

# RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH



Current Items of Interest

10 June 22

## **CALL to ARMS – We need Welfare Volunteers!**

Over the past two years the ranks of our volunteers have diminished. COVID-19 took its toll by halting all group activities and home visits. As COVID restrictions ease, we are keen to re-establish the connections with members and need your help to do this.



How can you help?

- We need to re-establish our Home, Hospital and Residential Aged Care Visiting Groups to maintain contact with our older and frail members through visits or regular phone calls
- Coffee catch-ups with members
- Assisting with commemorative and special events
- Contributing and editing articles for our publications
- Assisting with Day Club weekly fun activities or outings
- Archiving, library services or assisting the office staff
- Assisting with transport
- Organising recreational or social activities
- Helping raise funds through the ANZAC Day and poppy appeals
- Assisting with delivery of Christmas Cards and gifts to our oldest members
- Attend presentations for volunteers at the sub-branch on relevant topics to keep up to date with information

These are some of the opportunities for volunteers and other suggestions are always welcome.

What is needed to be a Volunteer?

Firstly, your genuine interest in people and your investment of time and energy in their well-being.

Each member of our volunteer team must be prepared to abide by our privacy and confidentiality policies and apply for the Working With Vulnerable People (WWVP) certification (at no cost to you).

Our volunteers are highly regarded, not just by RSL, but by those who receive their care and attention and by the community at large.

**We would also welcome our former volunteers to let us know if they are still willing and able to offer their services.**

Please contact the Welfare Office by email: [welfare@rslwoden.org.au](mailto:welfare@rslwoden.org.au)

or

phone: 6285 1931 on Tuesday or Wednesday.

*We would like to hear from you!*





**RSL**  
Australia

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

8 June 2022

For immediate release

**The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) is grateful for government support and funding of veteran services and is encouraging the Federal Government to look at providing guaranteed and sustainable needs-based funding to supplement the ongoing reliance on ex-service organisations and volunteers.**

**This follows the RSL experiencing a record year in demand for support, representation and service delivery across the veteran community across which more than \$13.3 million was spent on welfare service delivery. In the past year, the RSL has provided 437,000 hours of advocacy on behalf of veterans – more than 370,000 hours of work supporting veterans' claims for compensation and 66,000 hours of veteran welfare services This emphasises the current reliance of the veteran support system on services provided by organisations like the RSL.**

**The RSL says there is an urgent need for long-term solutions and certainty to resolve the many serious issues and concerns confronting veterans, service personnel and their families – critical to addressing some of the issues arising as part of the current Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.**

**RSL Australia President Greg Melick said issues needing such solutions include reducing the complexity of relevant legislation and ensuring DVA funding is demand driven and not subject to annual budget allocations.**

**“The Royal Commission presents Australia with the opportunity to address the devastating impact of this scourge on veterans, serving Defence Force personnel and their families. It also represents an opportunity to focus on the broader needs of veterans and their families, not only now, but into the future,” Greg Melick said.**

**“The RSL is providing advice and assistance for veterans and their families throughout the process to help their voice and experience to be heard. We have always sought to engage with whichever process can achieve the best outcomes for Defence Force members, veterans and their families regarding mental health and suicide.**

**“Ex-service organisations, the Government and Australian society must all work together to find and coordinate solutions to minimise Defence Force and veterans' suicide, and in doing so, honour the covenant between the Australian people and those who have served and sacrificed so much on their behalf.”**

**Greg Melick said the RSL's record level of support and representation for veterans and active service personnel across Australia and in overseas theatres of operation was testament to the immediate need for improvements and the importance of holistic solutions for the future.**

**“The RSL's investment over the past year has funded the provision of welfare services for veterans, covering mental health training and support, employment assistance, transition support, and a range of other wellbeing initiatives.**

**“Veterans needing support and assistance can find it as close as their nearest RSL Sub-Branch and the importance and value of this support and the more that 450,000 hours of work of RSL volunteers cannot be underestimated.**

**“Additional initiatives include the establishment of a national mental health training program, the RSL Veteran Employment Program, development of transition hubs, expansion of veteran wellbeing centres, a program of bursaries, scholarships and grants for veterans and their families, and preparations for the launch of 12-month pilot digital ‘Catalogue of Services’ initiative to connect Australian veterans and their families to the services, support, and communities they need.**

**“As well as continuing and expanding our range of services, we are committed to working with government, the ex-service organisation sector, veterans and their families to coordinate the response needed to minimise risk of suicide and maximise the wellbeing of Australia’s Defence Force members and the veteran community.”**

