

## Newcastle 'Registry Week' 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016

# STAFF and VOLUNTEERS HANDBOOK

Please note that information in this handbook is for staff and volunteers participating in Newcastle Registry Week 2016. Some of the information may be subject to change at short notice. It is essential that all volunteers attend the Training Session on Mon 17<sup>th</sup> October





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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your participation in Newcastle Registry Week! Over three consecutive mornings we will canvass the Newcastle LGA and complete the Vulnerability Index and Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) with people sleeping rough in the Newcastle LGA.

Newcastle Registry Week 2016 is an initiative being coordinated by the St Vincent de Paul Society through its Matthew Talbot Homeless service and its partner organisations: Family and Community Services (FACS), Nova for Women and Children, Mercy Foundation, Warlga Ngurra, Family Action Centre, Jenny's Place, Wandiyali, Samaritans and Hunter Primary Care. We are most grateful for the support of other key organisations and staff and individuals from other services and the community. A special thank you for support and guidance from Mercy Foundation and Micah who have significant experience in supporting this project in a number of other cities.

We are committed to undertaking the 'Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool' (VI - SPDAT), with as many homeless people in Newcastle LGA as possible. This includes people staying in crisis accommodation services, and in Temporary Accommodation, as well as those sleeping rough in the Newcastle LGA. We hope that the information collected will be able to be used to directly assist individuals as well as to better understand service, health and housing needs – so that we can make a collaborative effort to advocate for needed housing and services.

The methodology for undertaking 'Registry Week' has already been used in a number of cities overseas, as well as in Australia. It is a successful model and our intention is to make it work here. That said, we would always welcome feedback on any aspect of the project.

Staff and Volunteers have been recruited from amongst the partner organisations as well as from the community.

Training for carrying out the VI – SPDAT is being provided on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October from 1pm – 5pm. This will be undertaken at the Matthew Talbot Centre 82 Hannell St Wickham.

## 2. STATEMENT OF ETHICS

It is integral to the success of the Newcastle Registry Week 2016 that participants are treated with the utmost dignity and respect. To help ensure this informed consent will be gained from all those that choose to participate. This means that it is explained to each participant what kind of information is being collected, how it is being collected, what it will be used for, and how it will be stored. Please note that informed consent cannot be obtained from individuals under 16 years or age. Therefore, a survey cannot be completed with these individuals. The consent form at the front of the survey is aligned to current privacy legislation and contains the relevant information that will help guide staff and volunteers through this process.

We are committed to using the results of this project for the benefit of people who are homeless in the Newcastle LGA. We hope the project can result in housing some people and providing direct assistance as well as in efforts to advocate for the needs of housing and other services for homeless people.

Any summary information that is analysed and distributed from the project will be non-identifying. Unless specifically permitted by participants. Similarly, no information regarding the location of people experiencing homelessness will be released except where agencies are required to respond to their needs. These measures will ensure that services and supports can be organised for participants without compromising their right to privacy and confidentiality. Finally, individuals and families that choose to participate in Registry Week will be compensated for their time with \$15.00 provided per survey response.

Staff and Volunteers have a duty of care to respond to people in need of urgent medical attention but will not be asked to provide non-critical assistance. Requests for assistance should be made clear to the Registry Week Coordinator and Team Leaders. Partners in Registry week have an agreement in place that commits to ensuring that direct follow-up to people is available within a reasonable time frame.

Other partner members of this collaboration will be working hard over the coming months and years to help create additional housing and support opportunities and the VI - SPDAT Register will provide a mechanism to get back in touch with people who could be provided access to any of these new opportunities. This is why an essential component of this project involves obtaining people's names and photographs (with their express permission), in order to be able to follow-up. An anonymous survey would not make this possible.

### **3. INSURANCE**

Community Volunteers will be covered by Samaritans Children Volunteer Program Insurance. If your employer is supporting you to participate in this activity, you will need to ensure that your organisational insurance will cover you during your participation.

Volunteers will need to follow all procedures described in this manual in order to receive coverage. Failure to comply may render insurance null and void. Staff covered by their own organisational insurance should check that they fulfill the insurance requirements of those policies.

### **4. ON THE DAY**

Volunteers will carry out their work in teams, under the direction of Team Leaders. Team Leaders will be introduced to volunteers at the scheduled training session on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1pm - 5pm.

