

belong

Therapists at
the frontline
of healing

Caring for people with
complex trauma

Creating
a place that
feels like home

Renovations for
Clifford House





I have been both delighted and incredibly grateful for the financial assistance Carinity supporters provided us during June. I'd like to give a personal thank you to all the donors who have assisted in making our annual Chaplains Appeal one of our most successful ever.

Welcome to our winter edition of Belong.

The past six months have been a typically busy time across Carinity services – particularly in the residential aged care and home care service areas.

As you may have read, the Federal Government's generational changes to the aged care system were scheduled to commence on 1 July, however the start date has now been postponed until 1 November.

While our teams had been working extremely hard to ensure we were ready for the new aged care system, it was clear that the implementation timeframe was inadequate.

We welcomed the Government's decision to allow providers more time to implement the changes – particularly in relation to the new Support at Home (home care) program. We have already started to communicate with home care clients regarding the changes and further information will be sent in coming months.

While the additional time to prepare for the changes was welcome, it has delayed the release of a much-needed supply of home care packages. With a reported home care waitlist of around 83,000 people across the country, Carinity supports the calls from several industry bodies for the Government to release a significant number of packages

between now and 1 November to help alleviate the backlog of people needing care.

In other news, I have been both delighted and incredibly grateful for the financial assistance Carinity supporters provided us during June. I'd like to give a personal thank you to all the donors who have assisted in making our annual Chaplains Appeal one of our most successful ever.

KEVIN GRIFFITHS
CARINITY CEO

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On the cover

Emma provides childhood trauma and domestic family violence counselling at Carinity Talera.



Residential aged care

Creating a place that feels like home

Delivering outstanding aged care isn't just about healthcare and physical wellbeing – it's also about creating spaces that are welcoming, safe and where we can feel at ease. This sense of homeliness is just one of the reasons why Carinity is investing in a multi-million dollar renovation at Clifford House.

Carinity's dedication and commitment to caring for seniors began at Clifford House 76 years ago. It's a community full of history and meaning, and one that's well-loved by the residents who call it home.

Clifford House's Residential Manager, Arati Shrestha, said with the input of residents the refurbished Clifford House preserves the site's history while enhancing functionality, comfort and aesthetics for current and future residents and families.

"Our focus has been on making sure that people are comfortable and they have different amenities available and different spaces outside their bedrooms to relax and spend time with family," Arati said.

Above: Residential Manager, Arati Shrestha (centre), views an artwork by David Hinchliffe with residents Alexander Pringle (left) and Gloria Wallwork (right).



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“It’s great to see the residents using the spaces we’ve created, like the dining room. The residents have the homely aroma of fresh cooked meals and it’s a great environment there around meal times.”

The five-stage renovation will completely renew the Woolloowin home, ensuring every resident has a private room with ensuite. All shared spaces will be transformed, creating a contemporary, welcoming space that maintains the homely feel that Clifford House is renowned for.

Among the notable changes in Stage One, the revamped Grevillea wing, are lounge areas that have been enriched with home-like touches, and artwork that was thoughtfully selected to foster engagement and evoke positive emotions for the residents.

Outdated window treatments and security grilles in resident rooms have been removed, and new acoustic panelling on the walls and ceilings of common areas reduces noise and improves its aesthetic appeal, in a nod to the corrugated iron roofs of the Queenslander-style homes in the area.

“It’s great to see the residents using the spaces we’ve created, like the dining room. The residents have the homely aroma of fresh cooked meals and it’s a great environment there around meal times.”

Accessibility for residents in wheelchairs has been improved,



including much larger room doors, while each room has its own private ensuite with toilet and bathroom. These are welcome upgrades for resident Judith Marks, whose mobility is limited.

“There are new things in my room which makes it a lot better for me, being in a wheelchair. To be quite honest, you can’t fault it,” said Judith, who also loves her new in-room refrigerator and large television.

“I thought it was going to be good – but it was unbelievable. It’s gone from an old building to a ‘wow’ building,” she said.

“You would think the place was only just recently put here. It’s beautiful and it really is a credit to Carinity and the builders.”

The second stage of the Carinity Clifford House makeover is almost complete, and Judith is keenly anticipating future upgrades to the upper floor of the aged care home.

“When they change it all upstairs everything here will be new,” Judith said. “This place will be looking like a palace.”



Artwork with purpose

Art plays an important role in creating a sense of place, stimulating memories and evoking emotions. The Carinity team worked closely with our design partners at Deicke Richards to select artworks for our new Grevillea wing. The team selected a range of pieces from local artists, with recognisable landmarks and familiar sights popping up on the walls.

