

Wednesday, 19 February 2025

\$55,000 FUNDING BOOST PROVIDES FREE MOWING TO WOMEN ESCAPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

With the support of Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation, Hunter not-for-profit Victory Care is calling for volunteers for its Yard Maintenance Initiative, which provides free lawn mowing and gardening services for women and families who have escaped domestic and family violence.

Founded in 2021, each year Victory Care's Yard Maintenance Initiative volunteers donate over 400 hours of lawn mowing, gardening, and general yard clean-up to local women and families who are referred to the service by family and domestic violence caseworkers.

With a \$55,000 funding boost from Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation, the organisation is set to expand its impact in the local community.

Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation spokesperson Jackie Connors said the program offers dignity to women when they need it most.

"Caring for the lawn may not be a woman's top priority when escaping domestic violence but having someone to rely on for yard maintenance can truly make a difference in helping her rebuild her life after trauma," Ms Connors said.

"This program is about much more than just mowing lawns – it is about empowering women while offering them both dignity and independence."

Victory Care Director Karen Thorpe said the program was established in response to a service gap which was leaving women in a vulnerable position.

"We developed the Yard Maintenance Initiative as we found that women often did not have the resources to meet lease requirements, which left them at risk of homelessness or reconnecting with perpetrators of domestic violence," Ms Thorpe said.

"It can be really difficult for women escaping violence to access and maintain a rental property, so our service plays an important role in keeping local women and their children safe.

"We are incredibly grateful for the support of Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation, which will allow us to help many more women who are rebuilding their lives after experiencing domestic violence."

Victory Care is set to host a training session on Sunday, 9 March for new volunteers to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to work safely and respectfully.

Volunteers will be taught how to work with clients in a trauma-informed manner and informed on appropriate body language and communication.

Victory Care's spokesperson said everyone is welcome to volunteer, with many hands making light work.

Media release

“Everyone is welcome to volunteer with us and our initiative is a great way for those who are handy in the garden to get involved in a practical way,” Ms Thorpe said.

“We send between four and eight volunteers to each job, so whether you are available to volunteer for a couple of hours on a weekend once a month or regularly during the week, we welcome you to join us and help make a difference for our community.”

To get involved, please visit/contact: vcadmin@c3victory.org.au or phone 0491 632 484

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About Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation

Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation provides more than \$1 million in grants each year to charitable projects aimed at improving the health and social wellbeing of vulnerable people in regional New South Wales. Since its establishment in 2003, the Foundation has provided more than \$26 million to some 550 community initiatives.