



MEDIA RELEASE: HOMELESSNESS CONNECT

For immediate release

28 July 2016

Have you wanted to lend a hand to local people doing it tough but just didn't know how to help? Here is a way.

Homelessness Connect Day is about connecting people who are homeless or experiencing homelessness with the services and support they need. Homelessness Connect Lismore is being held on Thursday 4th August at The Winsome from 10m-2pm and all are welcome to come along for a community gathering where we'll give a little love to those doing it tough.

This year Homelessness Connect involves a variety of local service providers who will be offering community health services, tenancy advice, housing help, legal aid and counselling. There will be free haircuts, clothing, toiletries and lunch provided. There will also be drumming, live music and giveaways.

Donations of blankets and towels, warm jackets, non-perishable food and new socks and underwear would be appreciated and can be dropped off at the Winsome Hotel, 11 Bridge Street, Lismore from 9am to 1pm daily and ask for the Day Manager.

"It is really important for the wellbeing and protection of people experiencing homelessness to connect them to services who can help, but equally important, is connection to a supportive community. So we are inviting anyone in our wider community to play a part. Come along and have a conversation, share in some of the fun activities and meet other community members" says one of the Homelessness Connect Organisers, Paul Murphy from The Winsome & Lismore Soup Kitchen.

"There are multiple barriers obstructing people who are really homeless from mainstream services. Barriers such as lack of basic personal life skills and lacking access to transport or communication such as the internet; not having a regular address like those who are being forced to live on the riverbank because of shortage of suitable accommodation, or access to official documentation; and financial, medical and social barriers as well. Days like these help to break down these barriers by bringing available services to the people who need them. By making these links we hope to be able to provide ongoing assistance long after the day itself has ended" says Paul. "We will have information about housing, the law, Centrelink and other community supports on hand."

Homelessness Connect is being run this year in partnership with Northern Rivers Social Development Council, OTCP, North Coast Community Housing, The Winsome & Lismore Soup Kitchen, Salvation Army, Centrelink, Consortium of Neighbourhood Centres (CONC) and Connecting Home.

Homelessness Connect has been timed to coincide with Homelessness Prevention Week, an annual event used to raise awareness of homelessness and the surrounding issues. Homelessness Prevention Week aims to:



- recognise the individuals and groups in the community who make a contribution to preventing, and ending homelessness
- raise community awareness and understanding of the causes and complexities of homelessness, and the effect it has
- increase community connections for those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness
- increase community understanding and connections for those working with people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness

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Information for Media

- There will be participants and organisers available for interview by news crews on 4th August at the Winsome. Please contact Paul Murphy on 0428 665 445 or Cathy Serventy 0417 902 370 to arrange interviews.

Media enquiries contact:

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