



Presbyterian  
Support

Otago



Winter 2017

# REQUESTS FOR HELP RISE, AS TEMPERATURES DROP

*With your support, we can limit the effects of winter for many Otago families.*

The cooler summer months have made life difficult for many of the people our Family Works team supports, and the temperatures will continue to drop in the months ahead.

Amelia Rivers, Family Works Social Worker, connects with clients when they ask for support from our Dunedin office. She has seen a steady increase in the number of people coming through the door, and the unique circumstances that people have are becoming far more complex.

"I recently met someone who needed to move their family to Dunedin. Relocating themselves, with three children, was a challenge in many ways, with finance being a significant barrier. My role was to understand what support they needed, and to advocate on their behalf."

**"Families and people in challenging circumstances really need our support to make sure they know about, and have access to, the right resources,"** *Social Worker, Amelia Rivers.*

Situations like this are becoming more common. In the last three months, at least four people have come into our Moray Place office each week, to ask for support with housing.

Half of those who approach Family Works are parents looking for accommodation for themselves and their children. Requests for help have doubled in the last twelve months, and it doesn't look to be easing.

Homelessness can be presented in many ways - for some, it's couch-surfing with no fixed address to call home, while others have a fixed tenancy that is ending, without the option to renew their contract and nowhere to go.

Some homes have two (or more) families crammed together, with a dozen people in a space designed for a family of four. The additional pressure of many people sharing a small space can quickly become too much.

Having experienced a cold summer across Otago, the costs of heating and power have been another challenge for many families. Already this year there has been a 20% increase in the applications Family Works have supported to access the Dunedin City Council Community Electricity Fund.

Some families pay extra on their power bill in summer, with the intention of getting ahead before winter. Families across Otago are telling us that because of the colder weather, the extra they have paid is already spent. For others, higher-than-usual power bills have meant that other areas of an already tight budget are jeopardised. The ongoing impact of this can be crippling.

The distribution of food parcels is another way to measure the challenges that Otago families face. When a budget is stretched, the money that was available to buy food is often among the first to be reduced.

Recent demand on our foodbank has been very high. Since March, Family Works has distributed over 80 food parcels each week. Our distribution of food parcels means there are meals on the table for over 250 people each week.

It takes a whole community, working together and supporting those who face these challenges, to give hope.

We value and greatly appreciate the tremendous care and concern from people like you, who regularly give generously in support of the work we do, to assist the people of Otago.

**Thank you!**

## STEAMPUNK CELEBRATED AT SHOP ON CARROLL

*Anyone who visited Shop on Carroll in May would have found themselves immersed in the extraordinary world of steampunk.*

Dunedin Steampunk Society and the Dunedin Gasworks Guild of Gadgeteers installed a number of expertly crafted displays in the shop, with a grand combination of steampunk clothing and gadgets.

One of the outfits featured in the shop was 'Tishinka Azazel', created by Alyss. It was the winning piece in the 2016 New Zealand Fashion Show in Oamaru.

The outfit was completely hand-made and involved hours of work combining dozens of fabrics and small items, with embroidery to add an extra touch. Alyss says her inspiration was the idea of a gypsy lady who prays to the machine gods and is almost becoming a machine herself.

Fiona Dodds, Shop on Carroll Manager, said, "we are really grateful to the local societies who were both very supportive and generous during the steampunk activity. They made Shop on Carroll come alive with their creativity. **Thank you.**"



*Alyss with 'Tishinka Azazel'*

## PLAYGROUP WITH A TWIST

*An unusual Oamaru playgroup celebrated its 23rd birthday in April, with people of all ages on hand to mark the occasion.*



Iona Enliven care home in Oamaru hosts a playgroup for children in their chapel each Thursday. Parents bring their young ones along for fun and games, as well as reading and singing.

Established in 1994 to service the north end of Oamaru, the group gives Iona's elderly residents the chance to interact with children, by watching them play or reading them stories.

Over a dozen children attend the playgroup each week, and this number has remained consistent since it was formed.

Anna Jamieson takes her one year old twins, Libby and Cooper, to the playgroup. Going to playgroup is extra special because her grandparents, Margaret and Garth McKenzie, are both Iona residents.

Diane McCone, Activities Coordinator at Iona, said the playgroup, which is funded by the Ministry of Education, was initially set up after discussions between local social workers and church groups, with the aim of fostering inter-generational contact between the home's residents and children.

"It works really well," she said. "I think it's because most of the residents have children of their own; they can remember back to their childhoods and baby days. It gives them something to look forward to and it's a lot different to the run-of-the-mill stuff that happens in a rest-home."

*Originally published in Oamaru Mail, edited and used with permission*

# SPECTACULAR VIEWS ENJOYED IN TAIERI GORGE



*The sun was shining, the views were incredible, and people went home very happy!*

Tickets sold out early, and more than 460 people enjoyed the rare opportunity to walk the Taieri Gorge rail line on Sunday 7 May. Final calculations are still underway, though proceeds from ticket sales and raffles are likely to exceed \$17,000.