Very special original works from Brisbane artists David Hinchliffe and Nick Olsen are featured

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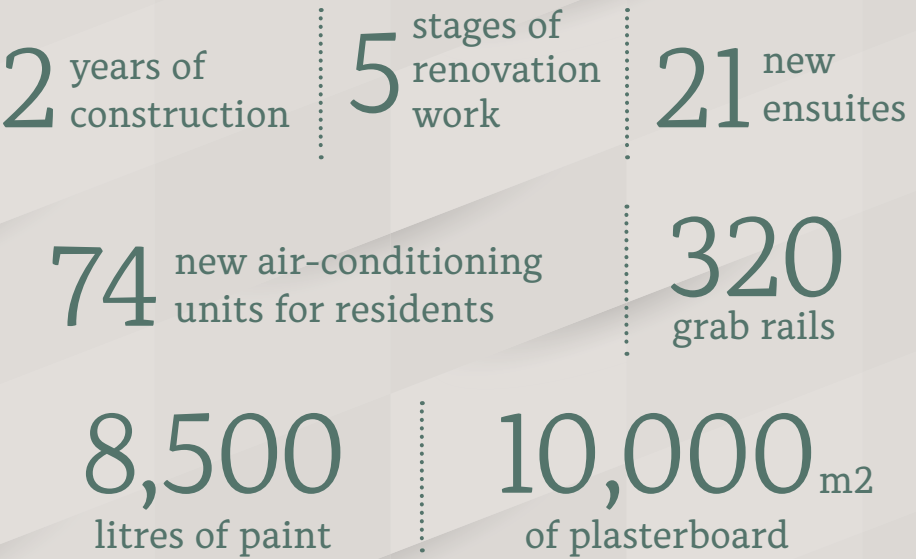
in our newly renovated reception area, while watercolours and botanical studies from local artists can be found in the halls.

Of course, over time, Clifford House had accumulated an extensive gallery of artworks, prints and pieces. Many of these have been re-framed and returned to the walls, acknowledging the rich history of the home. This includes a beautiful original painting of Clifford House’s former home in Ascot, which can be seen in our ‘memory lane’ outside the salon. Memory lane also features historical photographs, artworks and artefacts from Clifford House.

Above: (Left to right): One of the new suites in Grevillea Wing; Residential Manager, Arati Shrestha, with a Nick Olsen print; Dining Room; Coffee & Tea Nook; Clifford House’s welcoming new reception area.



Renovation by the numbers



From the farmhouse to futures

Carinity Education Glendyne began in 1998 as a grassroots mentoring initiative for five teenage boys facing significant life challenges. Classes took place beneath the house on a pineapple farm, with lessons focused on friendship, food, and hands-on activities like farm work and welding.

From these humble beginnings, the program grew into a thriving Special Assistance School — shaped in large part by the leadership of Dale Hansen.

Dale joined Glendyne in 2005, when the education program was still finding its feet. With a background in engineering, vocational training, business and IT, he brought practical expertise and a heart for mentoring. Within months, he stepped into a deputy leadership role and from 2009 went on to serve as Principal for 14 years.

“We were designing programs and buildings from scratch,” Dale said. “There were many challenges, but we had a team willing to roll up their sleeves and figure it out.”

Under Dale’s guidance, Glendyne transitioned to a co-educational model in 2006 and gained Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status in 2007. By 2013, the school had expanded to include middle years, and in 2014 it was formally

recognised under a new framework for Special Assistance Schools.

“The first five years were a steep learning curve,” Dale said. “With a lot of faith, teamwork and determination, we built something truly special.”

From 2007, Dale and his family lived onsite for seven years, caring for the property and its goats, sheep and cattle. During this time, he continued to grow both the physical infrastructure and the spirit of the school community.

Dale said his Christian faith was central to his work. “God’s grace is the power behind everything I do. I was never equipped to do all of it — God brought me into the school, and gave me the courage to keep going.”

What motivated him each day was seeing the transformation in learners — those who arrived disengaged and left with confidence, purpose and qualifications.

“My son and I went fishing one Sunday afternoon, and there was a man there - one of my former students - with his own son. He’s now a father, doing things he never had growing up. Breaking the cycle. That’s success. That’s why we do what we do.”



“Graduation day is my favourite day of the year. These are students who gave up on education, who never thought they were going to achieve anything - and they’re graduating with QCEs, apprenticeships or pathways to university.”