**Greg Melick said the RSL has the network, the experience, and the expertise to lead the ex-service organisation response, and in doing so, help to improve the lives of Australia’s Defence members, veterans, and their families.**

**“The heritage of the RSL Australia-wide – where mates have voluntarily helped mates independently for some 106 years – will continue to be the bedrock of our service and veteran support throughout and beyond the Royal Commission process,” he said.**

**ENDS**

**National Media contact: Tony Harrison – 0417 318 178; [tony@wearebright.com.au](mailto:tony@wearebright.com.au)**

# **CANCELLATION OF THE OGM DINNER SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY 28 JUNE 2022 - PROPOSED AFTERNOON TEA**

Dear members,

Due to the uncertainty surrounding the COVID situation in the ACT, the Sub-Branch Board has decided to cancel the OGM dinner scheduled for Tuesday 28 June 2022. We regret having to make this decision but feel that it is the most prudent course to take for our members.

In lieu of the dinner and to offer an opportunity for camaraderie to members, the Board has suggested that an afternoon tea be held from 1500-1700 hours on Tuesday 28 June 2022 in the Corey Room at the Sub-Branch office, Holder with light refreshments provided.

To gauge the level of interest in the above proposal, I would be grateful if you would advise if you might attend.

Regards,

Greg



**Greg Kennett**  
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## **WODEN VALLEY RSL SUB-BRANCH: GEARS PROGRAM, INVITATION TO NOMINATE**

Dear All,

With my apologies for chasing some of you previously and thanking you all for your patience, I now advise that we have delayed the start of the GEARS Program from 02 Jun until 15 Aug 22. While this delay will be subject to the extension of the grant that is paying for the course, I'm confident that we will be able to conduct the course as planned. Please also note that we have changed the day from Thursdays to Mondays as Thursdays seemed to fewer possible diary conflicts.

Although I'm sending this email to organisations and individuals as BCCs, I'm sure, that once a panel is confirmed, communications will become more transparent.

Please note that MESHA Has confirmed that a referral from your treating GP or Psychiatrist is required. They will issue a revised Referral form in due course as that will provide ample time to complete the document.

In the meantime, I'd appreciate it if you could advise the Sub-Branch Welfare Team of your interest in attending this course. Please also share the invitation with any colleagues and friends whom you think might be interested in attending or in finding out more about the course.

We are looking for 10-12 participants for each panel and will consider conducting two courses in parallel if we receive sufficient interest.

The following information provides an outline of the course and some basic administrative matters:

The course will be conducted at the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch rooms at 27 Mulley Street, Holder;

Course dates/timings are each Monday night between 1800-2000 for 12 weeks from 15 August 2022;

Light refreshments will be provided from 1715;

Training Manuals/workbooks will be provided at the first session;

As the course is funded through a DVA grant to the Sub-Branch, there is no charge to participants;

An outline of the GEARS Program is shown at the end of this email with additional information being available at <https://mesha.org.au/about-us/> ;

Representatives of the Sub-Branch will be available to facilitate entry to the building and access to facilities during each session;

As some of you will have other commitments that you will need to juggle through the 12 weeks of the course, there will be an option to join a session using ZOOM as and when required;

We will issue Nomination/Referral forms by late June/early July.

In closing, I again apologise for this late change, and encourage you to contact either MESHA or me if you have any questions.

Please also contact me if you have any friends or colleagues whom you think might be interested in nominating for this or any subsequent course.

**Jim Gilchrist**

## **What is the GEARS Program?**

**GEARS is a refined 12-week program (2 hours a week) which has evolved from the highly successful Skills Training in Affective and Interpersonal Regulation (STAIR) program.**

**The GEARS program is tailored specifically for current or former serving military members and emergency service personnel and issues they face including identity in transitioning back to civilian life, improving mood regulation, interpersonal communication skills and relationship skills.**

**The GEARS program was developed by Dr Jon Lane, Psychiatrist, current ADF Reservist and Afghanistan Veteran.**

**You will learn how to:**

- **Become more aware and comfortable with your emotions**
- **Develop positive, healthy coping skills for distressing feelings**
- **Identify unhealthy relationship patterns**
- **Build skills to improve your relationships**

**Build resilience and confidence.**

**To be eligible for a place in the program, you must:**

- **Be a current or former military or emergency services member**
- **Have mental health symptoms that concern you**

