



PEPLOW HOUSE UPGRADE

On most evenings at Peplow House, the kitchen is a hub of activity. Residents of the short-term crisis accommodation centre work together to prepare meals while learning about nutrition and developing cooking skills with the help of support workers. "It might be one or two preparing the meal for dinner tonight and then the others will all join in," Deanna Davis, Centacare General Manager Family and Community Services said. "It is a supportive environment and sometimes that builds social links and friendships that can continue when they have left."



Centacare received \$14,500 from the philanthropic organisation the Ballarat Foundation back in 2016 through The Courier Charity Fund to upgrade the Peplow House kitchen. Ms Davis said the completed upgrade had improved the facility and created a more enjoyable and accessible space for residents to cook, learn and socialise.

Peplow House is an eight bed crisis accommodation facility for men aged 18 to 65. Staff support the men with health and social needs during their six week stay. Ms Davis says the house provides a safe place and time to focus on gaining employment, getting well and securing long-term accommodation. "It is providing that space for people to regather and then start to plan and move on with their life," Ms Davis says. "Some people are well able to do that themselves - they really just need a little bit of support, a safe place to be, and time to look for their own rental. Others need perhaps a lot more support depending on what has occurred for them in their life."

The Ballarat Foundation is open to not-for-profit organisations seeking funding for projects relating to the Ballarat Foundation's key focus areas of housing security, food security, school readiness or youth success. Ballarat Foundation Chief Executive Matt Jenkins says the funding could be a catalyst for new programs and projects. "It is wonderful to have a partnership like this with The Courier in establishing sub funds for the community," he says.

"It is very much what we exist to do - to connect people that care to causes that matter. It is wonderful when an organisation can set up a fund they know is going to have an impact in perpetuity for generations to come. We would love to have a conversation with any other businesses interested in setting up a sub fund." More than \$230,000 in grants has been distributed by the Courier Charity Fund since it began in 2002.

Applications for the next round of The Courier Charity Fund have now closed and recipients will be announced on December 6. Visit the Ballarat Foundation website for more details.

Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text and photo by Rochelle Kirkham.

Photo: Centacare General Manager Family and Community Services Deanna Davis and Manager NDIS, Homelessness and Advocacy Virginia Louey in the Peplow House kitchen.