

Volunteer and Community Connections Newsletter

Spring Edition 2020

Inside this Edition

Page 1

*Message from
Volunteer and
Community
Connections Team*

Pages 2 & 3

*Message from
Chief of Services*

Page 4

*Goodbye Message
from Michelle*

Page 5

*CH&C Training
Requirements,
Auxiliary*

Pages 6—8

*Our Volunteers in
Stage 4 Lockdown*

Pages 9—12

*Messages from
Staff during Stage
4 Restrictions*

Page 13

*Congratulations to
our Volunteers,
Health Promotion*

Page 14

*DHHS Supporting
Social Connection
through
Coronavirus
COVID-19*

Page 15

*R U OK? Day,
Events, Important
Dates*

Message from Volunteer and Community Connections Team

Dear Volunteers,

We hope you are keeping safe and well while under Stage 4 Stay at Home restrictions. It is unfortunate that many of your volunteer roles have been suspended to comply with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) guidelines, to minimise movement of people to slow the spread of the virus.

As we mark the beginning of Spring, we look forward to volunteers resuming when restrictions are relaxed by the DHHS. We will continue to keep you informed in this rapidly changing environment.

As an essential service provider, Connect Health & Community continues to provide services to address community needs in a “COVID safe manner” (details on page 2 of this Newsletter). Our staff are working in squad formation and using personal protection equipment to reduce risk of transmission of the virus and to meet the requirements of the DHHS.

Amanda Murphy is currently working on new COVID-19 projects and will provide an update in the next edition of the Newsletter.

During this lockdown, our volunteers continue to support our local community, by making cloth face masks for vulnerable people, as well as supporting the Bayside Community Emergency Relief initiative, making drawstring bags for children from domestic violence homes. We thank you for your commitment and the tremendous support that you provide to improve the lives of people in our community.

In this Newsletter we have included contributions that you have shared from your experiences in lockdown. Our staff have also shared photos and stories, which we hope you enjoy reading.

In the meantime, we are keen for you to stay engaged and connected with Connect Health & Community and look forward to your feedback on how we can best support and assist you during this lockdown. Please complete the Volunteer Feedback form and send back to our team by email or post, so we can organise various social activities for you to enjoy.

Please take care of yourselves, your families and each other. We look forward to seeing you once pandemic restrictions have eased. Stay safe and well.

Regards

**Volunteer and Community
Connections Team**



Our Values: Respect, Responsiveness, Accountability & Collaboration

Message from Chief of Services

I hope everybody is staying safe and finding ways of remaining connected during these challenging times.

Connect Health is continuing to work hard to ensure that our community, volunteers, clients and staff stay safe. We continue to adapt and adjust our models of service delivery in line the latest Department of Health and Human Services guidelines.

As an essential service, we are expected to deliver our services in line with the Stage 4 restrictions.

This means that we have a robust COVID-19 Worksafe Plan that guides our work. You would find that it is much quieter on site at the moment as we have split the organization into completely separate teams so that we can deliver services safely to the community. Each team works at home for a week, then in the office the following week. This squad formation will remain in place for the duration of the Stage 4 restrictions..... If you are lucky enough, you may even spot a very small Spiderman running around the waiting room, as I did this morning.. what a creative way for a mum to get a small child to wear a mask 😊😊😊

Our Services

We continue to offer face to face services to urgent clients of our paediatric and adult services and urgent and emergency dental clients. If you happen to come to our East Bentleigh site then you will find that you are screened and temperature checked and greeted by our clinical staff dressed in full PPE. All of these strategies are designed to keep both our community and our staff safe.

You will see our vehicles out in the community as our Community Nurses and Occupational Therapists continue to attend urgent home visits when needed to ensure that our clients stay safe at home rather than land in hospital unnecessarily.

You may well continue to see our newly branded bus travelling the streets far and wide offering medical appointments as we utilize these vehicles as rather large taxis to ensure that we meet the social distancing requirements.

We are offering all of our services via telehealth and videoconferencing to increase people's choice of services. This includes some online exercise classes so please let the VaCC team know if you would like to join our classes.

