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MEDIA RELEASE

The Haven Provides a Haven to Locals Impacted by the Bushfires

Catholic Healthcare's The Haven Residential Aged Care Home in Wagga Wagga opened its doors recently to the residents of Blakeney Lodge, Tumut and residents of Tumut, Batlow and Tumbarumba impacted by the bushfires.

Since last Thursday, The Haven has welcomed 27 residents from Blakeney Lodge in Tumut as well as patients from Tumut Hospital and residents from Batlow and Tumbarumba.

Residential Manager of The Haven, Stacy Moses said, "We were contacted by the Disaster Recovery Unit in the local area to ask if we could help those in the community who needed extra care and support."

"We are also providing respite services for those families impacted by the fires and who need to protect their property and stock.

"We are only too happy to help and accommodate the visiting residents, patients and community members until the catastrophic fire danger has passed. Quality care, compassion, hospitality and kindness are who we are at The Haven.

"Of course, while we are a bit of a full house, we still have room to welcome new residents," added Stacy.

Everyone is doing well. Families and friends are visiting the residents, and knitting groups are on the go, locals are coming in to give manicures, staff are providing music, DVDs and organising activities such as games, playing Bingo and doing crossword puzzles.

"It's been a supportive atmosphere. It's heartening to see the visiting residents feel so safe and comfortable now. They are so vulnerable and have been through quite an ordeal – moving to a new home, knowing that their families are affected by the fires. Yet in the process, they have made some lovely new friends," said Stacy.

"Staff and the Residential Manager of Blakeney Lodge, Kerry Kelly have also come to The Haven to support their residents and provide familiarity and stability. They have gone above and beyond to help those in need. Some of our people had to evacuate their own homes in Tumut due to the fires. Yet they still come to work at The Haven to care for the residents.

“In the spirit of hospitality, staff from The Haven have offered accommodation to their colleagues if needed. There’s a real sense of community and everyone is willing and doing their part to help out during this crisis period,” added Stacy.

Local community members, including doctors and pharmacists, have been equally incredible in their support.

“We are especially grateful and appreciate the services provided by Dr Lee Jeffrey from the Riverina Family Medicine. The team at Riverina Family Medicine have been our main on-call doctors assisting residents, visiting residents and patients during this time. The offers from many doctors in Wagga to assist has been incredible,” said Stacy.

With hot weather conditions forecast to get worse and the current smoke blanket looking set to stay, the visiting residents will be staying at The Haven a little while longer.

The Haven has provided high-quality care to the local community for more than 65 years. For more information go to www.catholichealthcare.com.au/residence/the-haven/

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