



16 MAY, 2024

## Give a little, gain a lot

North Shore Times, Sydney

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# Give a little, gain a lot

## Volunteering is win-win, writes Sarah Antell

It's incredible the impact you can make in just two hours.

In the grand scheme of things, it really isn't a lot of time, but for someone in need it can mean the world. From helping with a grocery run to having a chat over coffee, or taking a short beach stroll or accompanying someone to the doctor's clinic, volunteering two hours of your time to help with simple, day-to-day tasks can have a real and incredibly meaningful impact on someone else – and it's incredibly rewarding too.

This National Volunteer Week, I urge you to consider volunteering and giving back to the community, in any way you can.

For me, being a volunteer is like being a friend – and sometimes it truly ends up that way.

Over the past few years, a beautiful friendship between myself and a client has evolved. When we were first connected through the volunteer program at Proveda, my client was living independently, vulnerable to social isolation without many close friends or family and in need of extra support with everyday activities, like transport to medical appointments and grocery shopping.

Now, he has moved to an assisted living home and our visits are much more adventurous – like checking out the views at Palm Beach or enjoying a long lunch in Berowra.

My visits are never dull and brighten my day as much as his. They're filled with heartfelt conversations, opportunities to learn and making new memories from local adventures.

It's incredibly rewarding to be

there for someone and to listen to his stories. Seeing his face light up with excitement and gratitude for the things we do and accomplish in two hours brings me a sense of purpose and fulfillment I can't adequately describe.

I've become a support he can rely on for advice, in a time of need or just for some company. I'm honoured to play such a role in his life.

According to Volunteering Australia, one in three Australians volunteer through an organisation annually. Proveda, a leading community care provider, connects more than 160 volunteers in the North Sydney region alone.

The volunteer program at Proveda helps pair local volunteers with individuals who may be isolated and seeking companionship or vulnerable and requiring support for a variety of day-to-day activities.

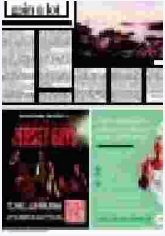
Volunteers are empowered to commit to as little or as much time as they like in response to specific opportunities and 'call outs' for support. This can be a one-off with no pressure to continue providing volunteer support. It's a completely flexible program that I'm so grateful to participate in.

There are a lot of people in need, and each step you take towards a kinder, more compassionate community is worth it. This National Volunteer Week, learn more about the Volunteer Program at Proveda here: [proveda.com.au/volunteer](https://proveda.com.au/volunteer).

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Sarah Antell is a Wahroonga resident and volunteer at Proveda.

Volunteer Week runs from May 20-26.



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**Volunteer Sarah Antell (inset right) loves taking a client, who has become a friend, to Palm Beach.**