Screening Clinic

Some of our staff are now working over at Sandringham Ambulatory Care Clinic (SACC) on the grounds of Sandringham Hospital as our SACC service was asked to set up a COVID-19 Screening Clinic for our local community.

This **Walk in Clinic** at the rear of Sandringham Hospital's main car park at 193 Bluff Road, Sandringham, operating between 9 am – 5 pm, seven days per week. Please let families and friends know that it is available, if you or your family experience even the mildest of symptoms.

Message from Chief of Services.....continued

COVID-19 testing at Home

If you are unable to get to this clinic, DHHS has introduced a new **Call-To-Test**, home based service for vulnerable people who cannot or have trouble leaving their homes, conducted by a qualified health clinician. Please call the COVID Hotline to find out more about accessing this service.

Hot off the press news

Connect Health is working with local government in the Cities of Glen Eira and Bayside to support local accommodation providers in ensuring that vulnerable communities remain as safe as possible.

Connect Health is working with Alfred Health and Star Health to develop a new program called the Positive COVID Care Pathway. This program is designed to support people in their recovery journey following a positive COVID-19 test.

More news to come regarding these brand new initiatives.

The VaCC team – where are they and when are they in the office?:)

The **Volunteer and Community Connections Team** are working as follows:

- Errol – Monday to Friday, one week at the East Bentleigh site, one week remotely
- Di – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday remotely
- Bill – Monday, Wednesday & Friday, one week at East Bentleigh, one week remotely
- Neera – Monday, Wednesday & Friday remotely
- Kia – Tuesday, Thursday & Friday remotely

Please remember that it is important that all of us follow the public health messages of hand hygiene, 1.5M distancing, wearing a face covering and getting COVID test for the most mild of symptoms and remain at home until your test result is known.

The VaCC team will continue to keep you up to date as changes occur.

Sally Hoffmann



Goodbye Message from Michelle

Farewell to the lovely and very dedicated volunteers at Connect Health & Community (CH&C).

I will miss seeing your friendly faces and watching the amazing work that you all do each and every day.

I have enjoyed my time immensely at CH&C and wish you all the very best in the very valuable work that you all do at CH&C.

You are truly amazing.

Thank you

Regards

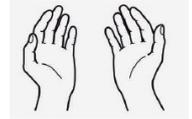
Michelle Whitlock

Volunteer & Community Connections Manager



CH&C Training Requirements

We look forward to volunteers resuming when DHHS restrictions are relaxed. Before recommencing, all volunteers are required to complete the COVID-19 Infection Control and Hand Hygiene training. Thank you to volunteers who have already completed this training. For volunteers who haven't completed the training, or require a PDF version or hard copy, please contact Kia or Neera on 9575 5312.



All volunteer drivers will be required to do training on Personal Protective Equipment before recommencing, and will be advised accordingly by the Volunteer and Community Connections team.



It is important for you to stay engaged and connected in this COVID environment. We look forward to receiving your Volunteer Feedback form, so the VaCC team can organise meaningful social activities for you to participate in and enjoy.

Auxiliary



Hello to all from your Auxiliary.

This year has certainly been one out of the ordinary, with COVID-19 shaping our lives.

Currently the number of positive COVID-19 positive cases seems to have begun to plateau and we hope you are all safe and well.

We look forward to seeing your smiling faces in the not to distant future as we invite you to share in the fun when we resume our FUNd raising.

Throughout the lockdown, members of the Auxiliary have been busy producing items for future stalls as well as sewing 180 re-useable cloth masks to be supplied free to those vulnerable people in the community.

Again, please do join us. All are welcome.

Any questions, please contact Lyn Munday, President, Auxiliary on 9570 5087 or 0411 045 369.



