



# wesley impact!

## news

Spring 2020



“Everyone should have someone,” says Mary, Lifeline Sydney & Sutherland crisis support volunteer.

When Mary swapped her corporate career for consulting – and a more flexible schedule – she generously decided to give her time as a volunteer for our Wesley Mission Lifeline Sydney & Sutherland telephone crisis support service.

“I’m very grateful for what I have so I joined the team to give back,” Mary says. “I wanted to have a direct impact and help people.”

Mary has a lot of friends, and she feels the deepest compassion for people battling loneliness.

“If we were not there, who would be there for all those people?” she says. “The worst-case scenario is we’d lose more lives.”

“Some people have no-one; they call us as their connection to a person. Often, they’re completely overwhelmed or they’re in a crisis situation and they’re unable to cope. The worst situation is that they could harm themselves.”

Lately, Mary says more people want to talk about COVID-19 and she has noticed an increase in first-time callers. “People are saying ‘I’ve never had to call before’. There is heightened anxiety, isolation, restrictions, financial upset and career worries. Some people who were already confined had a routine, but their routines have been disrupted and the people who support them aren’t coming.”

“We’re able to lessen their anxiety, to be an ear for them to express themselves without judgement, to vent or cry. It gives them support and validation to know someone’s listening and someone cares. They will tell us ‘thank you for your time’.”

Mary herself is thankful to Wesley Mission supporters who, with our wonderful volunteers, help the Lifeline Sydney & Sutherland service to continue.

**Your help lets us walk with people struggling emotionally in these hard times – thank you.**

\*Photo changed for privacy.

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# Vince's journey



Vince vividly remembers the long walk there, in the pouring rain. When they arrived, “I was soaked,” he says. “It was so good to have a hot shower and a hot meal. I was very grateful.”

While finally safe and comfortable, finding Vince a permanent roof over his head proved a challenge. Years before, he had been struggling with addiction and he wanted to put something aside for his daughter. So he had invested money into a Trust under her name. But they had lost contact after a messy divorce. Although Vince was still glad about his decision, it meant he had nothing left to build a life for himself. Other financial circumstances were complicating his situation, too.

But our team began navigating through Vince’s housing issues. After eight months at Wesley Edward Eagar Centre, Vince was offered a transitional home in Sydney’s inner suburbs. Two years later, we helped him find a permanent residence.

Every night was unbearably cold. Vince would huddle in his crowded tent, shared with four other men, beneath the light rail tunnels of Sydney’s Wentworth Park.

“I thought I was going to be on the streets for the rest of my life,” Vince says.

But in a moment, that all shifted. “I was lucky that Wesley Mission came along, and they changed all that for me,” he shares.

In the park, Vince met Rob from Wesley Mission, who invited him to stay at our Wesley Edward Eagar Centre in Surry Hills.

“The last 10 years have been a struggle for me, and I didn’t ever think that I’d end up where I am today, but I do have to thank Wesley Mission ... I couldn’t have done that by myself,” Vince says.

**Thanks to your generosity, we finally found a place Vince can call home.**

## Update – Wesley Edward Eagar Centre Appeal

We have invited all our friends to support the vital redevelopment of our accommodation facility in the heart of Sydney, where men and women experiencing homelessness can find hope.

The refurbishment reflects our belief that ‘every life matters’. There will be larger, secure and lockable bedrooms – each with an ensuite bathroom, restoring the safety and dignity people have lost. Dedicated spaces in the building will also enable us to launch a new model of care. On arrival people will tell their story to just one person. This single point of contact can then link them to a full range of ‘wraparound’ services on site – from trauma counselling to Centrelink outreach – helping them leave homelessness behind for good.



**We hope to raise \$100,000 from our loyal supporters towards the project. Please consider making a donation to renew this building and renew many people’s lives into the future.**



## Simon's 6 tips for wellbeing

This time last year, we introduced you to Simon. He lives with post-traumatic stress after seeing things as a police officer that no-one ever should.

On one of the four occasions that Simon tried to take his life, a call to our Lifeline Sydney & Sutherland service guided him through the crisis and saved him. The experience motivated him to become a Wesley Mission supporter like you.

Simon has also written a bestselling book with Libby Harkness, 'Life Sentence: A Police Officer's Battle with PTSD'. He is now a sought-after inspirational speaker, sharing the resilience skills he practices daily on his own ongoing journey towards recovery.

