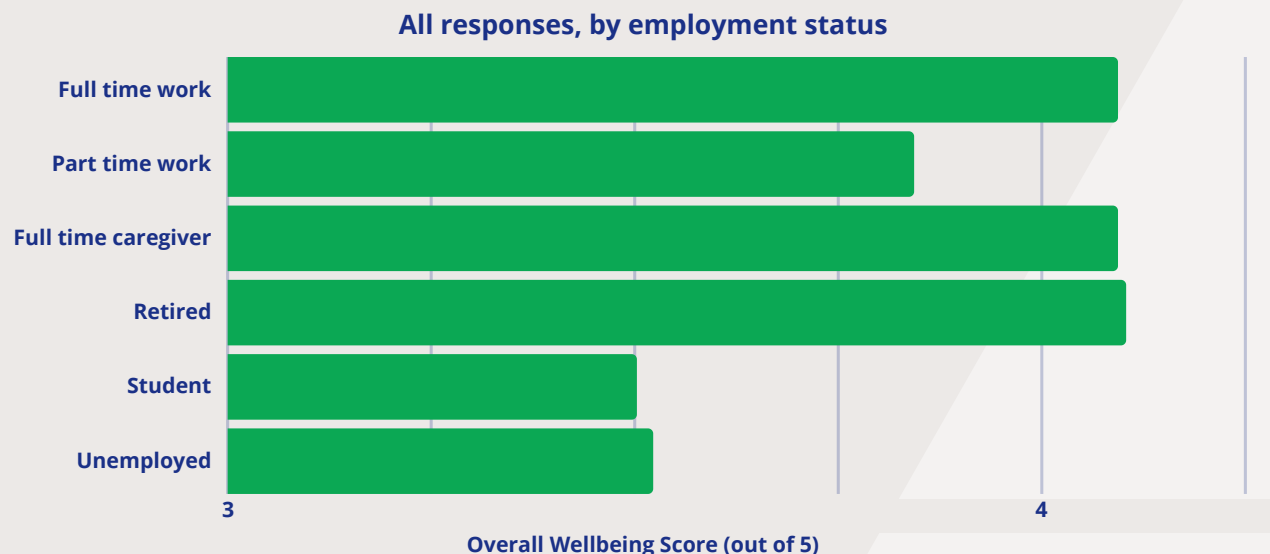
Gender

Female volunteers were found to have slightly (3%) higher overall wellbeing than male volunteers.



Employment Status

As compared to all other volunteers, retired volunteers were found to have significantly high wellbeing; unemployed volunteers were found to have significantly low wellbeing.



*Differences in all wellbeing scores reported are statistically significant (p<0.06).



Volunteers **Appreciate** Meals on Wheels

As well as responding to questions about specific factors relating to the organisation's target outcomes, volunteers also had the chance to provide open-ended feedback about how Meals on Wheels® Australia has had an impact on their wellbeing. The responses from volunteers were overwhelmingly positive and demonstrate that the people MoWA works with really appreciate the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in MoWA customers' lives:

"It's important to give back to the community and volunteering for MoW is so rewarding. My branch is amazing and our volunteers have a strong commitment to our customers. Love meeting our wonderful customers and supporting them in their homes"

I absolutely love working in the kitchen, interacting with other volunteers and knowing that I am contributing to the wellbeing of the customers"

"I greatly enjoy interacting with MoW customers - sometimes we might be the only people they speak to in a day, so it's nice to be a friendly face for them. I'm lucky that I'm also partnered with another volunteer who shares similar values so this makes it easy and comfortable"

"MoW has introduced me to new people, new cultures and has given me some hope for improving my situation through gaining some self-esteem."





Opportunities for Further Investigation: The Relationship Between Customers and Volunteers

This pilot measurement found that the quality of the relationship between customers and their volunteers is key to the social impact of Meals on Wheels® Australia. Understanding what customers and volunteers value in a relationship and why connection is made in some instances, but not others are therefore opportunities for further research and data collection.

It is likely to yield insights not only into how to improve the wellbeing of customers but also that of volunteers. It is possible that volunteers who build strong relationships with customers have higher wellbeing, which could be the reason driver/deliverers have stronger wellbeing than other roles. The goal could be to create a virtuous cycle where volunteers improve customer wellbeing which in turn improves their own wellbeing.

