MEDIA RELEASE

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YOUNGER VOLUNTEERS URGED TO JOIN UP ON NATIONAL MEALS ON WHEELS DAY

Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello has joined calls for younger volunteers to sign up with Meals on Wheels to help ensure the future of the iconic community service.

Speaking today while working with Meals on Wheels volunteers in North West Sydney on Meals on Wheels Day, Mr Dominello said the respected community service needs a new generation of volunteers if it is to survive.

“Meals on Wheels is under threat as more of its current volunteers begin to retire after many years of highly valued service,” Mr Dominello said.

“Now is the time for those with time and skills to offer their services and experience the difference these meals make in the lives of grateful older Australians.”

National Meals on Wheels Day is celebrated on 28 August to recognise the work of the organisation’s volunteers.

“Anyone with time to give should make contact with their local Meals on Wheels supplier to find out how they can help,” Mr Dominello said.

NSW Meals on Wheels CEO, Les MacDonald, said that unless the organisation can replace volunteers who are retiring, it faces the prospect of closing its doors in 10 to 15 years.

“We have an incredible group of 35,000 volunteers who ensure that our 16,000 clients around NSW receive a meal each day, and just as importantly, a friendly chat,” Mr MacDonald said.

“But approximately 90 per cent of our volunteers are aged over 55 years and we would love to see some younger people get involved.”

Today, Mr Dominello, who is the Minister responsible for volunteering in NSW, joined Christian Community Aid to help deliver a range of cuisines, including Indian, Italian and Chinese, to local residents.

“The NSW Government values the 2 million volunteers in NSW who contribute more than 240 million hours of voluntary work each year, estimated to be worth $5 billion to our economy, but we will always welcome more,” Mr Dominello said.

For more information visit the website at www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au.

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