

Numerous members of the local community tuned into the TV Sunday night to witness a team of West Wyalong nurses - Kylie Holland, Shannon Evans, Kirsty Smart and Diana Carne - take on a Paramedics team from Sydney's Northern Beaches in a special episode of Family Fued. The nurses team, described as "keeping the community safe and entertained", certainly did that as they battled the paramedics for a chance of playing for the mega cash prize of \$100,000. While the paramedics came out on top the local nurse team still got to walk away with \$3000 of which they have since donated \$500 each to Can Assist and Country Hope.

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Helping cancer patients who rely on cars



Can Assist West Wyalong has received funding from greenslips.com.au to help pay for cancer patients' green slip insurance.

Cancer patients across the Bland Shire who rely on their car to get to treatment and need assistance, are encouraged to ask for financial support from Can Assist West Wyalong.

As a spokesperson for greenslips.com.au said, "A cancer diagnosis in rural or remote NSW can bring the additional burden of travelling long distances to treatment however through a partnership with us, Can Assist West Wyalong has funding to help ease that burden."

The comparative CTP insurance site knows the cost of CTP car insurance.

It recognises the benefits of keeping local cancer patients' cars on the road, when they need them most.

"Access to a car and maintaining our patient's mobility to ensure they can get to treatment is a major priority," said Can Assist West Wyalong president, Trevor Lanyon.

"Our patients must travel to Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Albury, Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne, for different treatments and specialists.

"Travelling to treatment in your own vehicle is more comfortable while the patient and their carer can go at their own pace giving them security, privacy and a sense of control.

"Their own vehicle is an important comfort zone," said Mr Lanyon.

"Paying for someone's green slip is a great benefit.

Mr Lanyon said they already have four families in need of support with their CTP insurance as they are going five days a week for 6-8 weeks to radiotherapy.

"Having their own reliable car and paying for their green slip insurance is of great support."

Can Assist provides practical and financial support to cancer patients through travel, accommodation and pharmaceutical payments.

In fact Can Assist West Wyalong is currently supporting 57 patients at different stages of their cancer journey, actively involved with 11.

"Can Assist knows more people in the community need help, particularly with COVID-19 putting added burdens on local cancer patients.

"The branch is keen to help more patients in need in confidence, especially with payment from www.greenslips.com.au for their CTP green slip insurance," said Mr Lanyon.

He added how when first diagnosed, it can be mind boggling.

"I talk to our local cancer patients and the families to remind them there are people to support them.

"Our role is to give assistance, take the pressure off, so they can concentrate on the battle with cancer and not worry about the finances," said Client Liaison Officer for Can Assist West Wyalong, Ann Mangelsdorf.

"There is more cancer awareness, earlier diagnosis and treatments are improving with earlier intervention.

"The need in our community is growing with people travelling further to access the broader medical system and new cancer treatments so support from our local community has always been incredible and support from businesses like greenslips.com.au gives us additional capacity," she said.

Can Assist West Wyalong is funded entirely by local donations and local fundraising events, with all money raised locally staying local.

While you won't currently see volunteers at their regular fundraising events, Can Assist still accepts donations and welcomes corporate sponsorship.

During COVID-19, patient needs are even more acute and Can Assist remains committed to assisting all local cancer patients.

Can Assist West Wyalong invite cancer patients to come forward and seek their support.

It is as simple as calling 0438 471 760 with all patient enquiries and support being strictly confidential.

Letter to the Editor

Bitter pill to swallow

Madam,

We write on behalf of the Bland Advisory Group Inc with regard to the article in the "Advocate" on August 7, 2020 - "Counselling service to go it alone as Council backs out of further funding".

We wish to express our absolute disappointment at the lack of support from Council for the farmers of the Bland Shire.

The Bland Advisory Group Inc (BAG Inc) has indeed stepped up to fund this vital service for the primary producers of the Bland Shire and in a larger capacity than what was requested of Council.

The BAG Inc is a not-for-profit organisation that has taken upon itself to fund the provision of a Rural Financial Counsellor on a permanent part-time basis, taking the service from a one day per fortnight to three days per week.

The BAG Inc is working with the Rural Financial Counselling Service - Central West to ensure farmers within the Bland Shire are supported as they battle to recover from years of drought and prior to that, floods.

To set the record straight, Council did provide funding for the supporting role of Business Analyst, a position that exists to support the activities of the Rural Financial Counsellor.

The Business Analyst (BA) is not a Rural Financial Counsellor.

The BA is, in simple terms, responsible for triaging the client before actually seeing the Rural Financial Counsellor.

Earlier this year the person holding the BA role actually resigned and due to Covid-19 this position has not been able to be refilled, a very simple explanation for the balance of funds from Council remaining unused.

Ironically this funding from Council was provided from the Drought Communities Fund,

many would think this an appropriate use of drought funds.

The BAG Inc have worked closely with the Rural Financial Counselling Service - Central West to reinstate the service to the farmers of this shire because of the absolute need.

The last four years have been devastating for the district, first with the impact of the floods of 2016 and then followed by three years of severe drought.

Your readers will vividly recall the seemingly endless dust storms that rolled through in recent years.

While they may have stopped, the financial impacts of the drought and flood will be felt by farmers for much longer.

The farmers of the Bland Shire contribute greatly to the financial security and social fabric of the shire as a whole and of the smaller communities that are largely dependent upon them.

The farmers of the Bland Shire were responsible for agricultural production in excess of \$1.2 billion in 2018-2019.

To put it in perspective this is approximately half of the total value of agricultural production (\$2.517 billion) for the entire Riverina region from 2018-19, noting this year was indeed severely impeded by drought.

To back a farmer is certainly a wise return on investment.

The irony of "\$1 million funding approved for 14 projects" as reported in the "Advocate" (Friday, June 19, 2020) provided through the Drought Communities Program is not lost on farmers.

Certainly worthy projects but one has to question how some of the projects will truly support the wider community or "tackle the effects of the ongoing drought".

Councillors are urged to remember that recent rains do not negate the effects of recent years of drought, the financial implications will be felt for many years to come.

To not support the farmers of the Bland Shire when they contribute so much is a bitter pill to swallow.

**LISA and JOHN MINOGUE
JEFF GOULD
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Bland Advisory Group Inc Executive

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WEEKLY WEATHER WATCH

2020 rainfall to date ~ 510.8mm

Last Weeks Weather Figures taken from 9am-9am						Six Day Forecast supplied by the Elders Weather					
FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
High Temp: 12.8° Low Temp: 6.0° Rainfall: 1.0mm	High Temp: 10.2° Low Temp: 4.6° Rainfall: 4.6mm	High Temp: 12.2° Low Temp: 5.7° Rainfall: 0.6mm	High Temp: 12.5° Low Temp: 1.9° Rainfall: 0.2mm	High Temp: 13.6° Low Temp: 6.0° Rainfall: 0.0mm	High Temp: 15.0° Low Temp: 0.8° Rainfall: 0.0mm	Forecast: High Temp: 16.0° Low Temp: 5.0°	Forecast: High Temp: 18.0° Low Temp: 1.0°	Forecast: High Temp: 21.0° Low Temp: 5.0°	Forecast: High Temp: 14.0° Low Temp: 7.0°	Forecast: High Temp: 17.0° Low Temp: 3.0°	Forecast: High Temp: 23.0° Low Temp: 7.0°
											
Sunny	Fog then sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Windy						