Our Volunteers in Stage 4 Lockdown

Not easy to find many positivities during Stage 4, but one positive for me has been discovering my neighbourhood in Dingley Village. Discovering the wonderful parks, like Braeside Park and well planned Estates in the area like Waterways. Braeside Park has diverse flora and fauna set amongst nearly 1,000 acres. There are plenty of walking/cycling trails, rabbits and diverse bird life amongst the wetlands. People are friendly and greet you behind face masks. James S



I have been keeping busy in Stage 4 restrictions with baking, cooking traditional meals and taking regular walks and catching up on Arabic tv series. I can't wait to be back to Volunteer again. Thanks 😊 Safa



I have been sewing drawstring bags for children of domestic violence. Keeps me busy in the stage 4 lockdown. Tricia



Keeping active in lockdown. The "bike" has given me an additional interest, besides Zoom and Podcasts. It is so comfortable, sometimes I need a cattle prod to wake me up and remind me to keep peddling. Kia & Neera, missing you both and all my Connect "family ". Best Wishes, Eve

Our Volunteers in Stage 4 Lockdown

My one hour Wednesday walk at Spring Road Reserve, Dingley Village, around the corner from my home. Great wetlands where you can hear a variety of birds and frogs. I am also able to walk to Braeside Park, where the wattle is flowering, and there are lots of rainbow lorikeets, and once again the frogs are singing. We have a Wednesday Walkers WhatsApp group, so we can keep in touch and motivate each other. Julie A



Sample of drawstring bags I made for the Bayside Community Emergency Relief initiative – comfort packs for children from Domestic Violence Homes. Sally C

Coronavirus has presented all sorts of challenges for many people. I can't imagine how difficult it must be for single parents with young children; for people who have lost jobs or businesses; for couples stuck in unhappy or violent relationships; for children and young people trying to keep up their education sitting in front of a screen; for relatives unable to visit sick or elderly loved ones across state borders; for travellers trapped in far-away places unable to return home.

I am enormously grateful that there has been very limited impact on my life. I've been retired since 2017 so had no job to lose and no need to join the Centrelink queues. I have a small but comfortable home, books, TV and internet connection, enough food and an adequate supply of toilet paper.

I live alone and miss contact with family and friends most. I miss the voluntary work I used to do. Apart from bus driving for Connect, I was also a volunteer mentor for the L2P program helping young people to become safe drivers. (If you don't know what L2P is — ask Google.)

I've set up a sort of exercise circuit at home — moving between bed, couch, reclining armchair and fridge several times a day. A significant challenge is trying to remember: "Is it this month or next month that I'm due for a shower?" I'm also finding the 8:00pm curfew quite difficult since I used to enjoy a wild nightlife until at least 8:30pm!

Cryptic crosswords help to keep my brain active. A friend, a former English teacher, also enjoys them so we occasionally do one together via Zoom. I've had two articles published in a magazine and have been helping its editor by proofreading other articles.

I'm frustrated and angered by the anti-vaxxers and sovereign citizen idiots who spread all sorts of nonsense and refuse to implement the necessary precautions. I hope that when restrictions are eased we don't find more people becoming complacent and leading us into a third wave of the pandemic.

Jeff L

Our Volunteers in Stage 4 Lockdown

The Pros and Cons of wearing a mask, excluding health reasons

Pros

Saves on lipstick

Hides the wrinkles

We have learnt to speak more clearly

With sunglasses and a hat you can be anonymous

Cons

Elastic tangles in the glasses

Glasses fog up

Earrings get caught in the elastic

Can't see the smiles

Can't tell who is talking to you when they wear sunglasses and a hat

Patricia C

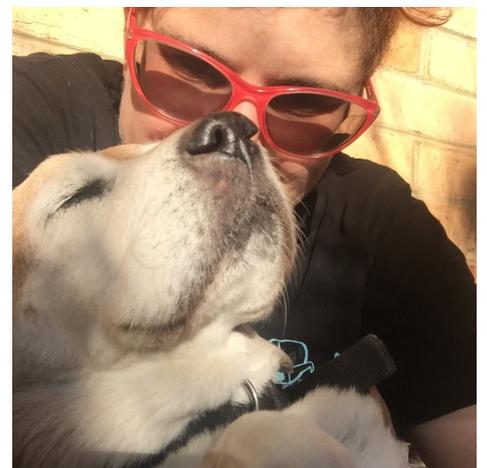
Here are a few things I have been working on during covid. Weird world we live in.