All proceeds will go towards purchasing a van to be used by our Buddy Programme and other Family Works activity groups, to increase access and promote community connections.

Jasmin Graham, Fundraising Coordinator, expressed her thanks to everyone involved, “thank you so much to the Lions Club of Dunedin South, Dunedin Railways, ticket holders, volunteers, and sponsors for making the 2017 Taieri Gorge Rail Walk such a huge success.”



## CONGRATULATIONS LISA MALONE

Lisa signed up to receive People magazine and won tickets for two adults and two children to take a trip on the Waitati Seaside.

*Thanks to Bindi Leech Photography*

## REPRESENTING DUNEDIN AT THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY AWARDS

*Presbyterian Support Otago was the Dunedin representative at the Trustpower National Community Awards, held in Rotorua in March.*



*Gillian Bremner, Deputy Mayor Chris Staynes and Michelle Gerwitz*

Chief Executive, Gillian Bremner, and Fundraising and Volunteer Coordinator, Michelle Gerwitz, spoke on behalf of Presbyterian Support Otago, with Deputy Mayor, Chris Staynes, on hand to support the team over the weekend.

Presbyterian Support Otago was the supreme regional winner at the Trustpower Dunedin Community Awards last year, earning us a place at the national finals.

Trustpower Community Relations Representative, Emily Beaton, says although Presbyterian Support Otago did not come away as the national award recipient, the work we do should be celebrated.

“Presbyterian Support Otago supports the community in a huge amount of ways, and every part of the organisation is supported by volunteers.”

“[PSO] have been helping people in need in the Dunedin community for over 110 years, and they definitely don’t show any signs of slowing down!”

Congratulations and thank you to over 550 volunteers who contribute to the critical work we do.

## COUNTDOWN TO OCTACAN

*We only have a few short weeks until the annual Octacan collection in Dunedin’s Octagon on Thursday 22 June.*

Our Family Works team have found that the long, cold summer this year has placed extra demand on foodbank resources. There have been fewer fresh vegetables donated from people’s gardens because of the cooler summer.

Issues such as affordable housing, redundancies, and high heating costs, continue to be challenging for a growing number of families as they head into winter. Our foodbank is a

critical service for the local community. Octacan encourages the public to support us by making tinned food, and dry food, donations.

We really appreciate the support we receive from the public. If you’re in Dunedin on Thursday 22 June, we’d love to see you in the Octagon with a donation during the day.

You can also show support by setting up can collections in your own work place, then dropping these down to Octacan, or contacting us to arrange collection.

**To find out more about Octacan, contact Jasmin on 03 477 7115, or email [jasming@psotago.org.nz](mailto:jasming@psotago.org.nz).**

**Over 18,000 cans were donated last year. Can we beat this in 2017? YES WE CAN**





Natalie Hill puts her name to the petition

## FOOTPATH PUTS BRAKES ON RESIDENTS

*Natalie Hill loves her life at Holmdene Enliven care home in Balclutha.*

There is just one frustration. The footpath outside the home is full of cracks, bumps, and uneven ridges that make it unsafe for Natalie to head out the front door, restricting her independence.

Natalie was immobile for many years; the team at Holmdene worked with Natalie for some time to get a wheelchair that she could operate, so she could be mobile again.

“The idea of the electric wheelchair was to give me some independence. I don’t

have this yet, because it’s not safe for me to travel down the path just outside our front door.”

Natalie would prefer to be buzzing along the Elizabeth Street footpath in her electric wheelchair. She wants to be able to make her way into town, or to a nearby park, independently and safely.

Other Holmdene residents, some with wheelchairs, others with walkers, and even those who walk unaided, are very nervous about going beyond the front step without someone else there. Most don’t venture outside because of the state of the footpaths.

Natalie is working with Holmdene staff to make sure the Clutha District Council is aware of the challenge that residents

## PAY EQUITY A GAME CHANGER

Presbyterian Support Otago welcomed the Government announcement in April of a pay increase for care and support workers.

Our Enliven care centres provide a wide range of aged-care services in Otago, and right across New Zealand. Our pay rates are based on the funding that we receive from the Government, so this is great news for our staff.

Chief Executive Gillian Bremner said, “we value our employees and want to see them receive fair remuneration for the training they undertake, and the essential work they do to support the elderly.”

“We also firmly believe gender should not affect what people get paid, and we support this step by the Government to address that pay gap.”

“We see this is as an important step forward for our sector, and the people who are delivering these essential services.”

Presbyterian Support Otago is committed to working with all relevant parties to ensure the successful implementation of the settlement from 1 July onwards.

face due to the state of the footpath. There has been some work done to improve the footpaths in the town centre, though residents can’t even get to those.

In March, Natalie started a petition asking the Council to commit to sorting out the Elizabeth Street footpaths.

Over 120 signatures were added to the petition in just two weeks, and the petition was presented to Clutha District Mayor, Bryan Cadogan, in April. Natalie and the team at Holmdene are hopeful that plans will be made to upgrade the footpath soon.