**No person is permitted to work alone.** Each team will be made up of several people who will work together, however this may vary between locations.

#### 4.1 Registration and signing in

All participants must have submitted a registration before participating in this project. Staff and Volunteers will carry out the activity each morning in teams. Team leaders will be introduced to you on the day of the training.

Each team leader will have a specific kit that includes maps, instructions, vest, blank surveys, pens, envelopes for money etc. Each person will receive a pack that includes: a carry bag, clipboard, pen, breakfast packs vouchers and blank surveys. A safety vest and a bottle of water will be provided to each participant.

At sign in each day, volunteers will sign in with their team leader. You will be expected to meet up with the Team Leader and other team members and leave the venue as soon as possible, with all equipment – ready to begin work by 4:30am.

If you are running late, please contact your Team Leader. The name and contact details for your Team Leader will be provided to you at the training session on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Any arrivals after 4.30am each morning will be too late to participate. **It is ESSENTIAL that you arrive every morning by 4.30am.** Refreshments will be available.

**All teams are expected to return to the 'Matthew Talbot Centre' each morning by 7:30 am.**

Unless you have previously notified the Registry Week Coordinator that you must leave by 8am – please stay at the venue for de-briefing before you leave each morning.

**Everyone must ensure they sign out – this will indicate to us that you have safely returned to the 'Matthew Talbot Centre' and that you have left for the day.**

*Staff and Volunteers who are intoxicated will not be permitted to take part. If you are driving to the venue each morning, take care to remember that alcohol or drugs you may have taken the night before may still be in your system. You are not permitted to drive under the influence.*

#### **Where you need to be:**

All staff and volunteers must attend the training session on **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1pm - 5pm** at Matthew Talbot Centre (82 Hannell St, Wickham, NSW 2293). *Location map is at the end of this document with information regarding parking for those that are driving.*



Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> October Compulsory	Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> October Compulsory	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> October Compulsory	Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> October Voluntary
<b>4.00 - 4.30am</b> <u>All staff and Volunteers</u> meet at 'Matthew Talbot Homeless Service' 82 Hannell st, Wickham	<b>4.00 - 4.30am</b> <u>All staff and Volunteers</u> meet at 'Matthew Talbot Homeless Service' 82 Hannell st, Wickham	<b>4.00 - 4.30am</b> <u>All staff and Volunteers</u> meet at 'Matthew Talbot Homeless Service' 82 Hannell st, Wickham	<b>9:00am</b> 'Thank You Breakfast and Community Briefing*' 'Matthew Talbot Homeless Service' 82 Hannell st, Wickham

\*RSVP by Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October (see separate flyer) for this function (for catering purposes).

## 4.2 Transport

Teams will be allocated to different areas to conduct the survey. Transport will be provided to drop staff and volunteers to surveying locations. Teams and groups will be using work vehicles supplied to travel to their locations.

*Please note: Volunteers must arrange own transport to and from Headquarters each day. Parking is not provided, however street parking is available. Please note that there is restricted parking during certain times in the area and people are responsible for ensuring they comply with the parking rules.*

## 4.3 Returning to Headquarters

Once surveying is complete, all staff and volunteers will notify their team leader, before travelling back to Headquarters. If the team is being picked up, the team leader should contact the driver (if the driver is not a member of the team) to advise that they are ready for pick up. All teams are expected to return to the Headquarters by 7:45am each morning.

Once back at Headquarters, staff and volunteers are to remain with Team Leaders, who will conduct a debrief with the team. On completion of the debrief, staff and volunteers will sign out before leaving Headquarters, each day. Team leaders will confirm with the Registry Week Coordinator that each member of their team has signed in and signed out each day.

If an incident has been reported to a Team Leader the individuals involved are required to complete an incident form that will be provided. Counselling will be arranged if required after an incident or if any staff or volunteer feels that they need it.

## 4.4 What to bring each morning

- A charged mobile phone. For safety reasons, each volunteer person should have a mobile phone. You will not be permitted to participate in the activity if you do not have (or are not paired with someone) who has a charged and functioning mobile phone. This is an important safety precaution. Each Team leader is responsible for checking this.
- A digital camera or mobile phone camera.
- A battery operated torch.