Hope you are all staying safe and healthy.

Tamar

Instagram; [theartoftamar](#)

tamardolev@gmail.com



Messages from Staff during Stage 4 restrictions

At the end of each day, I spend my 1 hour of exercising and practicing mindfulness by photographing my neighbourhood. This has literally helped me reframe my thoughts and view of the world.. which has been particularly helpful some days 🧘🏻 Sally



Office Assistant while working from home! Di



Volunteer and Community Connections

Messages from Staff during Stage 4 restrictions

Dear Volunteers

Thank you beautiful people for being such a special part of Connect Health and making a difference to our communities, great working with you all.

My prayer about you all

SOMEBODY

Someone did a golden deed;

Someone proved a friend in need;

Someone sang a beautiful song;

Someone smiled the whole day long;

Someone thought, "'Tis sweet to live";

Someone said, "I'm glad to give";

Someone fought a valiant fight;

Someone lived to shield the right;

Was that "someone" you?

In my eyes you are all each and every one of you, are that 'someone'.

Love, God's Blessings

Jackie



Here I am at work with my new team. They are Alaskan Malamutes so the big one squeezing under the desk was a bit of effort. Jennine

NOT EVERYTHING
IS CANCELLED

sunshine is not cancelled
spring is not cancelled
love is not cancelled
relationships are not cancelled
reading is not cancelled
naps are not cancelled
devotion is not cancelled
music is not cancelled
dancing is not cancelled
imagination is not cancelled
kindness is not cancelled
conversations are not cancelled
hope is not cancelled



#keeplookingup
SimpleStencils.com

Contributed by Jennine

Messages from Staff during Stage 4 restrictions

I have been busy cooking on my days off during lockdown. Let me know if you would like any of these recipes. Neera



