



# BUCKETTS WAY Neighbourhood Group Inc.

May 2026 Newsletter



Nicole, Caroline, Anne-Marie, Shiree, Tia, Chantal, Dale, Anna & Christine.

## DOORS OPEN TO 29 DENISON STREET

Good things take time, and it has been a while in the making, but we have proudly opened the doors to our second premises at 29 Denison Street.

This new office has been purpose-designed for our Ageing and Disability Services team, creating a welcoming and dedicated space to better support our community. For a face-to-face chat with Tia, Christine, Sarah, Anne-Marie or Leanne you can now go to 29 Denison Street.

Our other services (including hardship assistance, Meals on Wheels, the community pantry and transport services) will continue to operate from our existing location at 88 King Street.

Both 88 King Street and 29 Denison Street can accept cash or EFTPOS payments, and both offices share the same phone number: 6558 2454.

We're excited about this next chapter. Stay tuned for details about our official launch and open day in July!

## VACCINATION TIME FOR THE BWNG TEAM

BWNG team members recently took part in a workplace vaccination day, reinforcing our commitment to health, safety, and wellbeing across our organisation and for our participants.



Jaeman & Support Worker Morgan

We were pleased to welcome Jaeman from Revive Pharmacy Gloucester, who attended our office to administer both COVID-19 and Influenza vaccinations.

We believe vaccination plays an important role in reducing the spread of illness, protecting vulnerable community members and ensuring we can continue to deliver essential services with minimal disruption.

We thank Jaeman and Revive Pharmacy Gloucester for their time and support.

## TRANSITIONAL AGED CARE PROGRAM

If you are over 65 and have been admitted to a public hospital, before you are discharged make sure you ask about the Transitional Aged Care Program (TACP).

Through Hunter New England Local Health District

(HNELHD) this is a holistic home-based therapy and nursing program to support you in your home for up to 12 weeks after you are discharged from hospital.

The program is designed to help people over the age of 65 years, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 50 years, to regain their functionality at home after a hospital admission.

The program also works to limit your entry into residential aged care following an admission to hospital.

For more information visit

[www.health.gov.au/our-work/transition-care-program](http://www.health.gov.au/our-work/transition-care-program)



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Des McClure, Dave Abalos & Ian Shaw of Lodge 44 with BWNG team members Anna, Jeanette, Caroline, Sharon, Anne-Marie, Georgine, Christine, Nicole, Kylie & Amber.



Anna, Sharon, Nicole and Gail.

## TRIVIA NIGHT: GLOUCESTER MASONS COMMENCE FUNDRAISING

On Saturday 16 May, several BWNG team members proudly represented our organisation at a trivia night hosted by Lodge 44 Masons, at Gloucester Country Club.

The event marked the beginning of an exciting fundraising journey for a very important project — the development of a commercial kitchen in the lower level of 88 King Street, which will ensure the delivery of Meals on Wheels in our community.

The evening brought together 131 attendees for a lively trivia competition and charity auction. Thanks to the incredible support of everyone involved, including many local businesses who contributed to the prize pool of the charity auction. The event raised an impressive \$6,135 on the night alone.

In an unexpected and deeply appreciated gesture, the Masons and District 44 went a step further, presenting BWNG with a generous \$10,000 donation to help kickstart the project.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Masons of Gloucester, as well as everyone who attended the trivia night.

This remarkable show of support highlights the strength of our community and brings us one step closer to our goal of building a purpose build kitchen that will allow us to provide on Meals on Wheels safely and efficiently.

We look forward to sharing more updates as the project progresses!

## BEAUTIFUL DONATION FROM MID COAST COMMUNITY QUILTERS

BWNG was recently the grateful recipient of a beautiful donation of handmade quilts from the MidCoast Community Quilters. These quilts, each thoughtfully crafted with care and attention, will be gifted to a number of our clients, bringing warmth, comfort, and a personal touch that only handmade items can provide.

The MidCoast Community Quilters are a dedicated group of women who meet regularly at Nabiac to create quilts for a range of worthy causes. Their generosity has supported organisations such as Manning Base Hospital, and we are honoured to now be among the recipients of their incredible work.

This connection came about when Sharon Osborne kindly approached Gail Ellis to ask whether BWNG would be interested in receiving some quilts for our community members. We are grateful to Sharon for thinking of us and pleased to be able to share these special gifts.

We extend our sincere thanks to the talented and generous members of the MidCoast Community Quilters. Your kindness means a lot, and your quilts will no doubt be treasured by those who receive them.





It's not something everyone feels comfortable thinking about or discussing, but planning for end-of-life care is an important part of ensuring people are supported with dignity, compassion and respect. Having these conversations early can help individuals and their families feel more prepared, understand their options, and make choices that reflect what matters most to them.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING

Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) is now a lawful end-of-life option in New South Wales under the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2022*.

