

The generosity and commitment of volunteers at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Health Service will be celebrated next week as part of NSW Health's Volunteer Appreciation Day (February 15).

Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Health Service has around 700 volunteers in their hospital and community based services, including HKHS Meals on Wheels.

The hospital's acting General Manager, Greg Flint, acknowledged the huge contribution and difference volunteers make to the hospital and community services.

"Our volunteers make a very real difference in the lives of others. They are the friendly, caring face that provides comfort to those in need. They make a big difference in the lives of patients, their families and our staff," said Mr Flint.

"These volunteers deserve a standing ovation for their tireless efforts and dedication," he said.

The face of volunteering has changed at the hospital over the years, with volunteering - once predominately the 'ladies in pink' - now evolving to a more masculine hue.

"These days we are seeing more and more men wanting to volunteer their time and give back to the community," Mr Flint said. "This has seen the evolution of the 'Pink Ladies Service' into the 'Volunteers Service' and men donning their own masculine version of pink attire - a dusty pink shirt or navy polo shirt."

One such volunteer is retiree Mal Barratt, who spent his career as a pilot for Qantas and the Australian Navy. For the past five years, Mr Barratt has spent each Wednesday at the hospital, where he delivers the internal mail.

His inspiration came from his parents, who volunteered for Meals on Wheels until they could no longer drive and he said he hoped to continue volunteering for as long as he could because he found it personally rewarding.

Some 200 hospital-based volunteers provide a wide range of services at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai, including the flower and gift shop, hairdressing, patient library, fundraising, handicrafts, patient companions, occupational therapy aid group, ward and administration assistance, play leaders in the children's ward, courier and patient shopping.

***Volunteer Mal Barratt is available for an interview and photograph.***

---

**For further information please contact:**  
Debbie Eldridge 9477 9155 : 0404 020 330