**Here are some techniques from Simon you can use to improve your wellbeing and overcome stress and worry:**

1. It's important we maintain our support networks, whether it's through picking up the phone or maybe taking a walk with someone, practicing distancing but still maintaining those connections.
2. Every day try to have some down time and practice mindfulness – being present in the moment – to de-stress and boost your resilience.
3. Remember three things that have been difficult in your life. In uncertain times, or when you are feeling depressed or down or anxious, it's an empowering reminder that there's always hope.
4. With COVID-19, another good thing to realise is that this is new to almost everyone. We're all in this together, you're not alone.
5. Try to give each day a purpose. Each day I write down the three main things I want to achieve. It could be as simple as taking the kids to school. When we have a purpose, it can lead us away from feeling depressed.
6. Helping others is something that uplifts us, it makes you feel good to change someone else's day. One example is your support for Wesley Mission that helps people who are struggling. You can even save lives. I know because my life was saved and my gratitude for that is abundant.

## Your impact on people facing homelessness

Thanks to generous people like you who gave to our recent winter appeal, we could offer emergency relief to many more people as the COVID-19 crisis intensified and the coldest months approached.

From March to June, **we helped 85% more people** than we did in the same period last year who were at imminent risk of being unable to pay their essential bills.

In the month of June alone, as economic challenges deepened in Australia, **twice as many people turned to us** and we could assist them with bill relief, food vouchers, vouchers for essentials like warm clothes, and help to pay critical medical expenses and rent arrears. Some had lost belongings or livelihoods in the bushfires and they are now being hit again by the pandemic.

With you by our side, we helped families maintain their tenancies and made sure those who lost their incomes had enough to eat and could keep the power on and stay warm in the winter cold.

**Thank you for supporting our most vulnerable this winter.**



# How can you make a lasting difference?

From the 7th to the 13th of September, over 70 charities will unite for Include a Charity Week – an event encouraging Australians to consider leaving a gift in their Will to their favourite cause.

This year, the Include a Charity social change movement also launched a new brand combining a fingerprint and a heart, reflecting people's desire to leave their unique mark on the world.

By leaving a gift in your Will to Wesley Mission you can have a lasting impact on those in great need for years to come.

No matter the size of your gift, it will be very gratefully received. Any gift you generously make will help protect the most vulnerable in our society.

If you are interested in receiving further information about remembering Wesley Mission in your Will, please call Stephen Burfield on (02) 9263 5561.



Wesley Mission collects your details for fundraising purposes and to keep you up to date on our activities. All information collected is covered by our privacy policy (reviewed and updated from time to time), see [wesleymission.org.au/privacy](http://wesleymission.org.au/privacy). Please contact us if you wish to change your contact preferences. Photos and names have been changed to protect identity and privacy.

## Let's talk for Mental Health Month



October is Mental Health Month in NSW, encouraging us all to talk and think about our mental health and wellbeing. With COVID-19 increasing distress for many, we're asking you and our other caring supporters to help by raising money and awareness for Wesley Mission's mental health services from 1 to 31 October.

### There's something for everyone:

**Move for Mental Health** – take on a virtual run, trek, cycle or walk in a safe space over the month, improving your own wellbeing while you help others needing support.

**Hold a 'Wellness' virtual morning tea** – catch up safely with friends and family to raise funds for people in crisis.

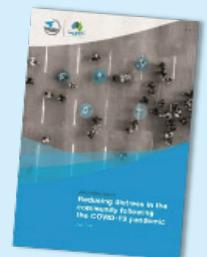
**Create your own fundraiser** – ask your loved ones to support you with any challenge, whether it's conquering a 1,000 piece puzzle or completing a patchwork masterpiece during October.

For advice or questions about fundraising for Wesley Mission, please contact Colette Kinsella on (02) 9263 5218 or email [Colette.Kinsella@wesleymission.org.au](mailto:Colette.Kinsella@wesleymission.org.au)

Set up your fundraising page to share with your networks at [donate.grassrootz.com/wesleymission/our-fundraisers/action](https://donate.grassrootz.com/wesleymission/our-fundraisers/action)

## Strengthening the mental health of Australians

With Suicide Prevention Australia, Wesley Mission released a joint white paper in June, calling on government to offer more support to Australians experiencing distress because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This document highlights social and economic factors in the community that are causing distress and increasing people's vulnerability to suicide.



Read the full white paper at [www.wesleymission.org.au/covid-19impact](http://www.wesleymission.org.au/covid-19impact)

## YES, I want to help Australians in greatest need.

Please accept my payment:

\$25  \$50  \$100  My choice \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My contact details:

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Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

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Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

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Expiry date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Online: [www.wesleymission.org.au/springimpact2020](http://www.wesleymission.org.au/springimpact2020)

My date of birth is: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

So we can send you happy birthday messages.

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