



# MTHCS

Mallee Track Health  
and Community Service

## Volunteering along the track March 2022

Dear Valued Volunteer,

It is wonderful to see you back at Mallee Track Health and Community Services (MTHCS).

It has been longer for some than others to returning to the essential role you all play in supporting the communities we live in. Whether it's been working on the grounds and gardens, delivering essentials, transportation, social or any other volunteer work done for our clients.

On behalf of the MTHCS Board I want to acknowledge and thank you for your dedication to clients, staff members, MTHCS and the wider community.

We have seen exposures of COVID-19 in our child care centres, in aged care, in our homes and in our communities. We are fortunate that these exposures have been minimal thanks to the wonderful work done all.

We know that it is not over yet and understand some of the challenges of the volunteer work you do.

As we enter a new phrase of living with COVID19, it will be interesting to see the new issues that will need to be addressed but no doubt there will be new ways and old ways to keep your vital work going. You are all very valuable to MTHCS and while you were away you were sorely missed.

Once again, thank you and welcome back.

Yours sincerely,

Joy Lynch

Board Chair.

**THANK YOU!**

### Vaccination/Boosters

Booster vaccinations are underway at the medical clinics. Please put your name down if you haven't already and the clinic will be in touch when they have availability – which may be at short notice.

#### New vaccines:

Announcements have been made this past week about Novavax and Moderna Paediatric vaccines becoming available. Our MTHCS medical clinics do not have any plans to offer these vaccines at this stage. Anyone interested in accessing these should get more information from the “point of truth” (the DHHS Covid-19 website)

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/about-covid-19-vaccines> or make inquiries at pharmacies or State-run clinics.

Thank you so much for sending through your COVID-19 vaccination records. This has been a huge effort, and we are grateful to you for what some of you have needed to do to obtain records, especially in the early days.

**Once you have received your booster, please send a copy of your new vaccination status to**

**0437256367 or email**

**[pwisneske@mthcs.vic.gov.au](mailto:pwisneske@mthcs.vic.gov.au) or drop a copy into administration.**



### **Safe Aged Care visits:**

We are doing all we can to reduce the risk of exposures to our vulnerable Aged Care residents, and these measures include visitors wearing of N95 masks and having visits outdoors wherever possible. RAT testing, where deemed necessary, is an additional protection, so please understand if visitors and/or members of their family are asked to undertake a RAT test before they visit. This is for the protection of our residents.

### **Social Support groups resume:**

Social support programs, based in community venues, are returning face to face in an exciting and safe way. Groups will run weekly across the MTHCS catchment area with some implementing new venues and times.

We have a team of experienced staff eager to coordinate activities, social gatherings, and friendly chats.

Group members are asked to have input into the planning of upcoming activities.

If you would like to join a social support group in your area and are needing support to register please contact MTHCS on 50921111 who can assist you on your journey to access supports.

### **Pattinson House Garden**



We have a number of wonderful volunteers at our Aged Care Centre that provide friendship, connection and a beautiful outdoor space for residents and families to enjoy. Recently our volunteers at Pattinson House removed an older grevillea and the older lavender in the rear garden and updated the space. Plans are under way to plant some daffodil's. Our volunteer gardener's spend hours and hours in the garden each week. Their endless work and the beautiful drop of rain has made a perfect outdoor space. Thank you and well done.



**Confidentiality** All staff and volunteers are bound to maintain the confidentiality of information they may have access to in the course of their work such as personal records, personal discussions, discussions with staff of a personal nature, and includes respecting customers rights and privacy. Should a volunteer want to talk to someone about their volunteering role or be concerned about someone they are volunteering with, please discuss your concerns with the Volunteer Coordinator or Service Area Coordinator. MTHCS recognises the need to, at times, talk about things that you may have come across as part of your volunteering role. We welcome this as it will ensure you feel supported and have someone to talk to should something challenge your thoughts.



Please continue to let us know immediately if a client is unwell or there has been some kind of incident/accident. Ph Pennie on 0437256367 or let the service area know. We value the role you play in the care of our clients.

**MTHCS New website:** Our Consumers now have the latest information at their finger-tips on MTHCS health and community services and programs with the recent launch of our brand new, interactive website. Everything from Medical Clinics, Acute and Urgent Care, child care and kinder enrolments, Allied Health services and community services including Neighbourhood Houses, Men's Shed, community transport, delivered meals, podiatry, exercise groups and much more.

We encourage you to use the website and, especially, to click on the Feedback button to let us know what they think about the site. Community input will help us to continuously improve. Your feedback is important.

**Vulnerable person register:**

The vulnerable person register (VPR ) has been developed to store local information about consenting, vulnerable people and is maintained by MTHCS. The VPR is directly accessible to Victoria Police to aid emergency planning and response including possible evacuation.

