



United Way Glenelg

## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

Tuesday 15 June 2021

### **WINTER CARE PACKAGES DISTRIBUTED TO OLDER RESIDENTS**

With the onset of the colder weather and recent lockdown measures, older residents in the Glenelg Shire community are about to receive a little pick-me-up thanks to the delivery of Winter Care Packages.

United Way Glenelg in partnership with Glenelg Shire Council is offering 200 Winter Care Packages to vulnerable older residents who find themselves feeling lonely, isolated or disconnected from the community.

Assembled by South West TAFE VCAL students, the packages contain non-perishable food and personal care items and also include a food voucher for purchasing perishable items such as meat, fruit and vegetables, an activity, reading material, comfort items, a special treat and a personal note from Merino Consolidated Primary School.

All the items have been sourced locally to support local businesses and valued at \$100 each.

United Way Glenelg Executive Officer Nicole Carr said it takes a collaborative approach to support a community.

“We are working very closely with our agency partners to ensure we are identifying and reaching those most vulnerable and in need. Our partners will distribute the packages directly to the homes while conducting their regular wellbeing checks.

22.5% of residents are over the age of 65 in the Glenelg Shire region, much higher than the regional Victorian average, many of who face serious health problems, chronic diseases, isolation and loneliness, Ms Carr said.

“Research shows that cold weather can exacerbate existing health problems in older people while feeling isolated and lonely is also known to have an impact on physical and mental health”.

The impetus for this project came from the successful delivery of 200 HOPE packages United Way Glenelg coordinated in 2020.

“From anecdotal evidence by the way of the messages of gratitude from the many letters, phone calls and cards we received and surveys completed by our agency partners we know the packages were greatly appreciated in supporting older people with basic needs, preventing them from disconnecting from the community and making them feel valued.

“These packages will make Winter a little more bearable.

“This is our small part, but we are relying on the entire community to look out for one another. Look out for your neighbours, your relatives and friends, anyone that needs a helping hand,” concluded Ms Carr.

Glenelg Shire Aged and Disability Services Manager Shelley Bourke said the packages had the potential to be “life-changing”.

“Council is proud to partner with United Way Glenelg on this important cause and ensures our most vulnerable community members receive the support they need,” she said.

“For our Community Support Workers, it is an absolute highlight to deliver these packages in person and see firsthand the impact it makes to someone in need. It is an incredibly rewarding and heartwarming moment.

“We hope to see many smiles as these packages are delivered throughout the Shire.”

Recipients were identified through United Way Glenelg Agency partners including Glenelg Shire Council Aged and Disability unit, Portland District Health palliative care and district nursing units, Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly & Community Health Service Inc, Winda Mara, Dartmoor Bush Nursing Centre, Casterton Memorial Hospital and St Vincent de Pauls.

The packages are funded by the United Way Glenelg Lewis Court fund together with a grant from Glenelg Shire Council and the Victorian State Government.

*Photo: Packages were delivered this week to Portland District Health District Nursing and Community Palliative Care patients. Alyson Rice and Kylie Cobby, both Administration Assistant with Portland District Health were thrilled to receive the packages for their patients.*

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