“Not every day is a great day,” he said. “But what brings me back every year is seeing students change, develop and grow into mature young people with some fantastic goals.

“Graduation day is my favourite day of the year. These are students who gave up on education, who never thought they were going to achieve anything — and they’re graduating with QCEs, apprenticeships or pathways to university.”

One of Dale’s greatest joys has been seeing former students thrive.

“One of the great joys I have is walking around the local community here and seeing students who graduated and are now working. Just having a conversation with them years after they’ve left and seeing that their lives are still on a path of success — that’s a testimony to the program’s effectiveness.”

Some graduates, now in their 30s, still stay in touch. One recent encounter stood out.

“My son and I went fishing one Sunday afternoon, and there was a man there - one of my former students - with his own son. He’s now a father, doing things he never had growing up. Breaking the cycle. That’s success. That’s why we do what we do.”

Dale said Glendyne’s impact stems from its clear sense of purpose, God’s many blessings, and the strength of its staff.

“We’re a team that works hard together, supports one another and sees students as real people, not as failures. We want to walk with them, break down barriers and help them reach their hopes and dreams.”

Looking back, Dale said he is proud of what the school has become, and humbled to have played a role in its growth.

After nearly two decades of service, Dale has recently finished up in his role as Principal. While it’s a significant change, he feels peace about the decision and gratitude for the journey.



“Whether you’ve been here two days or twenty years, every person has played a role in what Glendyne has become. It’s never just one person — it’s the whole team working together that makes the difference.”

As he finishes his time at Glendyne, Dale is looking forward to a new season — one filled with rest, family time and spiritual renewal. He leaves confident that the passionate and capable team will continue to see the school flourish.

Above: Glendyne staff farewell long-serving Principal Dale Hansen. **Below:** Dale reconnects with former student Alesia, now a youth worker supporting students at Glendyne.

Molly's vision for seniors celebrating 30 years

Before she passed away in 1985, Isobel 'Molly' Browne was constantly approached to sell farmland in Highfields on which she lived.

However, the former school teacher and devoted local Baptist church member was steadfast that her family property be used for a retirement village and nursing home.

Joan Bell, who has written a history of Molly Browne, described her as a "very godly and generous lady" who lived in a "very modest and rather primitive condition".

She used a hand pump to water her chickens, dog and cows. Rainwater for bathing and cooking came from a tap on an outside tank, and Molly cooked over an open fire with a chimney. In spite of her hardship, Molly was concerned for other people suffering old age and loneliness.

In her will, she bequeathed her 120-acre property to the Baptist Union of Queensland, to be

developed into what is now the Carinity Brownesholme seniors' community.

All that remained of the dairy farm in 1992 was the house, two sheds, bore, windmill and cattle trough. The windmill and cattle trough were later used as part of the landscaping at the Brownesholme retirement village.

The old farmhouse, which was in near disrepair, was sold to Barry and Joan Barwick, members of Toowoomba's Baptist community. They relocated the building – in two sections by truck – to nearby Cabarlah.

The couple spent two decades undertaking a painstaking restoration of the 145-year-old house, returning the dwelling to its near original state. Barry now lives in the Brownesholme aged care community.

The first part of Molly's dream for a home for seniors set on her land became a reality in July 1995 when Brownesholme retirement village's first resident, Gloria Phillips, moved into her independent living unit.



Ruth Baxter moved from her hobby farm near Clifton to Brownesholme in 2000. She is the longest residing current member of the retirement village where "everyone is a friend".

"I heard about this place before it was even built. I got invited to their first open day; I think there were ten units then. I was still working but I thought it would be nice to live there one day," Ruth said.

"There were cattle across the road when I first came here. I love being here, it's so nice and peaceful. I love the birds, the wildlife and the gardens.

"If anything goes wrong, it gets sorted out. If the plumbing goes



"I have seen enormous growth in Highfields, and I'm still amazed at how it's booming now."

It has enabled Joyce Larkens to remain living in the same community she knows and loves – and stay connected to friends from the retirement village in which she used to live.

Joyce moved to Brownesholme 25 years ago – and has never wanted to leave. She found comfort knowing her retirement village is co-located with the aged care home – and that additional support would be available should she need it. That moment arrived two years ago.

"I had a very bad fall in July 2023 and moved to the aged care home with a week's notice," Joyce said.

"I am very grateful to the lovely, kind and efficient staff. They all look after us very well. The food is very good ... and the entertainment keeps us busy and happy."

