

Media Release

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Critical support keeping older Gippsland residents at home

Newborough resident Sylvia McGregor, aged 76, had no idea what a Home Care Package (HCP) was until her Occupational Therapist (OT) mentioned it in passing.

As her ongoing treatment was getting expensive, Sylvia's OT asked if she was interested in an HCP to help her with her increasing health costs.

That was nine years ago, and Sylvia says without the support, she'd be living in residential aged care.

"My husband and I are only on a pension and have no savings, so we could never afford the services on our own," Sylvia says. "It's really wonderful – I can't explain how helpful it is."

Sylvia is on a Level 4 HCP with one of Victoria's largest home care providers, VMCH. The for-purpose aged and disability services organisation supports 900 older Victorians living in regional areas, and opened a Moe office in August 2017.

Across Australia, the number of people receiving Commonwealth-funded HCPs nearly quadrupled from 2012 to 2022 (55,000 to 216,000).

The Victorian Government reports the number of people aged 60 or older is higher in rural and regional Victoria (26 per cent in 2016) than in Greater Melbourne (18 per cent).

Sylvia, who requires mobile aids to get around, says her HCP including regular house cleaning, physiotherapy, access to social outings, meals, and a personal alarm, keeps her happy and healthy at home.

Her husband Peter is also supported with a Level 2 HCP.

"I can't praise VMCH enough," Sylvia says. "They try to help me so much. If I need something, I just ring Asmir (Case Manager), he is marvellous. My old scooter was old and dilapidated, and I think it only took three weeks to get a new one."

The couple's Case Manager Asmir Huzejrovic supports around 55 clients in the Gippsland region.

Asmir has a background in nursing and has always enjoyed helping people in need.

"My role gives me an opportunity to visit people in their homes, listen to their needs, and concentrate on helping them prolong their stay there. I absolutely love it."

The feelings are mutual, with Sylvia now referring HCPs and VMCH to anyone she meets.

"One lady I know was having so much trouble and couldn't get what she needed. I told her to go to VMCH.

"I also met a man down the street, he asked about my wheelchair and I said, 'I got it through VMCH', and started telling him all about it. I'd like as many people to know about HCPs so they can get the help they need."

If you would like more information on services to help you stay living at home, call 1300 698 624 or visit our Moe office at 44B George St.

Media enquiries

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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.

