

Media Release

12 May 2020

Reaching out to (Tele)friends

There's never been a more important time to stay connected and to look out for each other.

Sheilah Blanchfield is doing her bit on both fronts in her role as a TeleFriend volunteer with VMCH.

TeleFriend is a free VMCH service which sees trained volunteers make weekly calls to more vulnerable or socially isolated people who access VMCH services.

"A lot of people have trouble with technology so in today's world they're really left behind. TeleFriend is a simple, old-fashioned and easy way of communicating with someone."

Sheilah, who's volunteered with our not-for-profit organisation for around ten years, currently chats to an older woman living in one of our Affordable Housing units. Before this, she connected with two women whose respective husbands had recently moved into aged care.

"They were physically and mentally exhausted by the time their spouses went into care. Sheilah said. "The idea is really to let them talk and I listen. You can usually notice a lift in their spirits by the end of the call."

May 18-24 is National Volunteer Week. Each year, VMCH celebrates the incredible gift of time our 620-plus volunteers provide to the people we support across our aged and disability services.

VMCH is an organisation close to Sheilah's heart. Blind since birth, Sheilah was a student at our specialist school St Paul's College in the 50s. She still likes to visit the school and students from time to time, and is a regular donor to VMCH too.

Sheilah encouraged others to volunteer if they could. "If you can just do something for somebody else, it's enough. It's a nice feeling and you can make some great friends."

If you are interested in volunteering with VMCH, call 1800 036 377 or visit: [vmch.com.au/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/](https://www.vmch.com.au/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/)

Media enquiries

Cassie Zlonzak

Communications Adviser

T: 03 9926 2410

M: 0402 422 852

E: cassie.zlonzak@vmch.com.au

W: www.vmch.com.au

About VMCH

Here at VMCH, our services are as diverse as the people we support.

Our values underpin the work we do. As a Catholic not for profit organisation, compassion, respect and inclusion aren't just words to us, they guide us in everything we do.

While we've been around for over a century, we're always moving forward. Always staying true to who we are by supporting people and families to live their best lives; providing a place to call home and spaces to learn and grow.

Our professional and compassionate teams are with you on your life journey; helping you with a wide range of support from early learning and therapy, specialist education, disability services, affordable homes, residential aged care, retirement living and at-home aged care.