Some of Joyce's neighbours from the retirement village have since moved from their independent living units to the aged care community – and they continue to enjoy their cherished friendships.

Molly Browne would have wanted it that way.



"I am very grateful to the lovely, kind and efficient staff. They all look after us very well. The food is very good ... and the entertainment keeps us busy and happy."

or the hot water breaks down, it gets fixed. You don't have that worry. I'm very lucky."

Fellow resident Ian Grey also enjoys the serenity of the peaceful village which has witnessed a burgeoning suburb grow up around it.

"I have seen enormous growth in Highfields, and I'm still amazed at how it's booming now," Ian said.

"It's ideally situated, this village, and I wouldn't think of going anywhere else. What I enjoy

most is the friendship and the companionship of all the people here, and the kindness they show to me."

Molly Browne's vision for seniors' care catering to all ages was fully realised in 2021, when the Brownesholme residential aged care home was opened near the retirement village.

Brownesholme retirees have peace of mind knowing they can access higher care near their current home if they require it.

Opposite: Joyce Larkens has lived at Carinity Brownesholme seniors' community since 2000. **Above (clockwise):** Ian Grey and Merilyn Playsted have been next-door neighbours at Brownesholme's retirement village for 15 years; Ruth Baxter is the longest residing current member of the retirement village; Joan Bell, Doreen Rose and Joyce Larkens are former Brownesholme retirement village residents who now live in the aged care home; a sketch of Molly Browne's old farmhouse.

Therapists at the frontline of healing

When Emma was studying to become a clinical psychologist, she knew there was only one place in the world she wanted to work. After securing her dream student placement at Carinity Talera in 2010 while completing a master's degree, Emma has never looked back.

Carinity Talera is a specialist childhood trauma and domestic family violence counselling service on Brisbane's southside. The service welcomes an average of 65 children, young people and their protective caregivers through the doors each week.

"I wanted to work at Talera because of their reputation as an industry leader when it comes to supporting people who have experienced child abuse, neglect, and domestic and family violence," Emma said.

"I have always loved supporting people and was drawn to working in a helping profession.

"I originally considered becoming a forensic psychologist, but after completing a prison placement during my honours year, it really became apparent how childhood trauma could impact people's development trajectories if they don't receive support and intervention.

"The work we do at Talera is so important because we're a free service providing medium to long-term support to families and all our care is trauma-informed, meaning we approach everything from a place of understanding and compassion."

Emma's career progression at Talera has seen her advance from student to Child and Family Therapist, and now Senior Practitioner. During this time, she also returned to university to complete a PhD focused on burnout and secondary trauma in health practitioners who support people exposed to complex trauma.

"Working in this field, I have become passionate about the wellbeing of therapists, both in terms of training and the organisational support and supervision they receive," Emma said.

"This work can be so rewarding and such a privilege to do, but there can be some negative impacts on the health of practitioners who provide trauma therapy, which I explored in my PhD.

"Secondary trauma (sometimes called compassion fatigue or vicarious trauma) is essentially where, through providing empathic support to clients who have experienced trauma, practitioners can start to experience symptoms that directly mirror their clients.

"My research identified the importance of organisations being trauma-informed, including having supervisors who are trained in trauma, and that workplaces need to be emotionally safe for staff."

Talera's Program Manager Victoria said she was proud that the service continued to attract highly educated and passionate employees.

"Emma is a clear example of the kind of therapist we look for - someone who blends clinical excellence with warmth, humility, and a deeply grounded, compassionate presence," Victoria said.

"Whilst all our therapists hold master's level qualifications in counselling, social work or psychology, it's their capacity to stay present in the face of distress, engage in reflective practice, and build authentic, attuned relationships that's so important."

Leading a team of 11 dedicated individuals at Talera, Victoria said that what sets the service apart from an employment perspective is the prioritisation of staff wellbeing.

"We're protective and supportive of our team's safety and wellbeing. That means regular internal and external clinical supervision, debriefing, and a culture of self and collective care.

"We also place strong emphasis on professional development, offering financial support and dedicated time for learning to ensure our team continues to grow, feel resourced, and stay connected to best practice."

Victoria said the best part of her job is bearing witness to the healing experienced by children, young people and families as they begin to feel safe, seen and heard.

"It's also enormously satisfying to support a team of compassionate therapists who approach every day with care, consideration, and integrity," she said.

