



# COMPEER PROGRAM



St Vincent de Paul Society  
CANBERRA/GOULBURN

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# COMPANION + PEER

# = COMPEER

Compeer is a mental health program that connects an adult living with a mental illness diagnosis (Compeer participant) to an adult volunteer in the community (Compeer volunteer). The purpose of the connection is to develop and foster a one-on-one friendship. For duration of the program, 12 months, the volunteer and participant are expected to catch up for a minimum 4 hours per month to help grow the connection and move towards developing a friendship.

Compeer promotes social inclusion and the reduction of stigma by supporting friendships that are built on mutual trust, respect and understanding. The program is based on the premise that 'friendship is a powerful medicine'.

The Compeer friendship is supported by the Compeer Officer and the referring health professional.



## BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Compeer volunteers are members of our community who want to make a difference in another person's quality of life. They come from all walks of life, show respect towards others, have an ability to be supportive and show empathy towards people living with a mental illness diagnosis.

Volunteering commitment in the Compeer program is for a minimum 4 hours per month for 12 months. The volunteers are also responsible for providing short monthly reports on the progress of their friendship with a participant.

Compeer volunteers are also supported by:

- being inducted in both Vinnies and Compeer
- debriefing with the Compeer officer
- volunteer training and meetings
- access to employee assistance program for counselling services.

## BECOMING A PARTICIPANT

Compeer participants are referred to the Compeer program by their health practitioners.

The key criteria for potential participants are:

- must be 18 years or older and
- living with a mental illness diagnosis and is in recovery
- desire to form a connection or friendship with another person of similar age in a community setting.

## COMPEER RULES

As with most things in life, Compeer has a few rules for the first 12 months. These are:

- participants and volunteers make their own way to a mutually agreed catch up in a public place (café, walk, bike ride, art exhibition etc.)
- participants and volunteers pay for their own costs associated with the catch up or activity
- catch up and enjoy the conversation.







# GET IN TOUCH

**For further information about volunteering  
and referrals contact us:**

**Compeer Officer**

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