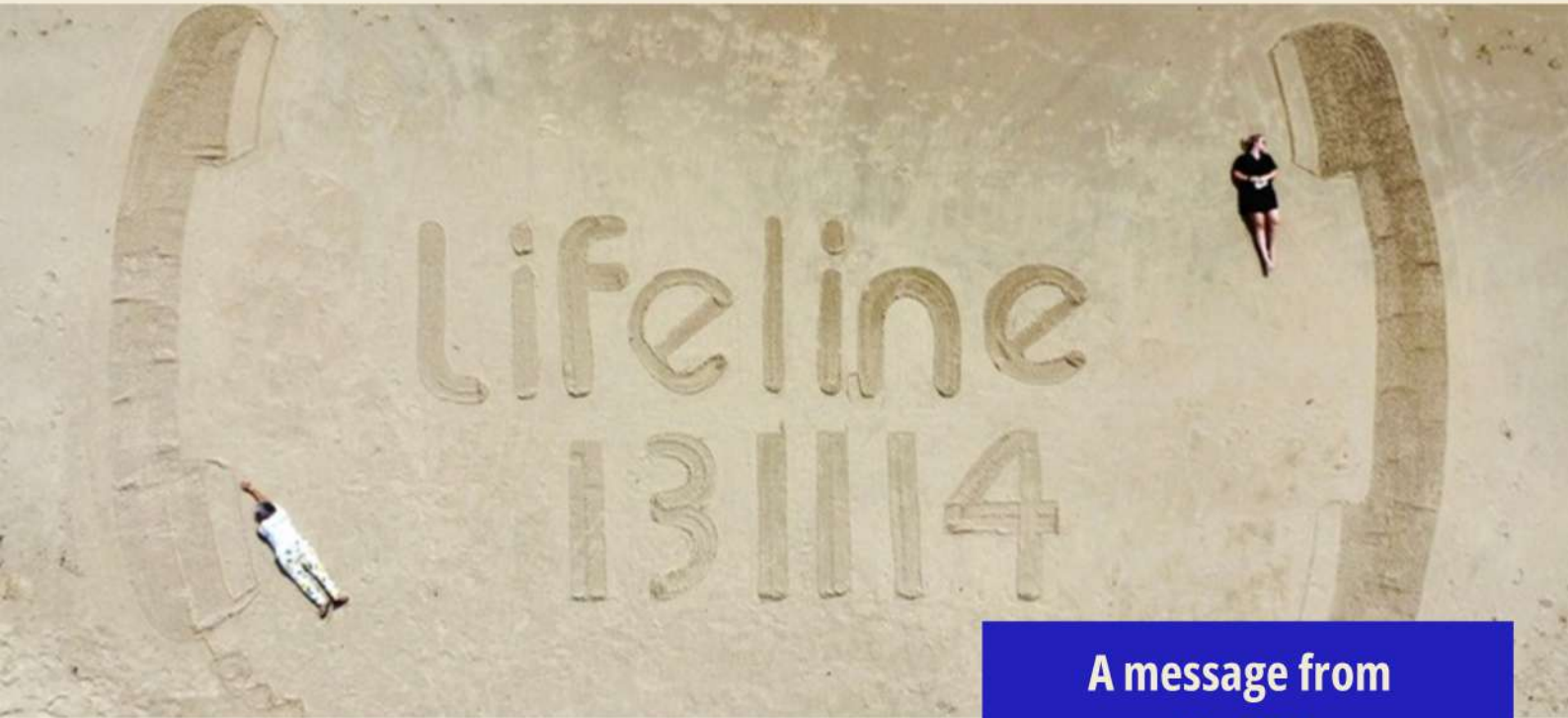




Lifeline Connect



Welcome to edition 3 of Lifeline Connect!

In this issue, we'll update you on the latest happenings across all areas of Lifeline Mid Coast. You'll also get a first look at our exciting new branding, featuring fresh colours and graphics that will soon be rolled out across the entire Lifeline brand. We're excited to share these updates with you, and we hope you enjoy this edition!



A message from the CEO

As the organization looks ahead, it embraces the reality that change is accelerating. A fitting quote encapsulates this sentiment: **"The pace of change has never been this fast, yet it will never again be this slow."** This perspective underscores the importance of adaptability and innovation as Lifeline Mid Coast moves into its 2025–2030 strategic plan. With significant transformations on the horizon, the goal remains clear—building on a strong legacy of service while forging new paths to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving world.