Carrot pudding

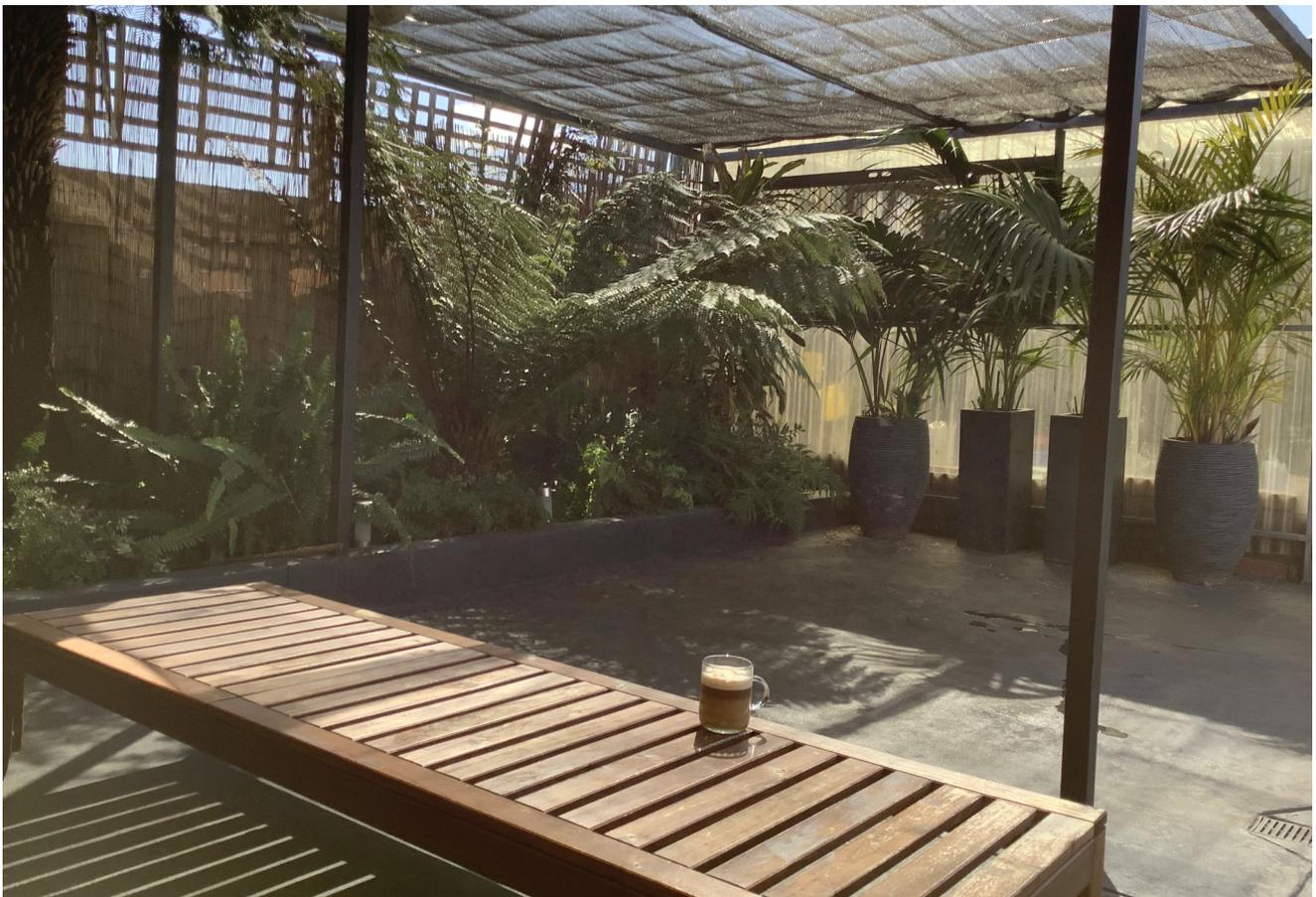


Cheese cake without a crust



Rice pudding

While working remotely, it is important for me to take the time to appreciate the small gifts in life - a sunny Spring day, a beautiful view of the backyard and a delicious strong cup of coffee. Kia



Messages from Staff during Stage 4 restrictions

Cats are not great iso partners when working from home. Kurt (beneath the monitor) thinks sleeping on my paperwork is a great way to while away the day. Courtney is an obnoxious Calico who likes to randomly wander over to the mouse and smack it onto the floor. Stay safe all. Cheers. Ralph



Message from the Physio staff and Allied Health Assistants

Congratulations to our Volunteers

City of Glen Eira Volunteer Recognition Awards — 10 Years' Service

We would like to congratulate the volunteers who were acknowledged by the City of Glen Eira for their 10 Years of Service during National Volunteer Week this year:

Lillith C., Keith G., Patsy H.,
Wendy H., Fay K. & Ana P.



Health Promotion

September 2020 is on the way!

STEPtember is a fun, safe and virtual event that challenges you to get your steps up to 10,000 per day for 28 days in September. Taking the challenge is a great way to boost your health, and you can still participate, even with covid-19 restrictions.

Remember, for now, you can leave home to get your steps up, but there are limits:

- Keep your exercise within 5km of your home
- You can exercise with one other person you live with or a friend or family member, as long as neither of you travel more than 5km from your home.
- You must limit your exercise to once a day and for only one hour.
- If you are a parent or guardian who is caring for a young child or someone who cannot be left unattended then they may accompany you.

There are also ways that you can exercise in your home, to keep your health and fitness up when you're not able to leave the house. Visit the website <https://www.verywellfit.com/best-ways-to-exercise-at-home-1231142> for tips, ideas and exercise routines that you can do at home.

FriendLine 1800 424 287

FriendLine is for anyone who needs to reconnect or just wants a chat. All conversations with FriendLine are casual and anonymous and our friendly volunteers are ready to talk about anything and everything.

<http://www.friendline.org.au/>



Supporting social connection through coronavirus (COVID-19)

Information for individuals – 24 July 2020

Are you feeling lonely or socially disconnected?

