



Volunteer Coordinator Networking and Engagement Meeting Community & Care

Summary Notes

The theme for this month's VCNEM was Community & Care and was held on Monday 20th March 2017 in the Centacare Meeting Rooms. FNQVI are appreciative to have had two fantastic guest speakers:

- **Yvonne Petrusma**, Volunteer Coordinator with Centacare Multicultural Services (CMS)
- **Justin Van Stom**, Regional Coordinator for FNQ with ComLink

Both guest speakers showcased their organisations' and outlined how volunteering assists with and impacts their individual organisations. The attendees were encouraged to ask specific questions of the guest speakers and the group on how they could apply the volunteering principles discussed to benefit their own organisations. Again, there were a number of connections made and it was a fantastic networking opportunity to connect individuals and service providers together.

At the request of the attendees, a separate list of contact details will be provided after each meeting so that networks can continue.

Yvonne Petrusma

Volunteer Coordinator

Centacare Multicultural Services (CMS)



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Yvonne began by giving an overview of the variety of services offered by CentaCare:

- Mental Health Care
 - Mental Health Care Centre, Thomas Street
 - Partners in Recovery
- Counselling
- Social Support and Respite
 - Respite Centre at Holloways Beach
- Care Coordination

- Multicultural Services
 - Sessions are delivered based on community need for example:
 - Obtaining a driver's licence
 - Filling in forms
 - Accessing childcare
 - Art projects
 - Business Assistance
 - Conversation Groups
 - Support for elderly groups

Volunteering within Centacare

Volunteers help with settlement of people on humanitarian and migrant visas. The Community Engagement team run information sessions (as described above) and can include:

- Sessions on cultural transitions
- Sessions on building resilience

Volunteering is mutually beneficial to both Centacare and the volunteer. Some of the reasons why people volunteer include:

- Meeting new people
- Gaining experience
- Staying active and involved
- Learning new skills
- Supporting a cause
- Having fun

Most volunteers are immediate pre and post retirement age. As with most organisations, there is a lot of admin surrounding the engagement of a volunteer however once this is complete, Centacare uses a wellbeing/empowerment model to assist with the retention of their volunteers. This can include 'Thank You' programs such as a cruise through Trinity Harbour or a social bowls activity; volunteers are also recognised for their service by being nominated for Volunteer of the Year.

Volunteers with Centacare can help people with:

- Family accommodation
- Local area orientation
- Navigating social systems
- Transport
- **#weare Cairns** Further information about the #weare Cairns art project is attached

Group Discussion on Volunteering

- Volunteers can be thanked with certificates, cruises activities etc but most are happy with simple ongoing acknowledgement and feeling like they are important and making a difference
- Some volunteers may not feel worthy of attending lunches and events for volunteers, again, sometimes acknowledgement is enough.
- Sending out birthday cards can also make volunteers feel valued. Thank you to Annette from the Leukaemia Foundation for her suggestion on entering the DOB of the volunteer into outlook as it will set a reminder for a week before a birthday leaving plenty of time to purchase and send a card.
- It is important to find out what is at the heart of the volunteers, what their passion is, when matching them to volunteer role

Justin Van Stom
Regional Coordinator FNQ

COMLINK

LEADING THE CARE REVOLUTION

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A. 12A GROVE STREET CAIRNS NORTH QLD 4870

Justin explained that Comlink was established to be complimentary rather than competitive to other transport services in the area. Justin started with ComLink in Townsville and relocated to Cairns as the service grew, to become the Regional Coordinator for ComLink in FNQ.

ComLink has been successful in this funding round and as such they will be increasing to four shuttle services:

- Palm Cove > City
- Smithfield > Redlynch > City
- Gordonvale
- Current service

This also has an impact on the volunteers with two of the drivers about to be offered a paid position as a result. This is a fantastic result for both ComLink and the volunteers.

The shuttle services run to a schedule and each shuttle takes approximately an hour to go throughout the city. For a nominal fee, the shuttle can transport the customer as short a distance as across the highway or it can take them all the way into town. Because the service requires bookings in advance, the drivers are able to make occasional personalised stops along the route. This gives the drivers a level of autonomy and gives the customers a personalised service that they wouldn't receive with public transport.

Justin discussed how volunteering works within ComLink. They source their volunteers through FNQ Volunteers Inc, specifically working with Loani and Will to refine the requirements so that FNQVI can refer suitable candidates. The volunteers are not only screened for their skills but also their attitude towards the role. The volunteers with ComLink offer a personalised and authentic service, working in a customer facing role, they play an integral role in the success of the organisation.

General Discussion

- Homecare packages were discussed and it was suggested that all 65+ (or 50/55+ if Indigenous) ask for an assessment for all social services and home care packages to see what they are eligible for.
- Justin explained the NDIS and CDC and it was discussed that in future it will be very important to market your services to both the individual customer and other organisations.
- Annette from Leukaemia Foundation suggested a new style of reusable magnetic badge that has helped to make her volunteers feel appreciated and recognised. The badges are smaller than the pin on ones and can be branded to your organisation. Annette will send a link to information about the badges.

Thank you

Thank you to both Yvonne and Justin for speaking at the VCNEM. It was an informative meeting with lots of new information being offered and many questions answered by the guest speakers and other members at the meetings.

Participants

Thank you to everyone that attended and sent apologies for the February VCNEM.

Dear Cairns residents,

We are honoured to request your participation in a very exciting Art Project called

#wearecairns

The art project aims to promote and celebrate diversity in Cairns, representing Cairns residents from diverse groups including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, different religions, ages, genders, abilities etc.

The exhibition opening will be on Friday 4th of August at TANKS and it is going to be an amazing night, with a diversity of artists involved including fine artists, photographers, dancers, film makers, digital artists and musicians.

As part of the project, principal artist/project manager Ricky Beresford and film maker Glen will be filming a diversity of Cairns residents in order to create a short film or teaser for the project. They are seeking 100 residents to be filmed and asked a series of questions including, "how long have you been in Cairns?" "what brought you to Cairns?" and "what do you do?" The short films will then be used to promote the project via Facebook and screened at the exhibition.

Ricky and Glen will be filming residents on Monday 27th of March and Wednesday 29th of March at Training Room 1, Centacare Cairns, 22-36 Aplin St.

Could you please forward to your community networks, we would like to get as much representation from the community as possible. Feel free to wear traditional dress if you prefer.

If you are interested in being filmed on the day, could you please indicate which time would suit you best (filming will take approximately 10 minutes):

Monday 27th of March, 12pm-7pm
12pm -1pm
1pm-2pm
2pm-3pm
3pm-4pm
4pm-5pm
5pm-6pm
6pm-7pm

Wednesday 29th of March, 9am-5pm
9am-10am
10am-11am
11am-12pm
12pm-1pm
1pm-2pm
2pm-3pm
3pm-4pm
4pm-5pm

You are also welcome to just show up on the day. We look forward to working on this exciting project with you.

Thanks and warm regards

Dominika Ricardi | Senior Community Development Worker

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