CEO Corner



A Bold Start to 2025 and a Vision for the Future

CEO - Catherine Vaara



The year 2025 has kicked off with exciting milestones for Lifeline Mid Coast. The grand reopening of the Lifeline Shop at 24 Central Rd has been a tremendous success, thanks to the dedication and hard work of Shop Managers, volunteers, and the Board Building Committee. As preparations continue for the upcoming grand opening of the Wingham Shop, the commitment of those involved continues to shine through.

Adding to the significance of this period, Lifeline Mid Coast had the honour of hosting a farewell visit from Colin Seery, the esteemed CEO of Lifeline Australia, who will be retiring in the coming months. Colin's visit was deeply meaningful, as he personally thanked volunteers and staff for their contributions to Lifeline and acknowledged the crucial role Lifeline Mid Coast plays in guiding best practices in suicide prevention and postvention. His words reinforced the organization's reputation as a Centre of Excellence—a place others look to for leadership and innovation in mental health support.

During his visit, Colin spent time with Eclipse participants, expressing how deeply moved he was by their experiences and the program's impact. He emphasized the importance of championing initiatives like Eclipse, recognizing that Lifeline Mid Coast's work is making a real difference in people's lives.

Colin's tenure as CEO has been marked by vision and compassion, transforming Lifeline Australia into a forward-thinking organization that embraces new technologies to extend its services to all Australians. His leadership has left an indelible mark, and his parting words serve as an inspiring reminder of the ongoing mission Lifeline Mid Coast carries forward. Under strong leadership, and with the dedication of its volunteers and supporters, Lifeline Mid Coast stands ready to shape the future of mental health support in Australia. The journey ahead is filled with promise, and the organisation's commitment to excellence will continue to make a lasting impact.

Board Corner

The Board has been very busy since the last Newsletter article. **“We are focused on delivering a successful and sustainable Lifeline Mid Coast to meet our customers, clients, and participants' needs and expectations, both today and in the future.”**



Concept plan - new Lifeline Mid Coast centre

Mission Statement

Committed to being a steadfast leader in crisis support and suicide prevention, we reach out to those in need and stand by our community through every season, fostering support and resilience.

(REVISED AND RECONFIRMED FOR 2025-2029 STRATEGIC PLAN)

New Admin and Services Building

The major project is the new Administration and Services Building Project. I am pleased to report that at the board meeting held on 10 April 2025, the Board received the Plans and costings and authorised the lodgement of the Development Application.

Building Projects

At the start of 2025, our Board Building Committee under the leadership of Peter Orford, managed the new premises in Central Road building works and the Wingham renovations. The Building Committee are now focusing on the new Kempsey shop location and its fit-out. **“I recognize the incredible effort of Shop Managers Tara (and Emma prior to her resignation), Megan, and their respective volunteers for ensuring that both the new Central Road shop and the Wingham renovated shop were ready to serve our customers on the opening day. Congratulations to all involved on a job exceptionally well done.”**

Almost a third of women aged 15 to 34 years were diagnosed with depression and/or anxiety in 2021.

795 female's died by suicide in Australia in 2024

Australia has the fourth highest level of tertiary educated women in the OECD

International Women's Day

Only 9% of CEOs in the ASX300 are women

At the current rate of progress, it will take another 131 years to achieve gender equality worldwide.

On average, one woman is killed every nine days by a current or former partner.

Citizen of the Year 2025



We're thrilled to announce that this year's Port Macquarie Hastings Citizen of the Year Award has been awarded to one of our very own...

Di Bannister!

With 30 years of dedicated service, Di has not only been a pillar of our workplace but also a shining example of commitment, compassion, and community spirit. This well-deserved recognition highlights the incredible impact she continues to make both within and beyond our walls.

Congratulations Di, thank you for everything you do!



**30 years with
Lifeline!**

CS Volunteer Peer Group



Volunteering on a crisis line takes heart, empathy, and emotional resilience. This month, we're recognising Dorothy, who turned that insight inward and created something meaningful—not just for callers, but for fellow volunteers.

Self-care is something we're taught to demonstrate, always, but it helps to have a space where it's okay to pause and take care of ourselves, too.

