

NEWTOWN

Neighbourhood Centre

New(town) Beginnings #2

Dear Neighbour,

To passers-by in Newtown Square, the Centre can sometimes appear to be a frenetic hub of high energy and intensity. Yes, there can be instances of what police would describe as unsocial behaviour, but what many don't see is how well our clients look after each other.

I'm quickly informed if someone's situation has changed, and the news is always appreciated. It helps me keep people connected to the most appropriate services, whether it's Centrelink, case management, or counselling, so that the support is regular and seamless. It also lets me stay ahead of the game so that arrangements can be made in advance, ready for when the person wants to re-engage.

Only last week, John* who has been experiencing homelessness received an exciting offer of accommodation. He needed to respond quickly but no one was able to get in touch with him as his phone was off. A few enquiries led to finding out he had been admitted to hospital, hence the difficulty in getting in touch. Despite this, it was easy to pass the message on that he needed to come in to the Centre once he was able to.

And what makes the connections I have with our clients so special to me?

It's the calls from clients, bursting with joy to tell me they've finally been given an offer from Housing NSW for permanent accommodation. Or that they've finally been reunited with a long-lost family member or they've been offered a job. It's all these times, when the regulars come in especially to update me on their news.

Just today, Marian*, came to inform me that she'd managed to get some credit on her Opal card, which means that she can now make it to vital appointments without risking another travel fine.

This may sound small to you, but it's all the small wins that I know that eventually amount to a big one. I'll never tire of hearing about these victories.

This community is full of resilience and spirit and I'm lucky to witness this every single day. I've got plenty more stories to share you with so keep a look out for the next issue.

Thanks for reading,

Mel
Community Strengthening Team

* Not actual name.