Based on the predictors of wellbeing, it appears this may well be possible, with significant overlap in the key factors that are associated with high wellbeing for customers and volunteers. Two strong predictors are directly shared with others mirroring similar priorities.

Shared Predictors of Wellbeing



**Holistic Wellness -
Enjoyment**
Enjoy life and having fun



**Holistic Wellness -
Self-Love**
Liking oneself

Mirrored Predictors of Wellbeing

Customers



**Holistic Wellness -
Purpose**
Feeling one's life has purpose



**Sense of Connection -
Community Belonging**
Feeling part of a community

Volunteers



**Holistic Wellness -
Meaning**
Feeling one's life has meaning



**Holistic Wellness -
Loneliness**
Feelings of loneliness or isolation

Finding the areas of service where the needs of customers and volunteers overlap could unlock even greater benefit for all those who are part of Meals on Wheels. Inclusion of research into these aspects into the measurement program in the future could therefore help identify enhancements across the whole service delivery model - from staff selection, recruitment, development and management, to scheduling and planning, to customer connection and volunteer matching, to relationships with other complementary in-home service providers, and so on.



Get in Touch



Meals on Wheels® Australia

enquiries@mealsonwheels.org.au
www.mealsonwheels.org.au



Huber Social

info@hubersocial.com.au
www.hubersocial.com.au





Appendix

1. The Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework
2. Data Transparency Page
3. Measurement Considerations
4. Predictors of Wellbeing
5. Quality of relationship shifts



1. Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework

To be able to fulfil their potential and achieve wellbeing, each individual needs to have the capability and the opportunity to do so. Everyone has different needs within these categories depending on their context.

When it comes to measuring the social impact of a service, Huber Social measures the 'shift' the service creates in terms of wellbeing and the specific program outcomes achieved to create this. Results are then consolidated at a sector, community and global level.

Longitudinal measurement monitors effectiveness of programs to meet these needs; ensuring resources are directed to have the greatest impact. The vision is a wellbeing measurement system that delivers us the whole picture, to put each of us in the best position to achieve wellbeing and leave no one behind.

The goal for each of us is the same; wellbeing. The part that differs are our individual needs.

The Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework

IMPACT

Wellbeing

To be in the best position to fulfil your potential and live a life of value. The overall goal for all services working with people.

OUTCOMES

Through building Capability

- Resilience
- Life skills
- Wellness - mental, physical and spiritual

OUTCOMES

and providing Opportunity

- Resources
- Self-development
- Societal structures
- Relationships



2. Data Transparency Page

To support understanding of the findings and informed decision-making, Huber Social includes a data transparency page for every measurement project. This makes clear the rigour of evidence and analysis across every stage of the data lifecycle for the project.



Phase	Questions on the Treatment of the Data	Points allocated	Yes or No	
Design	Everyone in the intervention included in the measurement	2	N	
	OR Survey sample population designed to be representative of group	1	Y	
	SAMPLE Sample description: <i>1019 survey responses were collected from MoWA clients made up of 744 from South Australia, 122 from South Brisbane (QLD), 31 from Marlin Coast (QLD) and 122 from Tweed (NSW). In South Brisbane, Marlin Coast and Tweed, all clients were included in the measurement.</i> <i>In South Australia, who had a much larger client population, a sample of 3207 clients were mailed the survey. They were selected based on one of the core measurement categories of 'Time in Program.' This included 824 new clients (receiving meals for less than three months), and 2382 long stay clients (receiving meals for one year or more). Demographic factors were consistent to broader MoWSA population.</i>	N/A	N/A	
	BASELINE 890 survey responses were collected from volunteers made up of 792 from South Australia, 29 from South Brisbane (QLD), 20 from Marlin Coast (QLD) and 49 from Tweed (NSW). All MoWA volunteers with email addresses were sent the survey via email.			
	Control group (independent of the intervention)	3	N	
	Group baseline measured (pre-intervention)	2	N	
Data Collection	BASELINE Baseline inferred from time in intervention (e.g. 1 vs. 3 years)	1	Y	
	EXCLUSIONS Details of people specifically excluded from the measurement: N/A	N/A	N/A	
	DISTRIBUTION	Online surveys		Y
		OR hardcopy surveys		Y
		Data collection supervised by Huber Social consultant	1	N
	DATA SOURCES	Translation or guidance provided	N/A	N/A
Data mining of other sources		1	Y	
Data included from previous years/measurements		1	N	
Cleaning	CLEANING Details of additional data sources: <i>To compare overall wellbeing scores of MoWA volunteers, data was sampled from two different measurement groups from the Huber Social Wellbeing Database.</i>			
	Partial responses removed or no partial responses	1	Y	
Analysis	CLEANING Details of any responses removed: <i>Partial responses removed if missing >50% Satisfaction with Life Scale data and/or >50% of outcomes data.</i>	N/A	N/A	
	SHIFT MEASUREMENT	Calculated on time in intervention		Y
		Calculated on group average	1	Y
		Calculated based on individual scores	2	N
TEST APPLIED	Basic analysis		Y	
	Statistical Correlation Test	2	Y	
	Multiple Regression or Lasso Regression Test	3	Y	
Reporting	REPORTING Client published Outcomes Report (prove)	1	N	
	Client received Social Performance Report (improve)	2	Y	
	Client published full Social Impact Report	3	Y	
RIGOUR SCORE: LOW: 1-9; MED 10-14; HIGH 15-19		MED	14	



