

# Media Release



May 5, 2017

For immediate release

## GIVE HAPPY LIVE HAPPY: SAMARITANS CELEBRATES NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

National Volunteer Week will be celebrated across the country this week, with Samaritans recognising the valuable contribution of more than 450 volunteers engaged with the organisation through a number of events.

With over 120 services spread across NSW, the opportunities for Samaritans volunteers are diverse and essential to providing services to the people that we support, including roles in Emergency Relief, Disaster Recovery, Retail Shops and more.

In recognition of Volunteer Week, CEO Peter Gardiner has decided to volunteer at the Samaritans Emergency Relief Centre to gain a full experience of the work of volunteers across the organisation and to experience firsthand the benefits they bring to vulnerable people in our community.

“Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organisation. They play an essential role in supporting our staff in their day-to-day tasks as well as interacting with people in need to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate.

“Many of our services simply could not operate without the assistance of our volunteers, who generously dedicate their time, energy and enthusiasm to making our world a better place,” Mr Gardiner said.

The theme for National Volunteer Week 2017 is ‘*Give Happy. Live Happy*’, as research shows that volunteers live happier and healthier lives, as well as making a huge difference in the not for profit sector.

“I’m looking forward to getting involved with Samaritans Emergency Relief this week to experience and recognise their integral role in supporting our organisation. I encourage all who are able, to give volunteering a go,” Mr Gardiner said.

Samaritans Emergency Relief provides assistance to those who are struggling through the provision of food supplies, support to pay bills, by offering a listening ear to people seeking support and connecting them with appropriate services, such as financial counsellors or caseworkers.

“It’s just one of our services that really couldn’t exist if it weren’t for the dedication and support of our volunteers,” Mr Gardiner said.

National Volunteer Week will be held from 8-14 May this year.

**-ENDS-**

**Media Contact:** Samaritans CEO, Peter Gardiner, will be volunteering at the Samaritans ER Centre, Bruncker Road on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May at 12pm and media are invited at this time for a photo opportunity. For more information and to advise your attendance, please contact Communication Coordinator, Laura Dawson, on 4960 7157 or 0438 475 772.