

Cancer patients to benefit from donation

CONSTANT travel, sometimes daily, to receive treatment is a non-negotiable for cancer patients in Blayney, many of whom will now benefit from crucial funding designed to alleviate burden by reducing their CTP insurance costs.

The Blayney branch of volunteer support network Can Assist, which supports 16 patients in varying stages of treatment, will help to reduce or eliminate those CTP costs thanks to a \$3000 donation from greenslips.com.au.

Can Assist Blayney vice-president Ray Burns said, considering how important travel is to patients in the area, the support will have a monumental impact.

"It will help our patients to have a registered vehicle, which is really important in the bush," he said.

"Registration is a huge cost, especially for people who are struggling (and) combined with a green slip it really adds up.

"This sort of donation can have a big impact on a cancer patient and their family. It means they have one less bill to worry about so they can focus on getting better."

The monetary support becomes all the more important when you consider Can Assist Blayney is almost-entirely community funded, but avenues to raise money were drastically reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Expenses, however, rose.

"Unfortunately, fundraising also took a hit because of the pandemic. Our income dropped 33 per cent, but our expenses rose \$10,000 during that period," Can Assist Blayney secretary Sue Scott explained.

"Patients have to go to Orange or Bathurst for oncology which is a round trip of almost 80 kilometres, for more specialised treatment they need to go to Sydney.

"Some patients could be travelling daily, we have one patient going daily for three weeks. Lots of clients live out of town too, without their own car they'd be lost."

The branch has been able to return to fundraising as restrictions have eased though. With every cent raised going directly to supporting the local community, Mr Burns said the branch would welcome more volunteers to add to the 30 or so it has now.

"We are looking for more ... if we could gain some younger volunteers that would be great," he explained.

Contact Can Assist Blayney on 0488 606 831 or visit www.canassist.com.au.

Blayney named best in the west



TEAM SUCCESS: Blayney's nursing team celebrates winning Western NSW LHD's Nursing/Midwifery Team of the Year award. **Photo:** WESTERN NSW LHD

BY MATT FINDLAY

DESPITE monumental pressure over the last 12 months the nursing team at Blayney Multi-Purpose Service embraced change and flourished, reaping the rewards as they crowned Western NSW's Nursing/Midwifery Team of the Year.

Western NSW Local Health District presented the award recently, marking International Nurses Day in the process, with the Blayney team's commitment during, and after, the COVID-19 lockdown a huge factor in their success.

The award is based on three criteria - demonstration and commitment to the Living Well Together values, a commitment to the nursing profession and demonstration of leadership in the provision of quality care.

During a stressful, scary year full of confusion, during which many residents were unable to visit family and friends, the team at Blayney Multi-Purpose Service went above and beyond in fulfilling all three key measures.

"We are extremely proud of the Blayney nursing team, and their passion and

dedication to providing excellent care for our patients and their families," Joanna Lemmich, Western NSW LHD Acting Executive Director of Quality, Clinical Safety and Midwifery, said.

"The COVID-19 lockdown was a stressful time for residents ... the Blayney nursing team worked together to ensure residents' mental health didn't suffer.

"Staff facilitated window visits, video calls and phone calls keeping residents in touch with their loved ones."

Ms Lemmich also pointed to the Blayney team's willingness to pilot innovative, new projects as another factor in the award win, along with its continued focus on providing learning opportunities and support for nursing students during placements.

"The nursing team at Blayney embrace change and are always willing to undertake pilot projects to improve resident and patient care," Ms Lemmich said.

"Some of those projects undertaken in the last 12 months include - Incontinence Associated Dermatitis roll out, MPS collaborative, SHARE palliative care project, Medication reconciliation and REACH

resident care planning project."

Although the Blayney team was recognised with this year's award, Ms Lemmich took the time to acknowledge the work of all the nurses and midwives in the region, applauding their incredible efforts throughout the last year.

"We would also like to thank and pay tribute to all of our hard working and dedicated nurses and midwives working across the WNSWLHD," she said.

Western NSW LHD also crowned its Nurse of the Year on Wednesday too, with Alice Thorne from Collarenebri Multi-Purpose Service taking home the top gong.

Ms Thorne has been working out west for more than 20 years, with Ms Lemmich lauding her ability to lead by example and continually go above and beyond for her patients, along with her fundraising and volunteering efforts.

"Alice is a very skilled clinician and role model who has a deep passion for ensuring that patients and their families are at the centre of their care. Alice is a strong patient advocate and empowers her peers to do the same," Ms Lemmich said.

Dad, daughter duo dancing for cancer

FORMER Blayney resident Andrew Moxon could be considered pretty typical of many Stars of Orange contestants in that he readily testifies to having no dancing skills prior to training for the competition.

But then, just as he was due to start practicing, he gave himself an additional handicap by breaking his ankle.

Fortunately, unlike her dad, Mr Moxon's daughter and dance partner, Annabelle, 10, is actually good at it.

"She loves dancing so she's

going to teach me," Mr Moxon, whose family still lives in Blayney, said.

"I roped her in to distract everyone that I can't dance.... I haven't danced properly since [my] wedding in 2009."

The pair share the same personal reason for wanting to get involved with the massive Cancer Council fundraiser.

Steph Sandford was only in her early 30s when she died from brain cancer in 2019.

In addition to her being the daughter of Mr Moxon's close friend and colleague,



BUST A MOVE: Andrew Moxon has 'roped in' 10-year-old daughter Annabelle to compete in the Stars of Orange competition. **PHOTO: JUDE KEOGH**

Sandro Tranfaglia, she had also been Annabelle's dance teacher.

As one of the gala night's volunteer organisers, Mr Tranfaglia had been asking

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I just don't want to let Annabelle down.

Andrew Moxon

his mate to get on board as a "Star" for a number of years.

"I'd always come up with a lame excuse because I don't like dancing, to be honest," Mr Moxon admitted, but when he was again asked in 2020, he wanted to do it for his mate.

The studio training Mr Moxon and his daughter for the Stars of Orange gala is also the same where Steph Sandford taught Annabelle.

"[United Dance Project have] been very patient with me," he said. "I'm not so much nervous [about performing]," he added, "I just don't want to let Annabelle down."

Stars of Orange is on Saturday, June 26, from 6pm. Tickets can be purchased from the Cancer Council website, where donations can also be made.

— ALANA CALVERT