3. Pilot Measurement Considerations

To show the social impact of Meals on Wheels® Australia services, the project used an experimental design based on assessing self-reported changes in customers and volunteers with respect to key service outcomes, comparing data from when a customer or volunteer begins their time with Meals on Wheels Australia and after they have been exposed to the program for a specific period of time.

In the future, customers and volunteers will ideally complete their baseline survey before enrolment with the service, and then complete regular wellbeing check ins for the years that follow. This will enable MoWA to track individual customer and volunteer progress to better understand any fluctuations in their overall wellbeing.

For the pilot measurement however, rather than waiting multiple years for customers and volunteers to progress through MoWA involvement, measurement has been undertaken based on a 'length of time exposed' analysis to give an initial indication of the organisation's impact. Customers and volunteers who have been with MoWA for three months or less were considered as the baseline measurement; results from the baseline groups were compared to customers and volunteers who have been with MoWA for longer periods of time to determine impact.

While offering initial insights into the impact of the organisation, there are some limitations to this approach.

Indicative baseline

In order to see the full impact of an organisation's work, ideally a pre-service baseline should be captured in measurement, that is, the 'before' surveys should ideally be completed before customers and volunteers begin with MoWA. In this case, as some customers and volunteers in the baseline group have already been engaged with MoWA services for up to three months, it's possible that key outcomes for have already been affected beyond their pre-program' baseline. Huber Social recognises this limitation in its approach and will be able to capture a more accurate baseline in future measurements.

SA Sampling

In South Australia, sampling of MoWA customers was targeted to customers who have been receiving three months or less (baseline) and one year or more (shift). Exclusion of customers' data who have been receiving meals between three months and a year may have an effect on the project's findings; future measurements will include a representative sample of customer data across all key dimensions of service including years of services received.

For some dimensions of the program, sample sizes were under collected or the category itself represents a small proportion of the total population (i.e. volunteers in the W.I.S.E. Program). In these instances, the statistical results may not be fully representative of the population measured, and findings should be considered indicative at this stage. Additional data collection and further analysis can strengthen the insights gathered for these smaller population.



4. Predictors of Wellbeing

In order to inform how to best support Meals on Wheels® Australia customers and volunteers, regression and correlation analyses were performed to identify which of all outcomes measured have a significant relationship with overall wellbeing; these are known as predictors of wellbeing.

The predictors of wellbeing for both Meals on Wheels® Australia customers and volunteers can be found listed in the following tables in order of statistical strength. The stronger the relationship between an outcome and overall wellbeing, the more confidence there is that a change in the outcome will correspond with a change in wellbeing.

Relationship strength is based on both the statistical significance (p-value) and beta coefficient value (r^2). All predictors listed are statistically significant to $p < 0.001$ (unless otherwise noted), meaning there is 99% confidence that the relationship identified between the predictive outcome and wellbeing is true, rather than produced due to sampling error or chance. The beta coefficient describes how closely each outcome and wellbeing are likely to move together related to each other.