Dorothy started a casual peer social group. The idea was simple: make space for connection, conversation, and a little joy outside of shifts. This group became a way for our volunteers to reset and take care of themselves together.

Now, volunteers regularly gather for relaxed hangouts, offering each other the same kindness they bring to every call.

Dorothy's initiative is a powerful reminder: self-care isn't selfish—it's essential. And sometimes, the best way to recharge is by connecting with people who understand the work and the weight it can carry.

Thank you, Dorothy, for leading with empathy and reminding us to care for ourselves, too.

Led by Dorothy Smart





**Save lives. Become a Crisis
Support Volunteer.**

Info Night

Tuesday 29th of July 2025, 6-8pm

The Westport Club, Port Macquarie

To book: Scan the QR code or email
admin@lifelinemidcoast.org.au or
call 6581 2800



New Staff Introductions



Sydni Greigh
Kempsey Shop Manager



David Hore
Retail manager



Tara Mesiti
**Central Rd & Gordon St
Shop Manager**



Mary Johnson
Taree Shop Supervisor



Karen Stafford
Central Road Shop Supervisor



Lorraine Edwards
Gordon St Shop Supervisor

Lifeline **SHOP** News

**Kempsey is
moving this
coming
July/August**

**Forster achieved
the highest
monthly sale in
LLMC history**

**Central Road
Hit A Daily
Sale Record**

.....

**Wauchope
Hit A Weekly
Sale Record**

Volunteer Achievement

Ruth from Central Road found a unique way to utilise buttons. Her craft has been displayed in the Central Road Store and is selling brilliantly!

Ruth has not only created a range of beautiful cards but also packs of loose pieces of craft items. The packs have made it simple for customers to purchase a range of items and truly embraces the recycling nature of op shopping!





Lifeline SHOP

Wingham Grand Reopening Coming Soon

After a successful soft reopening on March 31st, things are already looking fantastic. Megan has done an incredible job managing the renovation, from the fresh new fit-out to the early stages of signage and a soon-to-be-finished paint job scheduled for this month. The first week of trade has been strong, and with Meg at the helm, supported by her awesome crew of volunteers, we're excited to see things continue to grow.

Keep an eye out — our official Grand Reopening is just around the corner!

Central Road Reopening

On Thursday the 6th of March, Lifeline Central Road officially opened their doors. A ceremony was delivered by CEO **Catherine Vaara** and Board Member **Neville Parsons**. Well-delivered speeches highlighted the tremendous effort from Staff and volunteers into the transition of their new location. Even with extreme weather predicted, the volunteers were led by Shop Manager **Tara** to host a great morning and cut the honourable red ribbon. The day continued on with great promotions, sales and even a coffee van at the front doorstep.



Volunteer Spotlight



More Than 20 Years as a Shop Volunteer....

Rose Pontifex & Pam Milne

This edition, we proudly shine our Volunteer Spotlight on our most dedicated and cherished team members, who have been volunteering with us for an incredible 20+ years. They began volunteering as a way to give back. What started as an act of gratitude soon grew into something much bigger — a lifelong commitment filled with compassion, community, and connection.

Over two decades, Pam and Rose have seen it all. From humble beginnings to major building expansions, from shifts in staff to changing times, they've been a constant thread in our story.

Whether cutting rags in the back room, greeting customers as a cashier, or now quietly managing our bookkeeping, Rose has embraced every role with grace and heart.

To them, this place isn't just a shop — it's a second home. It's a social hub, a support network, and a chosen family. "Lifeline has been my lifeline" Rose says—a reflection of just how meaningful this role has been in her life. Rose often speaks of the camaraderie between long-time volunteers and new staff, how the "old timers" naturally mentor and support fresh faces, fostering a spirit of teamwork and warmth that makes our organisation truly special.

Rose looks forward to her volunteer days with enthusiasm. It's clear that her presence here is more than routine — it's passion. And for us, her steady presence, friendly smile, and deep knowledge are invaluable.

Thank you, Rose and Pam, for the time, heart, and dedication you've given so generously. You've helped shape this place into what it is today — and we are all the better for it.



Out and About With LLMC

CSU Market Day

During CSU O-Week, Lifeline Mid Coast had the opportunity to connect with students at the markets, showcasing our services and raising awareness about the vital support we offer. We were thrilled to engage with students, letting them know they can access our assistance during tough times or get involved by volunteering with us. It was a fantastic way to introduce our resources to the CSU community and encourage students to reach out or contribute to our mission.