- Weather appropriate clothing and comfortable, closed, sturdy walking shoes.
- Wet weather gear if rain is predicted. The activity will still go ahead if it is raining.

#### 4.5 Your provisions

- A reflective safety vest
- Water
- Each person will receive a carry bag containing a clipboard, pens and recording sheets.

#### 4.6 Do not bring

- Valuables including large sums of money, jewelry and handbags.
- Extra people who have not registered.

## 5. SAFETY PROTOCOL

### 5.1 Communication procedure

The team leader will contact each group in their team every half an hour from 5.00am – 7.30am. The team leader will advise the Registry Week Coordinator at headquarters once an hour to confirm the safety of all.

If staff and volunteers have not heard from their team leader within 10 minutes of the scheduled time they are to ring the team leader. If there is no answer they are to contact the Registry Week Coordinator straight away. The coordinator will ask a driver from headquarters to visit the area immediately. If a group do not answer the phone after 15 minutes' headquarters will dispatch a vehicle to the area.

If volunteers are not located within a further 10 minutes, the police will be contacted by the driver. The driver will then notify the coordinator of the action taken.

Each Police Local Area Command has been notified that Newcastle Registry Week is taking place.

**For URGENT POLICE OR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PHONE 000. Do this FIRST in emergencies.**

### 5.2 General safety

The safety of all staff volunteers and people who are experiencing homelessness is paramount. It is important that volunteers stay in their groups and do not separate. If individual volunteers wish to survey someone by themselves, they should always maintain a clear line of sight and sound between them and their partner. Full safety training will be provided to all Volunteers at the training session on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

## DON'T

- Approach anyone who is behaving erratically or in a dangerous manner. Use emergency procedures if necessary.
- Enter squats, buildings or enclosed areas that have single exit points.

## DO

- Keep your voices down and be respectful to all members of the community, whether they are homeless or housed.
- Respect that you are potentially intruding in someone's personal space and take all steps possible to respect that fact.
- Avoid surprising or startling people.
- Explain your presence to anyone who asks or who is disturbed by your presence.
- The nature of this activity may require you to wake a rough sleeper. Try to avoid this if at all possible – perhaps by going away for a period and coming back a bit later. However, it is essential we speak to as many rough sleepers as possible and you may need to wake someone. If so:
  - Call out from up to 1m away
  - Be gentle
  - Be respectful
  - Do this as a pair
  - Offer to come back if the person is disturbed by your presence.
  - If the person is angry at having been woken – explain what you are doing and request their assistance.
  - If the person is so angry that it becomes a safety issue – leave the area IMMEDIATELY.

### 5.3 Emergency procedure

If staff or volunteers observes that a person is in need of urgent medical attention, or is at risk of harming themselves or others, contact the appropriate emergency service:

- In the first instance contact Police, Ambulance, or Fire Brigade for emergencies on **000**. Staff Volunteers are to then contact Team Leaders and Headquarters
- For any non-critical concerns or situations, volunteers are to call their Team Leaders. Wait until help arrives. Once the service has been contacted, call your Team Leader and notify them of the incident and the outcome.
- If staff or volunteers encounter someone who is under 16 years of age they must call their Team Leader immediately. A Child Protection Report will be made by the Team Leader. Volunteers are not permitted to conduct surveys with people under 16.

Volunteers are required to report any child at risk to the DOCS helpline (133 627) at headquarters after the count. If a child is observed to be sleeping rough, the volunteer pair should contact their team leader for guidance.

## 5.4 Incident management

If a volunteer is involved in an incident follow the procedures outlined below. An Incident Report will need to be completed on return to the 'Matthew Talbot Centre'. All incidents must be reported to Team Leaders as soon as practical.

Incidents may include:

- Accidents involving participants
- Verbal abuse or threats
- Physical abuse
- Incidents whilst walking around the streets/parks
- Rough sleeper disclosure of self-harm, intention of harm to others, or harm to themselves by others.