For the purposes of this project, a strong relationship between an outcome and overall wellbeing is defined as any outcome with a beta coefficient value greater than 0.5; a moderate relationship is between 0.499 and 0.4.

The following pages present all predictors of wellbeing that have a strong or moderate significant relationship with overall wellbeing, for both Meals on Wheels® Australia customers and volunteers.

Table 1. Predictors of Wellbeing for Meals on Wheels Customers

Predictors of Wellbeing	Beta coefficient	P-value
Enjoyment	0.594	$p < 0.01$
Sense of purpose	0.544	$p < 0.01$
Selflove	0.526	$p < 0.01$
Personal community	0.516	$p < 0.01$
Community belonging	0.51	$p < 0.01$
Sense of agency	0.486	$p < 0.01$
Physical health	0.485	$p < 0.01$
Community acceptance	0.478	$p < 0.01$
Happiness	0.477	$p < 0.01$
Access to relationships that offer quality time	0.47	$p < 0.01$
Relationship skills	0.455	$p < 0.01$
Being heard and respected by others	0.455	$p < 0.01$
Independence	0.441	$p < 0.01$
Community safety	0.43	$p < 0.01$
Hope	0.428	$p < 0.01$
Selfbelief	0.421	$p < 0.01$
Access to relationships that offer words of support	0.407	$p < 0.01$
Health Management	0.402	$p < 0.01$
Safe home	0.4	$p < 0.01$



4. Predictors of Wellbeing

Table 2. Predictors of Wellbeing for MoWSA Volunteers

Predictors of Wellbeing	Beta coefficient	P-value
Enjoyment	0.603	p < 0.01
Job skillset	0.552	p < 0.01
Sense of meaning	0.549	p < 0.01
Reduced loneliness and isolation	0.505	p < 0.01
Self-love	0.504	p < 0.01
Personal community	0.486	p < 0.01
Relationship skills	0.485	p < 0.01
Access to relationships that offer quality time	0.467	p < 0.01
Hope	0.465	p < 0.01
Being heard and respected by others	0.46	p < 0.01
Access to relationships that offer words of support	0.455	p < 0.01
Self-expression	0.443	p < 0.01
Financial security	0.434	p < 0.01
Access to relationships that offer acts of giving	0.433	p < 0.01
Community acceptance	0.432	p < 0.01
Physical health	0.419	p < 0.01
Communication skills	0.413	p < 0.01
Daily purpose	0.41	p < 0.01





5. Quality of Relationship Shifts

Table 1. Full list of statistically significant shifts for customers who know their volunteer very well when compared to those who do not know their volunteer at all

Outcome	Shift % when clients know volunteer very well	P-value
Community belonging	22%	p < 0.01
Communication skills	21%	p < 0.01
Sense of purpose	21%	p < 0.01
Community acceptance	20%	p < 0.01
Trust in services	19%	p < 0.01
Hope	18%	p < 0.01
Knowledge of how to access key social services	18%	p < 0.01
Enjoyment	17%	p < 0.01
Relationship skills	17%	p < 0.01
Personal community	17%	p < 0.01
Physical health	16%	p < 0.01
Access to relationships that provide words of support	15%	p < 0.01
Being heard and respected by others	15%	p < 0.01
Access to financial support services	15%	p < 0.01
Selflove	15%	p < 0.01
Confidence in ability to live independently	14%	p < 0.01
Selfbelief	14%	p < 0.01
Attitude towards food	13%	p < 0.01
Interests and passions	12%	p < 0.01
Feelings of anger	12%	p < 0.01
Health management	12%	p < 0.01
Selfacceptance	12%	p < 0.01
Access to different types of relationships	12%	p < 0.03
Sense of agency	12%	p < 0.01
Safe community	11%	p < 0.01
Feelings of happiness	11%	p < 0.01
Access to relationships that offer acts of giving	11%	p < 0.05
Access to affordable housing	11%	p < 0.01
Coping	10%	p < 0.01
Feelings of anxiety	10%	p < 0.05
Financial security	10%	p < 0.01
Access to transport	8%	p < 0.03
Quality of food	8%	p < 0.01
Access to a safe home	8%	p < 0.01
Access to relationships that offer quality time	7%	p < 0.05
Access to adequate nutrition	5%	p < 0.01