The Vulnerable Persons Register may be used by Victoria Police and other authorised emergency management organisations for consideration in planning activities when responding to a range of emergencies where there is the capacity and resources to safely provide assistance

What type of event will activate the VPR?

- A fire, storm, flood, heat wave, earthquake, explosion or accident.

If you know someone that may like to be on the vulnerable register please ask them call MTHCS on 50921111.

**Volunteer Drivers:** The MTHCS volunteer team are looking for volunteer drivers to support our community transport program. Volunteer drivers provide an essential link for eligible people to keep in touch with their local community, events, businesses and medical needs.

This service is only possible with the wonderful support of our volunteer drivers. If you have a few hours to spare and would like to become a volunteer driver, please contact us for more information. We will help with your application to become a volunteer and provide first aid training.

This is a great opportunity to join an amazing team, have some fun, meet new people and give back to the community. If you are enthusiastic about helping our community please reach out to Pennie on 0437256367.



MTHCS have re-introduced the transport service to Mildura for eligible clients under strict covid safe guidelines. It is wonderful to be able to provide this wonderful service again.

*Choose Kindness*

## Our Organisational Values

- Accountability - We define our expectations and are accountable for our actions;
- Excellence - We set high standards and continually strive to improve on them;
- Compassion - We treat everyone with care, respect and dignity;
- Teamwork - We work collaboratively and in the spirit of partnership;
- Integrity - We endeavour to do the right thing in all circumstances, even if no-one is watching;
- Transparency - We are open and honest and embrace positive change.



## Mental health program ready for launch

MTHCS are very excited to announce a new mental health program. New staff member, Natarsha Hickey and Renae Bonica, who has previously worked

in a Carer Support role, is taking on the position as Rural Outreach workers. Both Natarsha and Reane will travel throughout the catchment. Appointment of the Rural Outreach Workers ticks off a major first phase of the MTHCS Mental Health program to provide immediate local support to the community towards health and wellbeing. ROWs are not therapists or counsellors - instead they will be available to support people linking with and navigating the specialist support services they need. More details of the program will be announced soon. Watch this space for more details. Congratulations Natarsha and Renae. We can't wait for the program to get underway.

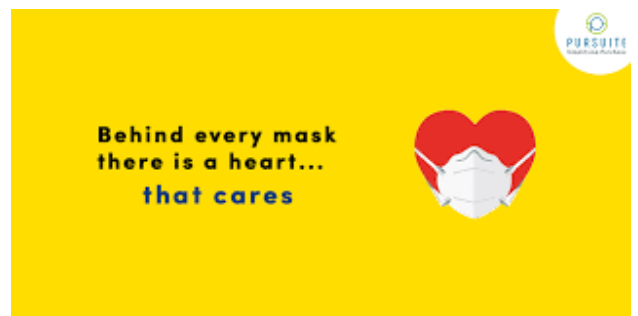
## Do volunteers still need to wear face mask?

### Masks to remain ...for the time being

We're all feeling the strain of continuing to work in masks and we share your hope that we can be in a position to scale back on this in the near future. With covid cases still being seen in the community, Masks will continue to be required in MTHCS facilities for the time being.

The reasons are twofold:

- The removal of mask wearing requirements in the community means this is a transition period – and a riskier time. The mask mandates have not been eased for high risk settings such as aged care and hospitals. Holding the line for another two weeks allows us to watch and see what happens in the community and whether we can safely consider a different approach. We are aware of COVID circulating in respective school communities across the catchment;



**Staff Movements:**

Welcome to team Lauren. Hi, I would like to introduce myself to you all. My name is Lauren and I am the newly appointed Delivered Meals coordinator.



I moved from Ballarat to Ouyen 3 years ago with my husband and two children. We were looking for a bit of change, and an escape from the cold weather.

I have been working for Mallee Track just shy of 3 years, as a food and domestic services assistant, here in the Ouyen hospital kitchen. I absolutely love working in the kitchen and will continue to do so. I'm sure my experience there will help with my new role.

In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my family, listening to music and interior design.



The Mallee Track Debutante Ball committee are seeking additional volunteers this year. The proposed date for the Deb Ball is May 27. Volunteer roles include, setting up the hall with seating, tables and decorations and at the event showing guests to their seats, replenishing drinks on tables and tea and coffee throughout the evening, assisting debutante and partners behind the stage and packing up following the event. Advantages of volunteering at the deb ball include, being part of an enjoyable community event celebrating our young people and the variety of roles available. Some volunteer roles that involve working directly with young people may require a working with children's check, MTHCS can assist with this simple and free process. If you like to be involved in this wonderful community event or know of someone that may be keen please contact  
Kim Darley : 0448 734 699