STEP 1:	Assess seriousness of incident
STEP 2:	Follow emergency procedures
STEP 3:	If the safety of any staff or volunteer is under threat, leave the situation as quickly as possible
STEP 4:	Call the Team Leader to report the incident and discuss if any follow up is required. The team leader will then contact headquarters
STEP 5:	Continue surveying once everyone is safe
STEP 6:	If the situation becomes unsafe, then cease what you are doing and go directly back to the 'Matthew Talbot Centre'. Inform your Team Leader of this, and if transport is required back to the 'Matthew Talbot Centre', let your Team Leader know.
STEP 7:	All incidents must be reported at check in after the completion of each morning's surveying and an Incident Form completed.
STEP 8:	Support and debriefing will be provided at the 'Matthew Talbot Centre' each morning after everyone has returned.



## 6. OUTREACH TIPS

### 6.1 Who to ask to complete a survey?

It is not always accurate to assume from a person's appearance that they are rough sleeping; however, some level of judgment is required. If unsure, please consult with your partner before continuing.

#### TALK TO PEOPLE WHO:

- Are carrying substantial belongings and who appear to have no accommodation.
- Are sleeping, laying or sitting on the pavement, street, parks, shops/business fronts, parking lots, road or railway underpasses.
- Are inhabiting a tent or a makeshift structure.
- Are obviously sleeping in cars
- Indicate to volunteers that they are homeless.

### 6.2 Use of torches

If it is still dark on any morning and you need to use a torch - do not flash the torch in anyone's eyes or use it intrusively. Use the torches to walk safely and to fill out the surveys.

### 6.3 Maps

Team Leaders will be given maps of their specific area to survey. It is the responsibility of all Team Leaders to coordinate Volunteers to survey all areas identified on the map.

### 6.4 VI – SPDAT

Each team will be issued with maps and blank survey forms. How to complete these surveys with homeless people is one of the key subjects of the training session on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016. This is why attendance at this training is mandatory.

### 6.5 Approaching a rough sleeper

If you observe a person walking around and you are unsure if he/she is homeless you can attempt to find out if they are homeless. We suggest that you first introduce yourself and then ask questions such as "Do you have anywhere to stay tonight?" rather than "Are you homeless?" as this can be insulting to both rough sleepers and others.

When you are interacting with anyone who may be a rough sleeper be: polite and respectful; position yourself at the person's eye level (sit or stand) as this will encourage an equal communication.

After completing the survey each participant will be offered a small cash token of appreciation in an envelope along with some breakfast items, voucher and information.

## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Below is a script that can be used if a staff or volunteer is questioned as to what they are doing.

*My name is \_\_\_\_\_ (first name) and this is \_\_\_\_\_. We are doing a survey about the needs of people who are sleeping rough or staying out because they don't have a place to go to.*

*The information will be used to assist people if they ask for it and also to try to advocate for additional housing and support*

## 6.6 Assisting people

The central aim is collect important information about homeless people in the Newcastle LGA. It is not to provide immediate outreach assistance unless there is an urgent need for it.

Staff and volunteers will be given information cards that include contact details for Link2Home. These cards can be given to people who require assistance with housing or other support.

Transport will be available for any person who is homeless to accommodation or to hospital (if an ambulance is not required). If you require Transport please contact the coordinator. If you cannot reach the coordinator – speak to your team leader.

## 7. CHECKLIST

- Read this manual thoroughly before attending the training session on **Monday October 17<sup>th</sup> 2016**
- Bring this manual with you each day as well as a charged mobile phone (with credit) if you have one.
- **Arrive at the Matthew Talbot Centre no later than 4.30am each morning of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016**
- Once at Headquarters locate your Team Leader, your partner and team.
- Sign in on arrival with your team leader and pick up your materials.
- Ensure that you have recorded all necessary phone numbers in an easily accessible location.
- Walk, drive or be transported to your surveying area with your partner.
- Walk each street and park of your area and invite any rough sleepers to participate by completing the survey with you.
- Ensure your team leader has contacted you every half hour. Follow communication procedure with Team Leader if this has not happened.
- Finish surveying and return to Headquarters by 7:45 am
- Sign out after debriefing with your team
- Complete incident forms as necessary



## 8. IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Team Number	Group Member names	Team Leader Name and Phone Number

### YOUR TEAM

Name	Number

**Coordinator:**

Michael Fitzpatrick	0429 095 690
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**Team Leaders:**

*For advice if coordinators cannot be contacted*


**Other important numbers:**

Police/Ambulance/Fire	000
Link2Home	1800 152 152





