Media Release

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Social enterprise gives Ollie a new game plan

When he's not out on the footy field with his local club, Port Melbourne, Richmond supporter Ollie is busy honing a different skill – making coffee.

Thursday 19 November is World Social Enterprise Day – a global movement recognising purpose-driven businesses and the people whose lives they change.

Ollie has spent the past six months building his hospitality skills through VMCH Social Enterprise, working Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at the retirement precinct St. Clare café. On weekends, he plays as a forward for his local club, Port Melbourne.

Ollie is one of hundreds of people VMCH has supported into job skills training and award-wage employment through its social enterprises, which span hospitality, retail, horticulture and creative arts across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

In October, Ollie swapped his usual café for the VMCH coffee van at the 2026 Toyota AFL Open, the AFL's flagship national event for footballers with disability. The coffee machine in the van was a little different to the one he knows at St Clare, so it took him some time to adjust, but he worked alongside the team pulling espresso shots and preparing hot chocolates and chai orders throughout the day.

St. Clare Team Leader Jackson Davie says Ollie made the most of the change of scenery.

“He enjoyed the change of environment and the opportunity to develop different skills while working in the coffee van alongside support workers,” Jackson says.

Ollie's goal now is to keep building his confidence making coffee, learn latte art and gain more experience, with hopes of securing a café job of his own.

VMCH's new Social Enterprise Impact Report shows that over the past year, 171 people completed more than 50,574 hours of job skills training. Eleven people gained employment within VMCH, and 19 moved into further study or employment elsewhere. VMCH has also reached a significant milestone, supporting 100 people into cumulative employment since the program began in 2022.

Harley Dalgleish, VMCH General Manager Disability Services, says the milestone reflects years of work building genuine employment pathways for people with disability.

“I’ve been fortunate to see this work grow over many years, and I’m incredibly proud of what our teams and participants continue to achieve,” Harley says.

“We’re now looking ahead to our goal of supporting 500 people into training and employment by 2030–31. Behind every one of these numbers is a person working towards their own goals, supported by people who genuinely believe in them.”

VMCH's social enterprises have also strengthened a partnership with community housing provider Unison Housing this year with a new café in Kensington, and the Green Team's gardening and maintenance work. Where Is My Coffee? Nunawading was also named winner of the Whitehorse Excellence in Business Award in the Social Enterprise/Not-for-Profit category in 2026, recognising the café's blend of quality hospitality and meaningful employment pathways.

To mark World Social Enterprise Day, VMCH is encouraging the community to get behind its social enterprises by visiting a Where Is My Coffee? café in Wangaratta, Bendigo, Kensington or Nunawading, Star Café in

Torquay, or a VMCH Op Shop in Wantirna, Heathmont or Balwyn. Gifts made by VMCH's Cre8 teams are also available through the online store.

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About VMCH

At VMCH, we believe people should be seen and valued for who they are, not defined by the services they receive.

For more than a century, we have supported Victorian communities, helping people live with purpose, connection and choice. Guided by our Catholic tradition, we recognise the dignity, individuality and contributions of every person.

Across aged care, care at home, disability services, retirement living, specialist education and affordable housing, we support people to stay in control of their lives and connected to what matters most.

Guided by our values of Love, Joy, Courage and Hospitality, more than 4,000 staff and volunteers support over 15,000 people across Victoria, creating communities where people feel respected, included and empowered.