Central Road Grand Reopening

Hosted by Lifeline, we joined the community in celebration of the Official Grand Reopening of our new location for the Central Road shop. Even with extreme weather predicted, the volunteers were led by Shop Manager Tara to host a great morning and joined together to cut the honourable red ribbon. The day continued on with great promotions, sales and even a coffee van at the front doorstep. All sales from our shops funds the vital services Lifeline Mid Coast provides to our community.

Endeavour Clubhouse Wellness Walk

Lifeline Mid Coast was represented by staff that participated in the Endeavour Clubhouse Wellness Walk. Whilst enjoying the sights Port Macquarie has to offer in the no less than perfect weather, deeper conversations were shared among other services and organisations in the local area. Brainstorms of what collaborations our community could truly benefit from were shared among everyone. All organisations and the general public got a chance to form a deeper understanding as to what support is readily available to our community.

Out and About With LLMC

CSU Market Day



Central Road Grand Reopening



Endeavour Clubhouse Wellness Walk



News From Suicide Prevention

The Services team has seen a few exciting changes recently, with some familiar faces stepping into new roles and a few new team members joining us. Below, you'll find a quick update on the transitions and introductions. Be sure to give a warm welcome if you see any of our new team members around!



Farewell to Zoe

We bid a fond farewell to Zoe, our wonderful Services Coordinator, as she embarks on a new adventure in Perth, WA. While she'll be greatly missed here, we're thrilled she'll continue to be part of the Lifeline family through her new role with Lifeline WA. Wishing Zoe all the best!



Role Change for Ebanie

As Zoe moves into her new role, we're pleased to announce that Ebanie, our previous Community Engagement Coordinator, will be stepping into the Suicide Supports Coordinator position. Taking on the Community Engagement role is Mattise, who many of you will know from her fantastic work in Friday admin.



Welcome to Daniel

We're also thrilled to welcome Daniel to the team as our new Lived Experience Peer Worker! Daniel has been connected with Lifeline for some time as a participant, and he's now taking the next step by using his lived experience to support others. We're so excited to have him on board—read more about Daniel on the next page!



Welcome to Lulu

A warm welcome to Lulu, who has joined our Services team as part of her work placement! Lulu is currently completing her Diploma of Community Services through TAFE and is gaining hands-on experience with Lifeline Mid Coast. She brings a wealth of knowledge to her peer support role and is passionate about building a future in the mental health sector.

A Story From Lived Experience

Our Suicide Prevention and Postvention manager Kelly sat down with Daniel to discuss his journey with LLMC. From participant to peer worker, check out the interview below!

Can you tell us how you came to be with the Lifeline Suicide Bereavement groups?

I lost my brother in 2011 to suicide, he was 25 years old, he was my little brother, 10 years younger. It didn't feel like I had only lost my brother, it felt like I had lost a son. It affected my life massively, so I started coming to bereavement groups and I find them wonderful.

What do you get out of the groups?

I get a lot of out of the groups. I mean it's been many years, I lost him in 2011, and I still get so much out of the bereavement group. Being able to share my story, knowing that grief doesn't just last for a short period, it can go forever. Also being able to listen to other's stories as well knowing that all different circumstances brought us together, but we share this similarity, it's a safe spot, I feel comfortable to be able to share my story. I hope that others get as much out of what I say as I get out of what they say. For some of the people there, it's very fresh which brings me back, but it helps. Being in group makes my heart feel full. I love the bereavement group, it's just excellent.

Meet Daniel Rebecchi



You've been coming back to group for some time now and you're going to come onboard as a co-facilitator, how do you hope this will add to your journey?

I feel I've got a lot to give, not only losing someone to suicide, but other parts of suicide as well, I've had a lot of life experiences. You know how much I love you guys and what you have given to me, I'd like to be able to give that to somebody else, somebody who may need it right then and there and maybe you didn't even realise that what you've said has meant so much to somebody. I want to help, I want to give back to what Lifeline has given me.

A huge thank you to Daniel for his vulnerability in sharing his story and everything he does for Lifeline.



April 2025 Lifeline Connect



Next Newsletter July 2025



Submission Due June 2025



Lifeline Mid Coast
We are local.