"I'm inspired by the work we do together - holding hope, honouring stories, and walking alongside families on their journey toward recovery."

Opposite: Senior Practitioner Emma with Program Manager Victoria in the gardens at Carinity's domestic family violence counselling service. **Above:** Victoria and Emma with colleagues Ben, Karen and Gabbie in one of Talera's therapy rooms.



Serving up comfort

There's not many people who don't find comfort and nourishment in a favourite meal. It's a source of enjoyment that's shared by our residents in Carinity's aged care communities.

For the chefs and kitchen teams in each home, the act of caring through food brings its own reward. We spoke with Nicolas Harth, Chef at Carinity Brownesholme, whose career has taken him around the world and has now brought him back home to the familiar hills of Toowoomba's Highfields.

As a Jandowae born-and-bred local, Nick started his career as an apprentice chef in kitchens across Toowoomba. Hailing from a family of chefs, donning the apron to follow his mother and older brother seemed like the natural choice.

After finishing his four-year apprenticeship, Nick headed overseas where he gained the bulk of his experience. "I worked in three-rosette restaurants –

which are the equivalent of a Michelin star – with a brigade of chefs, before moving across to hotels, including boutique hotels in the beautiful Cotwolds in England.

When he returned home to Australia with his young family in tow, Nick found himself looking for a different kind of challenge.

"A resident might need to change to a soft diet and be struggling with some of the limitations, like missing fresh beans or lettuce. We'll try and personalise it as much as possible – I'll always make the time to sit with them and understand what they need, to make sure they're happy."

"Mum worked as a chef in aged care for a long time," he said. "I often used to help her out in the kitchen when I was an apprentice, so I had a good understanding of the differences in serving older diners."

Nick's experience alongside his mum meant he knew that food in aged care could still provide a great dining experience.

"Mum used to always make things from scratch, so that was one of my prerequisites of coming to work at Brownesholme, that there would be no packet foods – not even soups."

Hearing Carinity's commitment to freshly prepared and cooked meals sealed the deal.

Getting to know the residents and their preferences appealed to Nick. Adapting to the dietary requirements of 96 individual residents gave him the opportunity to put his creative mind to work. A varied, flexible menu and responsive team plays a big role in this.

In all Carinity homes, every afternoon residents are invited



to choose what they'd like to eat tomorrow. Of course, just like at home, sometimes when the day arrives they feel like something else instead. That's why there's always the choice of an alternative meal, salad or sandwich, to make sure no-one goes hungry.

For those occasions where nothing sounds quite right, Nick and his team make sure to have other options available, which also helps to minimise food waste.

"I cryovac extras from our regular roasts, so it's never a problem to whip up a meat and three vege if I need to," he said. "We're not a restaurant, but we try to



have as many options as we can, so residents can usually find something they enjoy."

With many residents experiencing new dietary requirements, Nick always has a solution.

"A resident might need to change to a soft diet and be struggling with some of the limitations, like missing fresh beans or lettuce. We'll try and personalise it as much as possible – I'll always make the time to sit with them and understand what they need, to make sure they're happy," he said.

This personal approach of getting to know each resident is something that Nick really enjoys about his role.

"It's on us to maintain residents' nutrition, so we've got to make it interesting, with good flavours and textures and all those elements that we take for granted. Making it as exciting as possible is really important."

As the saying goes, we 'eat with our eyes', and it's no different as we get older. It's especially important for residents on a texture-modified or soft diet. For Nick's team at Brownesholme, making soft food look as good as it tastes is something of an artform. From food moulds to creative experiments, the team are always seeking out new ways to offer variety and interest. Recently, Nick and his team have set themselves a challenge to create corn and beetroot – typically tricky to serve in a safe way as a soft food.

"I want to make sure that all the residents are enjoying the same food. This is just a different shape – the flavours should be there, everything should be there, just slightly modified."

After nearly four years serving residents, there's still more that Nick wants to do.

"Introducing a seasonal menu, increasing how much food we're sourcing locally and staying focused on giving residents the best possible dining experience keeps me motivated."

The happy chatter of residents as they share their meal together is also a great reward.

Above: Chef Nick Harth in Brownesholme's commercial kitchen; plating up a freshly prepared favourite; Leeanne Smith dices up fresh produce ready for the evening meal.

My Story

Brandon Walker Home Care Lifestyle Carer

Brandon's teenage and early adulthood years were not those of a regular teenager. Over four years he cared for two very special loved ones through to the end of their lives. While challenging and sad times, they set the foundation for his purpose-led career.