You are not alone. For many Victorians, physical distancing and social or work-related restrictions have led to feelings of loneliness and disconnection. For people who were already feeling lonely or isolated before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, it's been even harder to get help.

All of us need social connection to feel happy and well. We also need people we can turn to when we need help. That's why it is important to reach out if you feel lonely or disconnected.

You can get help on the phone and from your community

If you are experiencing loneliness or social disconnection due to coronavirus (COVID-19), you can receive support from the Australian Red Cross and local community organisations with just one call to the coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on **1800 675 398**.

This help is provided as part of the Victorian Government's Community Activation and Social Isolation initiative.

What happens when I call the coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline?

Your call will be answered by a caring Australian Red Cross volunteer who will speak to you about your needs and the help that could make you feel more connected. They can also provide a friendly ear if you are distressed or anxious.

If you would like, the volunteer can put you in touch with a community connector in your area. This person will arrange for you to get the help you need safely and locally.

What help can I get from the community connector?

Your local 'community connector' will call you to organise supports available in your local area. The supports themselves can be provided from a range of organisations such as multicultural organisations, universities of the third age, neighbourhood houses, men's sheds and volunteer groups to name a few. They might include:

- **Emotional support** such as regular chats with a like-minded local.
- **Practical help** such as running errands or helping people to video chat with friends and family.
- **Social activities** such as linking into online book clubs, fitness groups or volunteering opportunities.

Am I eligible?

This initiative is available to all Victorians.

How do I get help?

You can call the **coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on 1800 675 398** and press 3 to speak to an Australian Red Cross volunteer to get the help and support you need.

Volunteer and Community Connections



R U OK? DAY

R U OK? Day, Thursday 10 September 2020, is a national day of action to remind Australians that every day is the day to ask, "Are you OK?" if someone in your world is struggling with life's ups and downs. R U OK? is a suicide prevention charity in Australia. It is important for us all to stay connected and, for those who are able, be willing to support those around us. Having meaningful conversations with loved ones, friends and colleagues could change a life. By inspiring people to take the time to ask "Are you OK?" and listen, we can help people struggling with life feel connected long before they even think about suicide. It all comes down to regular, face-to-face, meaningful conversations about life. And asking "Are you OK?" is a great place to start. For more information: <https://www.ruok.org.au>

Dates to make note of:

Group activities— hydrotherapy, group exercise classes, and social support groups have been suspended in line with current Stage 4 restrictions.

Social Support Group activities may resume, dependent on DHHS restrictions. Date to be confirmed and Volunteers advised.

2020 Hydro Emergency Rescue Training and Hydrotherapy Volunteer Meeting:
Suspended due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Volunteer Christmas Lunch:

To be confirmed, dependent on DHHS restrictions and physical distancing requirements.

Public Holidays in 2020

Friday 25 September	AFL Grand Final Friday
Tuesday 3 November	Melbourne Cup Day
Friday 25 December	Christmas Day
Monday 28 December	Boxing Day

Last Day for Volunteers:

Friday 11 December 2020

Recommencing:

Monday 11 January 2021

Connect Health's

Vision: Healthy People, Healthy Communities

Purpose: Understand and meet the health needs of the community as a socially responsible business

Values: Respect, Responsiveness, Accountability & Collaboration

Main Site Address:

2A Gardeners Road Bentleigh East 3165

Postal Address

PO Box 30 Bentleigh East 3165

Website: www.connecthealth.org.au

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/connecthealth.org.au/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/connect_health/

Volunteer and Community Connections Team

Volunteer Services: *currently in squad formation*

Neera: Monday, Wednesday & Friday remotely

Kia: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday remotely

Phone: 9575 5312

Email: community@connecthealth.org.au

Community Transport – Individual: *currently in squad formation*

Bill: Monday, Wednesday & Friday, one week at East Bentleigh site, one week remotely

Di: Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday remotely

Errol: Monday—Friday, one week at East Bentleigh site, one week remotely

Phone: 9575 5386

Email: communitytransport@connecthealth.org.au