

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## A SNAPSHOT OF FOOD ASSISTANCE IN THE GEELONG/ G21 REGION, VICTORIA: AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Across the Geelong/G21 region there is a long and established history of providing food and other forms of emergency relief to those experiencing food insecurity.**

*Food for Thought: A Snapshot of Food Assistance in the Geelong/G21 Region, Victoria (October 2018)* was commissioned by the Give Where You Live Foundation as a partnership project with the Deakin University Freelance Hub and the participating agencies of the Geelong Food Assistance Network (GFAN).

The Report highlights the results of a survey conducted of the Geelong Food Assistance Network members and others providing food assistance in the region and provides a snap shot of food assistance activity in the region.

### WHAT WE LEARNED

#### About the Food Assistance System

- At least 63 organisations provide and distribute food assistance.
- The majority of organisations (55%) use more than one method to deliver food assistance with the most common methods being food parcels/boxes and fresh food, followed by prepared meals consumed onsite.
- The method of delivery that drives the greatest volume of food assistance is food vouchers.
- Food assistance is not just about food security - 78% of organisations providing food assistance also refer clients to one or more complimentary services.
- For every one paid staff providing food assistance there are 4.5 volunteers providing food assistance.
- Volunteers provide \$3.4 million in labour to support the food assistance system annually.
- 50% of volunteers who support the food assistance system are aged 61 or older and for one third of the organisations volunteers over the age of 61 make up at least 65% of their volunteer base.

#### About the Food

- An estimated 717,883 meals a year are provided by the food assistance system. This is the equivalent of 2,000 meals a day.
- The majority of organisations were able to 'always' or 'mostly' offer access to cereal and grains (88%), fresh vegetables and fruit (72%) and processed and prepared food (70%). Organisations found it more challenging to consistently offer meat and other proteins (48%) and dairy (44%).
- Storage capacity or lack of donations are barriers to providing consistent access to all food types.
- 40% of organisations are forced to purchase 50% or more of the food they require to provide food assistance.

#### About Those Who Receive Food Assistance

- 46% of organisations reported an increase of 5% or more in those seeking food assistance on the previous 12 months.
- 57% of those seeking food assistance were female and 43% were male.
- Those aged under 30 represent the largest age group (35%) seeking food assistance with those aged 15 and under representing about half (17%) of that total.
- 45% of those receiving food assistance were families with children (this includes both single parent families and couples with children).

For further information or to view the full report, please visit [feedgeelong.org.au](http://feedgeelong.org.au) or email: [feedgeelong@givewhereyoulive.com.au](mailto:feedgeelong@givewhereyoulive.com.au)



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