

# The power of a country-city partnership helping keep Dunedoo cancer patients' cars on the road

For cancer support network can assist Dunedoo, providing support to keep local cancer patients' cars on the road is vital because of the distances travelled to access treatment. And the grassroots branch recently received a timely donation from greenslips.com.au that will help the branch continue to do this.

Can assist Dunedoo provides practical and financial support to cancer patients in Dunedoo and surrounding townships, via transport costs, pharmaceutical and medical costs, utility bills – even things like lawnmowing. "We never turn anyone back," says Branch Secretary Julie Rowbotham. Another significant expense is accommodation in Dubbo, the big cancer centre for radiography and chemotherapy. "A lot of people from our district are going there for treatment and staying at Macquarie Homestay, and on average the bills are \$1000 each. I currently have four to pay," Julie adds.

The branch helps clients of all ages, with different types of cancer and at different stages of their cancer journey. Since January this year, they've had 14 new patients. "But layered behind that are so many ongoing requests for assistance," Julie says. "The number has risen and, on average, I'm getting two a week from our community nurse."

Julie says the greenslips.com.au donation will have a significant impact. "It's absolutely wonderful, because a lot of our clients are not in a healthy financial position. Our community nurse said to me that this would keep their cars on the road, and she mentioned several recipients who will benefit. The donation is the icing on the cake."

Julie says it's crucial for locals to have their own cars to get around. "The distances are so great," she says. "Driving to Dubbo is a 180km return journey, and there's only one community car that covers a vast area, so it's not always available. Thus, it's vital for people to have their car in good order and on the road. This money is just amazing for the community, and to let them know that greenslips.com.au



Dunedoo branch members at one of their many fundraisers - (back) Kerry Inder, Ann Humphrey, Winston Rowbotham, Julie Rowbotham (Secretary), Phillip Wentworth Brown (President). Front: Eugene Scifleet, Winsome Rowbotham and Judy Bowman

provides a comparison of prices and identifies the cheapest price for your green slip is great. This will go far and wide, because the cost of everything is increasing, and the cost of putting the car on the road is high."

## Greater awareness needed

Julie says that greater awareness of the support that Can Assist Dunedoo provides is needed. "We just want to make people aware we are here for them if they need assistance during a cancer diagnosis. We also need our community to support us, because the money goes directly back into our community cancer patients. Supporting Can Assist is vital to country NSW," she says. "Can Assist assisting local families. We know the toll cancer takes on the local community."

Julie began volunteering with Can Assist Dunedoo 13 years ago, after a friend who belonged to the Mudgee branch asked her. Julie has had personal experience with cancer; her sister Margaret was going through chemo at the time, and five months ago was diagnosed with grade 4 cancer. Julie, herself, has recently had a positive result from the bowel cancer kit test and is waiting to get a colonoscopy. "But onwards and upwards," she adds.

What sets Can Assist apart from other charities is that all money raised locally

stays in the area to help local cancer patients across the district. The branch is funded entirely by local donations, fundraising events, and corporate support such as greenslips.com.au, a CTP green slip insurance price comparison and information website, which has partnered with Can Assist for three years.

"We are humbled to be working with Can Assist," says Stephen Treacey, founder and owner of greenslips.com.au. "Time and time again I've seen just how important it is for a cancer patient in country NSW to have their own vehicle to travel to and from treatment. We're proud to support Can Assist's country NSW patients with the cost of their green slip. Can Assist's powerhouse of volunteers and unique fundraising model, with all money raised locally staying local, ensures donations make a tangible impact with those who need it most. Can Assist provides both practical and emotional support at a time when people need it."

To seek assistance from Can Assist Dunedoo, or for more information about donating or volunteering, please contact Julie at Can Assist on 0408 248 034. For further information about how to support Can Assist, visit [www.canassist.org.au](http://www.canassist.org.au).

## On this Day - 5th October

- 1892 - The Australian Cricket Council announces an intercolonial cricket competition to be known as the Sheffield Shield.
- 1961 - "Breakfast at Tiffany's" film, based on the novella by Truman Capote, and starring Audrey Hepburn, premieres.
- 1973 - "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road" 7th studio album by Elton John is released.
- 2014 - Russell Crowe owned South Sydney Rabbitohs beat Canterbury Bulldogs, 30-6 to break 43-year drought and win the NRL Premiership.