Voluntary Assisted Dying is a deeply personal and often complex decision. For some, it provides a sense of control and relief; for others, it raises ethical, cultural or spiritual concerns. The NSW framework aims to respect individual choice while maintaining rigorous safeguards to protect vulnerable people.

At its core, VAD gives eligible adults the choice to seek medical assistance to end their life in a controlled, compassionate and legally safeguarded way. It is intended for people who are experiencing intolerable suffering from an advanced, progressive and incurable illness.

### Who is eligible?

There is strict eligibility criteria. Persons accessing VAD must:

- Be aged 18 years or over, an Australian citizen or permanent resident, and a NSW resident
- Have decision-making capacity
- Be diagnosed with a disease, illness or medical condition that is advanced, progressive and expected to cause death
- Be experiencing suffering that cannot be relieved

The VAD process in NSW is deliberately thorough. Multiple formal requests must be made by the patient and at least two independent medical practitioners must assess eligibility,

### Safeguards and oversight

The legislation includes strong protections to ensure safety and ethical practice. Health practitioners must follow strict protocols, and each case is overseen by the Voluntary Assisted Dying Board NSW. Participation is voluntary for healthcare providers, meaning clinicians can conscientiously object.

There are safeguards to ensure the person understands their decision and alternatives, such as palliative care.

### The role of palliative care

VAD does not replace palliative care. Instead, it sits alongside it as one of several end-of-life options. Many people who explore VAD are also receiving high-quality palliative care, and discussions about comfort, dignity and personal values remain central to decision-making.

For anyone seeking more information, it's recommended to speak with a healthcare provider or consult official NSW Health resources, as the process is carefully regulated and requires professional guidance.

You can find out more about VAD in NSW by:

- visiting the NSW Health Website <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/voluntary-assisted-dying>
- Contacting **NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Care Navigator Service** 1300 802 133
- Speak to your doctor about VAD as part of a broader conversation about end-of-life care.

## THE END OF LIFE PATHWAY EXPLAINED

The End of Life Pathway is a specialised support stream within Support at Home where a medical practitioner has identified that a person may be in the last months of life.

Once a person is assessed as eligible, they can be fast-tracked onto the End of Life Pathway. This allows for:

- **Increased funding and services:** Higher levels of in-home support can be approved quickly for increased care needs.
- **Flexible care delivery:** Services can be adjusted as needs change, including personal care, nursing, equipment, and respite for carers.
- **Coordination with health providers:** Care is often delivered alongside palliative care teams, GPs, and other health professionals.
- **Support for families and carers:** Practical and emotional support is also extended to those caring for the person.

You can find out more About the End-Of-Life Pathway on the NSW Health website by scanning this QR code.





## IPTAAS – REDUCING THE COST OF TRAVEL FOR ESSENTIAL CARE

For many people living in regional and rural areas, accessing specialist medical care often means travelling long distances. The Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme (IPTAAS) is designed to ease this burden by providing financial support to help cover the costs of travel and accommodation when treatment is not available locally.

### What is IPTAAS?

IPTAAS is a NSW Government program that assists eligible patients who need to travel significant distances for specialist medical appointments. This can include visits to specialists, ongoing treatment, or certain diagnostic services that are not accessible within a reasonable distance of home.

### What support is available?

Depending on eligibility, IPTAAS can help with:

- Travel costs (such as fuel, public transport, or air travel in some cases)
- Accommodation expenses for patients and, where appropriate, a support person
- Assistance for frequent or ongoing medical visits

### Why should regional patients use IPTAAS?

Living in a regional area should not mean going without essential healthcare. IPTAAS helps to:

- **Reduce financial pressure** associated with long-distance travel
- **Improve access to specialist care** that may only be available in larger centres
- **Support continuity of treatment**, particularly for people with chronic or complex health conditions
- **Provide assistance for carers**, recognising the important role they play

Despite the clear benefits, many eligible people don't access IPTAAS simply because they are unaware of it or unsure how to apply. Taking advantage of this program can make a significant difference, helping to ensure that cost is not a barrier to receiving the care you need.

If you or someone you support may be eligible, speak with your healthcare provider or visit <https://www.iptaas.health.nsw.gov.au>



Volunteers Priscilla, Cherie and Pam.

## VOLUNTEER WEEK & NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE WEEK

In May we celebrate both Neighbourhood Centre Week (11 – 17 May) and National Volunteer Week (18 – 24 May).

These two observance events recognise the people and organisations who work every day to support, connect and strengthen local communities.

Volunteers are at the heart of many community services, including Meals on Wheels and our transport programs, which would simply not be possible without them.

NSW Neighbourhood Centre Week is also an opportunity to celebrate the important role neighbourhood centres play in creating welcoming, inclusive and resilient communities.

Centres like BWNG provide practical support, social connection and programs that help fill the gaps in services available to communities and are especially valuable in rural areas

This month, we extend a heartfelt thank you to all volunteers, staff and community members who help make our region a stronger and more connected place to live.