

Media Release

8 December 2023

Hampers help those who need it most this Christmas

Sometimes the most valued gifts don't come with a price tag.

It's hard not to get caught up in the consumer-driven culture of Christmas – but the true meaning of Christmas is all around us, especially across the VMCH community.

Each year for-purpose aged and disability services organisation VMCH relies on donations to ensure hundreds of vulnerable people receive a little joy at Christmas through its hamper appeal.

VMCH Chief Mission Officer Bridget O'Shannassy says it's been an especially tough year for many.

"The cost of living has pushed people to the brink, with nothing left to spend on luxuries. For some, even the necessities are out of reach."

This year will be VMCH's biggest hamper drive yet, with 800 people in need across its affordable homes, home care, and disability services.

Bridget described the hamper drive as a "true community effort".

"We have handmade decorations created by our aged care residents, disability clients and volunteers, along with a number Christmas treats including chocolates, shortbread, Christmas puddings and toys for our younger recipients. Some contents are purchased with community and staff giving financial donations, and support by various charities, local schools and businesses."

Affordable homes resident Bobbie Bartkus, aged 78, says she was "delightfully surprised" to receive her first Christmas hamper several years ago.

"It's a really generous and thoughtful gift. I especially like that the aged care residents create some of the hamper items; that's really special."

Bobbie also describes the hampers as a "budget saver".

"Given how expensive everything is these days it certainly means you don't have to purchase several items on your Christmas list, which is a big help."

Bridget says affordable homes residents like in particular, like Bobbie, are very happy and grateful to receive the hampers each year.

"The arrival of hampers is eagerly anticipated by so many, with the majority of residents living alone. They tell us it makes their day to know someone is thinking of them at Christmas. For some people, it's the only gift they will receive at Christmas."

If you would like to donate to the VMCH Christmas hamper appeal, call 1300 698 624 or visit www.vmch.com.au/donate-now

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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, for-purpose 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.

