

***Media Release  
For Immediate Release  
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**Not the retiring type  
National Volunteers Week 9 – 15 May 2011**

Mrs Beryl Melbourn may have finished her nursing career years ago but she has proven herself to be far from the retiring type, just like many older people, who have turned their hand to volunteering.

Since moving to UnitingCare Ageing's Northaven Retirement Village's independent living community 13 years ago, Mrs Melbourn has proven herself to be an indispensable and tireless volunteer.

Deputy chair and secretary of the independent living residents' committee, Mrs Melbourn is renowned for her organisational abilities, commonsense and warm heart.

Using her former work-related experiences, Mrs Melbourn helped establish Northaven's reflexology clinic. Mrs Melbourn has also turned her attention to nurturing the spirituality of those around her, assisting with chapel services and conducting Holy Communion for residents with higher care needs on a monthly basis.

Mrs Melbourn is typical of a growing number of older people who volunteer to share and learn new skills, socialise and give back to the community after giving up paid employment.

According to Volunteering Australia, top reasons for volunteering include 'helping others or the community', 'personal satisfaction' and 'to do something worthwhile'.

Describing her own reasons for doing so, Mrs Melbourn explained that "I have always wanted to help people".

David Makinson, Acting Director, UnitingCare Ageing, said that the efforts of volunteers benefit everyone in the organisation.

“Our 3,000 volunteers generously donate their time and skills and we really appreciate the impact they have on both clients and staff.”

Mr Makinson continued, “Many of our volunteers are older people who are no longer in paid employment but still wish to contribute to bettering the lives of people in their local community”.

“They are still working hard but without pay so it is really important to us to acknowledge the importance of their roles.”

While volunteers don't need to possess any particular skills, existing skills will always have a use. Alternatively, it's a great opportunity to learn something new.

There is no set amount of time you are required to volunteer either with volunteers choosing to donate as little or as much of their spare time as want. One volunteer tells her friends that “one hour every now and then is all it takes” while Mrs Melbourn can be found six days a week operating Northaven's kiosk, ordering and pricing stock as well as doing the book-keeping.

National Volunteers Week begins Monday 9 May and finishes on Sunday 15 May 2011, acknowledging the vital contributions of volunteers.

If you're like Mrs Melbourn and not the retiring type why not consider spending some time volunteering. It can be as simple as having a chat, participating in social events, helping out in the garden or sharing one of your favourite hobbies.

For more information on volunteering with UnitingCare Ageing please visit <http://www.unitingcareageing.org.au/careers/volunteering>.

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**For more information or to arrange an interview with David Makinson, Acting Director, UnitingCare Ageing, please contact Ingrid Hoff, Media and Communication Officer, UnitingCare NSW.ACT on 02 9376 1415 or [ihoff@unitingcarenswwact.org.au](mailto:ihoff@unitingcarenswwact.org.au).**