Media Release

12 November 2026

VMCH Christmas Hamper Appeal to help 900 people feel at home this festive season

VMCH has launched its 2026 Christmas Hamper Appeal, aiming to deliver 900 hampers to people experiencing hardship or isolation across Victoria this festive season.

One of those people is Choon Wong, 86, who has lived in his VMCH Affordable Homes unit in Balwyn since 2013. For Choon, home means being close to his daughter and two grandsons, good neighbours, and a bright, light-filled space where he can keep up his lifelong love of art.

The walls and shelves of his unit are filled with a lifetime of creativity, including pastel drawings, paintings, sculptures and wood carvings he has made himself. Born and raised in Singapore, Choon loved drawing from an early age. His high school art teacher recognised his talent and hoped he might study art in Paris, but Choon's father had other plans for him.

"I was always drawing, even when I was very young," Choon says. Although he didn't pursue art as a career, he never left it behind, and now, at 86, he continues to create from home.

This Christmas, Choon will be one of 900 people to receive a VMCH Christmas hamper. He still remembers useful items from previous hampers, including preserves, honey and a bamboo chopping board. For Choon, the hamper is another thoughtful part of Christmas in a place where he feels at home.

VMCH Chief Executive Officer Sonya Smart said the appeal was about making sure no one felt forgotten at Christmas.

"At the heart of the Christmas story is a family searching for shelter and being told there is no room at the inn," Ms Smart said. "It's a story that reminds us of the importance of having a safe place where people feel welcomed, connected and at home."

"Each hamper is a real community effort. VMCH residents, clients and volunteers create handmade decorations through our Arts in Action program, while staff, volunteers and supporters help collect, pack and deliver the hampers with care. It's a wonderful example of our community coming together to look out for one another."

Among those delivering hampers this year is Sarah Mueller, VMCH Affordable homes Assistant, who has taken her two children along to deliver hampers to affordable homes residents for several years.

"The residents absolutely loved seeing the kids and having a good chat," Sarah said. "One lady in particular was a favourite, who just seemed so lonely and all she wanted to do was talk with us, which we all happily did. Both the kids have even asked if we can go back and visit her again another day for a coffee. I'm so grateful for this opportunity each year, and I love that I can take the kids to experience it and hear other people's stories."

VMCH staff member Anna Grawe, who has delivered hampers for several years, said the small moments of connection stayed with her.

"Each year, one of our recipients, Heather, keeps the Christmas decorations our volunteers, residents and students have made and hangs them all together," Anna said. "They're the only Christmas decorations she has. She was so delighted to see us, and so grateful for the hamper full of goodies."

With cost-of-living pressures continuing to affect many households, VMCH is calling on the community to help make this year's appeal possible. Donations can be made online at

vmch.com.au/donate/christmas-appeal or by calling 1300 698 624. Donations of $2 and over are tax deductible.

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About VMCH

At VMCH, we believe people should be seen and valued for who they are, not defined by the services they receive.

For more than a century, we have supported Victorian communities, helping people live with purpose, connection and choice. Guided by our Catholic tradition, we recognise the dignity, individuality and contributions of every person.

Across aged care, care at home, disability services, retirement living, specialist education and affordable housing, we support people to stay in control of their lives and connected to what matters most.

Guided by our values of Love, Joy, Courage and Hospitality, more than 4,000 staff and volunteers support over 15,000 people across Victoria, creating communities where people feel respected, included and empowered.