

Volunteer along the track

October 2026

A Message from the Team

We are delighted to share some wonderful news with you.

Mallee Track Health and Community Service has been named a finalist in the 2026 Victorian Public Healthcare Awards, with our Community Transport Volunteer Team recognised for its outstanding contribution to our communities.

This recognition is something our entire organisation can be incredibly proud of.

Our volunteers are an integral part of MTHCS and play an extraordinary role in helping people across the Mallee Track access healthcare, essential services and social connection. Across our vast catchment, our 104 volunteers give their time, skills and local knowledge to help ensure that distance and isolation do not become barriers to receiving care.

The impact of our Community Transport Volunteer Team is particularly significant. Our 28 volunteer drivers provide a safe and trusted transport service for people who may otherwise have very limited options. On average, MTHCS completes 119 community transports each month, helping people attend medical appointments, undertake shopping, participate in social activities and access other essential services.

But what makes this service so special goes well beyond kilometres travelled or appointments attended.

Our volunteers provide companionship, reassurance, dignity and connection. A trip to an appointment can also be an opportunity for a conversation, a laugh and the comfort of knowing someone from your community is there to support you. As one of our volunteers so beautifully described, volunteering is about “showing up, listening, and making sure people still feel like themselves.”

This finalist nomination also reflects the work that happens behind the scenes. I would like to acknowledge the staff who coordinate and support our volunteers and who work every day to ensure these services remain safe, responsive and centred around the needs of our communities.

The Victorian Public Healthcare Awards recognise excellence and innovation across Victoria’s public health services. To have the work of our Community Transport Volunteer Team recognised at this level is a tremendous achievement and a wonderful acknowledgement of rural communities looking after one another.

The winners were announced at the Victorian Public Healthcare Awards ceremony in October 2026 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. Although we did not win, we are extremely proud to be recognised as a finalist and grateful to all our volunteers.

Please join me in congratulating our Community Transport Volunteer Team and everyone who supports them.

Regardless of the outcome, being selected as a finalist is already an outstanding achievement. It shines a well-deserved light on the generosity of our volunteers, the strength of our communities and the important work being undertaken every day across Mallee Track Health and Community Service.

Congratulations, and thank you to our wonderful volunteers!!



Volunteer along the track October 2026

Celebrating Our Volunteers

Retiring Volunteer Spotlight

Name: Alan & Lyn Floyd



**Volunteer
Role:** Meals
on Wheels

**Years of
Service:** 22+
years

Thank you
for your
dedication

and the positive impact you have on our clients and community. You will be missed, and we wish you all the very best for the next chapter.

Community Transport Vehicle Update

New Community Transport Vehicle

We are pleased to advise that our Community Transport vehicle has recently been upgraded and is now a **Subaru**.

To ensure everyone is familiar with the vehicle's features, safety equipment, and operating procedures, **all volunteer drivers are asked to call into the office prior to their next transport booking for a brief orientation.**

The orientation will cover:

- Vehicle controls and features
- Safety and accessibility considerations
- Fuel and maintenance procedures
- Accident and incident reporting requirements
- Transport documentation requirements

Thank you for your ongoing support of our Community Transport Program and the valuable service you provide to our clients.

If you have any questions, please contact the Community Services Team.

Safe driving and thank you for making a difference in our community! 



Aged Care Standards Focus

Standard 1 – The Person

Older people have the right to:

- ☒ Be treated with dignity and respect
- ☒ Make their own choices and decisions
- ☒ Feel safe and supported
- ☒ Have their culture, identity, and preferences respected

What this means for volunteers

- Listen actively and respectfully.
- Support client choice wherever possible.
- Promote independence rather than doing tasks for people unnecessarily.
- Maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- Report any concerns to staff promptly.

Volunteer along the track

October 2026



MTHCS Organisational Safety Protocols

The safety and wellbeing of our clients, volunteers, staff, and community members is a priority. Please remember the following organisational safety protocols when undertaking volunteer duties:

☒ **Follow all MTHCS policies and procedures**

☒ **Always wear your volunteer identification**

badge

☒ **Sign in and out if required**

☒ **Maintain client privacy and confidentiality**

☒ **Report all incidents, accidents, hazards, and near misses promptly**

☒ **Never perform tasks outside your volunteer role**

☒ **Support client choice and independence while maintaining safe practices**

☒ **Do not transport clients without authorisation and required documentation**

☒ **Ensure mobile phones are used safely and legally while driving**

☒ **Follow infection prevention and hand hygiene practices**

☒ **Participate in required training and safety updates**

☒ **Seek guidance from staff whenever you are unsure**

If Something Doesn't Feel Right

If you witness or become aware of:

- A safety concern
- Client distress or wellbeing concerns
- Elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation
- Unsafe environments
- Vehicle concerns or damage

Please contact your coordinator in that area as soon as possible.

Remember

Stop. Think. Act Safely. Report.

Everyone has a role in creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for older people, volunteers, staff, and visitors.

 **Safety is everyone's responsibility.**

Delivered Meals Meeting:

A big thank you to all volunteers who attended our recent Delivered Meals catch-up. It was wonderful to hear that recent improvements, including the new meal labelling system and updated run sheets, have made deliveries easier and reduced the potential for mistakes. Volunteers shared how much they enjoy connecting with clients and the positive impact these interactions have on their volunteering experience. A number of practical suggestions were discussed, including introducing soup labels, improving meal packing order, and developing a quick reference guide for client absence and emergency situations. We appreciate the valuable feedback provided and encourage all volunteers to continue sharing ideas and suggestions, as your input helps us continually improve the service for both volunteers and clients. We also extend our sincere thanks for your ongoing dedication and support in delivering such an important community service.

Please be on the lookout for a full version of the meeting minutes which will be sent out in the coming weeks

Volunteer along the track

October 2026



Volunteer Services Monthly Snapshot

This month, our dedicated volunteers continued to make a positive difference across our communities by supporting clients with transport, social connection, and access to essential services.

Monthly Highlights

- 🚗 Transport trips provided: 117
- 🍲 Meals delivered: 714
- ❤️ Volunteer hours contributed: 375
- 🙌 Active volunteers: 96

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers for their ongoing commitment, generosity, and community spirit. Your contribution helps people remain connected, independent, and supported within their local community.

📞 Handy Numbers to Store in Your Phone

If you need support with **delivered meals, community transport, or general volunteer enquiries**, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Contact Us

📞 **Main Office:** 03 50921 111

🚗 **Community Transport Enquiries:** 0419 375 445

🍲 **Delivered Meals Coordinator:** 0407 000 129

👤 **Community Care Team Leader:** 0437 25 6367

✉️ **Email:** volunteer@methcs.vic.gov.au

🕒 **Office Hours:** Monday to Friday 9am to 2.30pm

Thank you for the important role you play in supporting older people in our community. If you're ever unsure or need assistance, we're only a phone call away. 💜