**Obtain a referral from your GP, psychologist or psychiatrist to attend the program – [GP Referral Form](#).**

**The GEARS program is held in Adelaide, Darwin, Canberra and Hobart and online sessions are also available via Zoom.**

**Dates for upcoming sessions will be announced soon. For more information or to be put on the waitlist for our next program, please contact [programs@mesha.org.au](mailto:programs@mesha.org.au) or call us on [\(08\) 7002 0880](tel:0870020880).**

**Please note GP Referral is mandatory to participate for ethics requirements of the project. [GP Referral Form](#)**

## Gungahlin RSL Sub-Branch - safeTALK Workshop 2 July 2022

**Good Evening All,**

**For those of you that have attended our monthly get togethers, we mentioned a couple of months ago about holding a safeTALK workshop. We have it booked in and please see the information below.**

**Over the past few years, we have all been exposed to the stresses and uncertainty of the pandemic. Unfortunately, this has put a significant strain on the veteran community and those who support them.**

**The Gungahlin RSL is hosting a half-day safeTALK workshop on 2 July between 9 am and 1 pm as part of the RSL Australia Mental Health Initiative. This workshop is free to anyone connected with veterans or the veteran community.**

**There are no costs to attend this workshop, and morning tea will be provided. Attached are flyers which will provide more details about this opportunity. To register for this workshop, call Open Arms at 1800 011 046 and ask to register for the safeTALK workshop on 2 July in Gungahlin in the ACT.**

**Alternatively, you can email me letting me know that you would like to attend and I will respond in bulk. I think this is something that could benefit a lot of our members and their loved ones. We will also look into hosting a 2 day Mental First Aid course in the coming months following this safeTALK.**

**We look forward to seeing you there.**

**Kind Regards**

**Kim**

**Kim Hicks**

Secretary

*Gungahlin RSL Sub Branch*

Member ACT Govt - MACVF

*Ministerial Advisory Council for Veterans and their Families*

M: 0409846996

E: [secretary.gungahlinrsl@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.gungahlinrsl@gmail.com)





*"Everyone  
can make a  
difference  
in  
preventing  
suicide"*

*A national educational workshop to help you become more alert to suicide prevention opportunities and how to offer help*

Most people with thoughts of suicide signal their distress and invite help. These opportunities are often missed, dismissed or avoided, and people feel more alone and at greater risk.

During this workshop you will:

- Watch video role play reminders of why suicide alertness matters.
- Hear how open, direct talk about suicide can increase safety.
- Discuss barriers to helping and practice basic helping steps.

*Who can attend:* Anyone concerned about family, friends, colleagues or others in the veteran community.



**LIVINGWORKS**





# OPERATION LIFE: SUICIDE ALERTNESS FOR EVERYONE (safeTALK)



*"Everyone  
can make a  
difference  
in  
preventing  
suicide"*

Most people with thoughts of suicide signal their distress and invite help. If these opportunities are missed, dismissed or avoided they can leave people more alone and at greater risk.

In safeTALK you will learn how to become more alert to suicide prevention opportunities and how to offer help.

**Saturday, 2 July 2022**

**9 am to 1 pm**

**Gungahlin**

**Registration Close: 17 June 2022**

To register for the safeTalk workshop, call 1800 011 046 or visit [OpenArms.gov.au](http://OpenArms.gov.au) and search for 'Suicide alertness for everyone'



**LIVINGWORKS**



# Suicide Intervention & Mental Health Literacy Workshops



*"I wanted to look out for my mates and this course gave me some skills to help them"*



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**Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling, in partnership with RSL Australia, are offering free training opportunities to those seeking to help family, friends, co-workers or others in the veteran community.**

These suicide intervention and mental health literacy workshops are delivered in RSLs and major Ex-Service Organisations (ESO) around the country.

If you are an ESO and would like to get involved with this training please contact  
MSHP@ClinicalProgramsandPolicy@dva.gov.au  
or call 1800 011 046

For more information about the workshops and other programs offered by Open Arms, visit  
[www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/treatment-programs-and-workshops](http://www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/treatment-programs-and-workshops)



## **COFFEE CATCH UP EVERY FRIDAY 10-12**

**Members and guests are welcome to join us for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee & cake with former service mates. Every Friday from 10 to 12 in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.**

**Please note that the Eddison Day Club is currently meeting on only a very casual basis for lunch at midday Fridays.**



## **Contact Us**

Give us a call for more information or access to our services

**RSL Woden Valley  
Sub-Branch  
14/27 Mulley Street  
HOLDER ACT 2611**

**62851931**

**admin@rslwoden.org.au**

Visit us on the web at  
**www.rslwoden.org.au**

Office hours are  
**9am-3pm Mon-Fri**

## **PS.**

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