MEDIA RELEASE

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FAIR GO FOR AGED CARE VOLUNTEERS

Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello has reminded volunteers in NSW aged care facilities who were previously required to pay $52 for criminal background checks that they can now be obtained for $15.

As part of Commonwealth requirements, volunteers who have unsupervised access to residents in funded aged care facilities must undergo a National Police Check.

The NSW Government provided a subsidy, which cuts the price of the check from $52 to $15, to encourage more volunteers to work in aged care facilities. These new arrangements have now commenced.

“Background checks are an important way to protect the wellbeing of vulnerable people in care, but $52 is a lot of money and can be a real barrier to attracting volunteers,” Mr Dominello said.

“The reduced price of $15 will make it easier for aged care facilities to host volunteers and will provide a real boost for volunteering in this sector.

“Volunteers provide many benefits for both aged care residents and providers, sometimes simply by lifting spirits with a friendly smile and personal connection.”

Mr Dominello said the price reduction fulfils a commitment made by the NSW Government at the launch of the first ever NSW Volunteering Strategy in May this year.

“There are more than two million volunteers in NSW who contribute more than 240 million hours of voluntary work each year, estimated to be worth a remarkable $5 billion.

“They make our community a great place and we want to help even more people to participate in community life through volunteering.”

The reduced price checks are only available to volunteers and the resultant police certificate will clearly indicate that the individual has been checked for volunteer purposes only. Volunteers who have supervised access to aged care residents, or who are there by invitation from a resident, do not require a check.

National Police Check applications may be made online through NSW Police at https://npcoapr.police.nsw.gov.au

For more details on police background checks go to www.police.nsw.gov.au

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