

Media Release



December 13, 2017

For immediate release

SAMARITANS IS GEARING UP FOR CHRISTMAS WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY

Christmas is underway at Samaritans with staff and volunteers busily preparing for the annual Christmas Lunch in the Park with the support and generosity of local sponsors.

The Christmas Lunch in the Park will be held at Newcastle Foreshore Railway Sheds from 11am on Christmas Day with support from our generous major sponsors, Port Waratah Coal Services, Port of Newcastle, Woolworths Mayfield and Event Cinemas.

In its 16th year, this year's lunch expects to see up to 1000 people in attendance with an additional 250 volunteers involved on the day to make it a memorable occasion.

The Lunch ensures that people in the community who may feel isolated or are experiencing difficulty, can enjoy Christmas Day with lunch, entertainment, a visit from Santa and good company.

"This event is all about inclusion, bringing people together and sharing community and festive spirit. No one should be alone or unable to celebrate on Christmas Day," Event Coordinator, Dana Pichaloff, said.

"Samaritans provides a number of services to thousands of people in need at Christmas. From our Christmas Assistance Centre, Emergency Relief services, our refuges and our Christmas Lunches in Newcastle and the Central Coast. There are a lot of people who need our help and we can only deliver this with the support of the community," she said.

The Lunch is made possible through the generosity of sponsors and donors to the Samaritans Christmas Appeal which focuses on raising awareness of the vulnerable people in our community who may not otherwise be able to celebrate the festive season.

The Appeal aims to raise much needed funds to support and bring hope to families living in the shadow of disadvantage, and also to those who are without friends and family at Christmas time.

Samaritans encourages people to give generously this Christmas to support those less fortunate. The Samaritans Christmas Appeal will run until December 31.

"Samaritans is grateful for the generosity and support of all of our sponsors for Christmas Lunch in the Park, particularly major sponsors Port Waratah Coal Services, Port of Newcastle, Woolworths Mayfield and Event Cinemas. I'd encourage all who are able to give generously this Christmas to support those less fortunate," Mrs Pichaloff said.

Donations can also be made directly to Samaritans for the Christmas Appeal on 1300 656 336 or www.samaritans.org.au/donate

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Media Opportunity: Media are invited to a donation pick up at Woolworths Mayfield on Friday 15 December at 12pm with Dana Pichaloff.

Media Contact: Media are invited to contact Samaritans Communication Coordinator, Laura Dawson on 4960 7157 or 0438 475 772 for more information.