**Well done, Natalie, for your initiative and drive to make the footpaths safer for everyone.**

## IGNITING A SPARK OF LIFE

*We asked for your support to introduce Spark of Life to our Enliven care homes in the last edition of People. We are making great progress...*



Leigh McLeod

The Spark of Life programme focuses on meeting the emotional needs of people with dementia, so they feel appreciated, loved, and involved. This is of central importance, with an increasing number of residents living with dementia.

We have committed to training Enliven staff so they have the specialist skills required to support residents with dementia.

Leigh McLeod, Clinical Coordinator at Ranui Enliven care home in Alexandra, completed the intensive 21-day Spark of Life training in Perth during May.

Leigh said, “the Spark of Life course was amazing and what I’ve learnt will be life changing for the people living with dementia, their families, and our staff.”

“I attended the course alongside some amazing people with a different range of cultures and such diverse stories. I’m excited to be getting started on the implementation.”

Leigh’s priority is to train other Ranui staff to use Spark of Life practices, and determine how we implement the programme at Ranui. Spark of Life will then be introduced to other Enliven homes across Otago where we have dementia units.

Thank you to everyone who gave a donation towards supporting our commitment to implement Spark of Life. We are part-way towards our fundraising target, and you still have an opportunity to make a donation in support of this critical initiative.

## FOODBANK DONATION LEADS TO WORK EXPERIENCE

*Otago Girls’ High School Year 12 student, Tamsyn Lawrence, wasn’t in the classroom for the first week of April.*

Instead, Tamsyn was undertaking work experience, with three days that week spent at Presbyterian Support Otago, and the other two days at the University of Otago.

Tamsyn decided to approach Presbyterian Support Otago for work experience because Otago Girls’ High had prepared items for our foodbank in past years. Her grandmother, Kathryn Cunningham, also regularly volunteers in one of our charity shops.

Tamsyn experienced the range of our services during the week. Monday was spent assisting the Stepping Stones programme in South Dunedin; one day included working at St Andrews Enliven

Care Home in Dunedin; and Friday found Tamsyn assisting the Family Works foodbank in the Support Centre.

“I think it’s important to help others. This week I’ve discovered that lots of people need help for lots of different reasons,” said Tamsyn.

“I really enjoyed my time at St Andrews. I particularly enjoyed seeing some of the residents with pets, and the enjoyment they get from the animals.”

Those who worked with Tamsyn were very impressed. Sue Lousley, St Andrews Enliven Care Home Activity Coordinator, said, “Tamsyn was just perfect at St Andrews. I was impressed with her natural ability to communicate with the residents. They responded well to her and she spent the morning chatting, doing hand massages, looking at magazines, feeding the chooks, and many other tasks. It was a win-win for everyone”.

**Thank you, Tamsyn, for supporting us!**



# SUPPORTING PEOPLE THROUGH THE WINTER MONTHS

*As the winter months arrive, the number of people who look to us for help increases dramatically across all of our services.*

Family Works social workers are seeing a growing number of families, including many working families, seeking help.

Household incomes were stretched by a cooler summer. The cost of feeding, clothing, and warmly housing a family during Otago's winter can be too much for some families.

We help by providing an emergency food parcel, counselling, financial mentoring, support to find emergency housing, or by providing winter clothing. Anyone can call or walk in through our doors and they will find the comfort and support they need.

Our Enliven services for older people are also increasing, with more demand at this time of year. Many older people in our community become increasingly isolated over winter - they rely on our Visiting Volunteer programme and

other Enliven initiatives to remain socially connected.

You can help people in your community through the cold winter months, by generously supporting us.

**\$40 will provide a family with a much-needed food parcel**

**\$80 will support someone with budget advice and mentoring**

**\$150 will enable us to support someone with emergency housing overnight**

**\$160 will train and provide ongoing support for an Enliven Visiting Volunteer**

**\$800 will provide support from a social worker for a family in a housing crisis**

Please help us to support our community this winter. Complete the form and return it to us with your donation, or go online to get involved and make your donation at [psotago.org.nz](http://psotago.org.nz)



## YES! I WANT TO HELP THIS WINTER.

Please tick

- Spark of Life programme  
 **\$40** Family food parcel  
 **\$80** Budget advice and mentoring  
 **\$150** Support emergency housing  
 **\$160** Training and support for an Enliven Visiting Volunteer  
 **\$800** Social worker support for a family in housing crisis

Other \$

- I have left a gift to PSO in my will  
 I would like more information about leaving a gift in my will

Please tick payment method

- Cheque  Credit Card   
 Internet Banking

Card number



Name on card

Expiry date

Signature

Internet Banking PSO Account Number:  
06 0901 0005597 00

My contact details are

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Please return this form to:

Fundraising Team  
 Presbyterian Support Otago  
 FREEPOST 845  
 PO Box 374, Dunedin 9054

(All donations are accepted. Gifts over \$5.00 are tax deductible. Charities Commission number CC 20878)



Presbyterian Support  
Otago

# OCTACAN 2017



**THURSDAY 22 JUNE  
7:30 AM - 2:30 PM  
THE OCTAGON**

**FILLING OUR FOODBANK**



 OCTACAN



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Our Services