The drive and passion to support those in palliative care steered Brandon to work as a personal care assistant at Toowoomba Hospice.

"I was immediately drawn to the hospice to make a difference by providing comfort and reducing stress at this incredible challenging time of someone's life.

"Working in aged care was the natural next step in my journey, so I completed my Certificate III in Aged Care," Brandon shares.

Brandon joined the Carinity Home Care Brisbane North team in 2024 as a Lifestyle Carer, providing support to seniors living at home.

"I love being a carer. I love being able to make a difference, and help our clients retain some of their independence by staying at home.

"One of my favorite moments as a carer was taking my 93-year-old client and wife out to lunch at Hungry Jack's, a favourite spot of theirs. It was wonderful to see their joy from such a simple activity. They loved watching the world come and go around them."

It's not just the lives of the seniors he cares for that has improved since Brandon started at Carinity – his own life has also benefited through his caring for others.

"Since joining Carinity and reconnecting with my purpose I have so much more confidence in myself. I'm surrounded by a supportive team, a manager who has our interests at heart, and every day I find myself feeling stronger and better in myself."



Read Brandon's
full story ➔



chaplains chat



Our Carinity team believe that every person is made in the image of God and is therefore profoundly important to Him. You and I may not always experience a resounding exclamation of joy when looking into the mirror every morning, but regardless of how we feel, as images of God, we all hold great worth.

People matter. We see this in Jesus' ministry constantly. He deliberately shifted His attention to the fringes of society and consistently found time to engage with all people. The simple act of being listened to, prayed for, or remembered, can spark profound change in people.

The feedback from our Carinity Chaplaincy and Missions team is that when someone feels genuinely heard and loved, it helps people rediscover identity, dignity, and belonging.

We see this within our ministry in prisons, where inmates feel forgotten and overlooked, and yet, by offering time each week, our Inside Out Prison Chaplains remind real people that they truly matter.

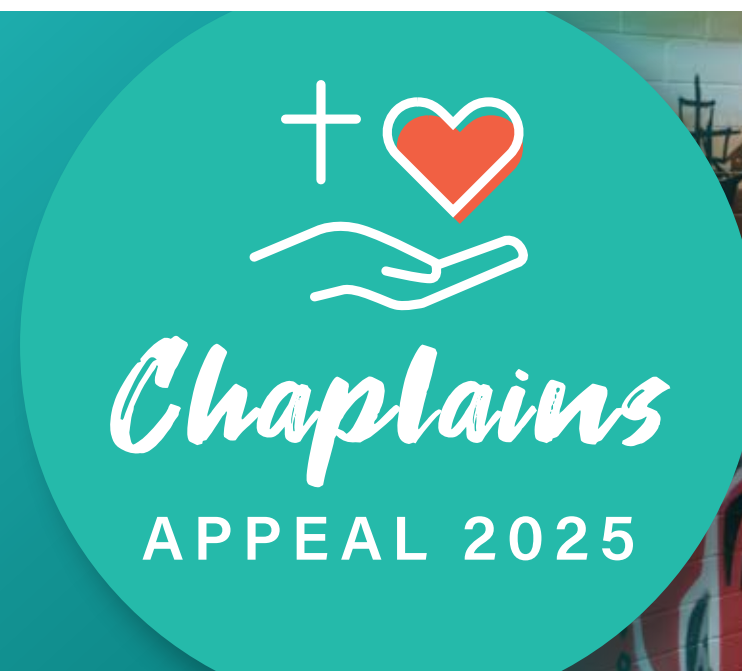
Our Carinity school chaplains provide an essential service to our families, students, and staff, focussing on providing compassion rather than

judgement. In doing so, it breaks down walls of isolation and, builds bridges of trust and communicates dignity.

Likewise, our hospital, residential aged care, and home care chaplains provide space for healing, hope, and reconciliation. It becomes a holy encounter – where the Good Shepherd seeks the lost, binds up the broken, and restores souls. In these moments we see that compassionate care is sacred and transformative.

Following our recent Chaplains Appeal, we give our profound thanks to the wonderful donors who chose to partner with us. Your financial support is vital to ensuring our Carinity Chaplains continue to reflect the Good Shepherd by caring for others!

REVEREND DAN LYONS
DIRECTOR OF MISSIONAL
CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP



"God has become
everything in my life"

Donations of \$2 or more to help continue the work of Chaplaincy are tax deductible and can be made at carinity.org.au/donations or by scanning the QR code to the right.





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