

## Media Release – for immediate publication

# Students Tackle Shut-in Syndrome

Hills Community Aid's Executive Officer, Des Milligan today praised the staff and students of William Clarke College for their support for HillsCarPal, set up to tackle Shut-in Syndrome.

"Shut-in Syndrome is a condition faced by an ever-increasing number of Seniors when they can no longer drive. Some "Shut-ins" lose contact with family, friends and community; with feelings of, isolation, uncertainty and even hopelessness the result ",Mr Milligan said.

"In working with William Clarke College, we were assisted by some great community-minded young people from The Hills region, who gave the project its direction. We are grateful for William Clarke College's involvement in developing a PC Training Program for HillsCarPal clients. This will help us considerably in combating the problem, which affects around 1065 Sydney Hills Seniors." Mr Milligan added.

"It felt good to be able to contribute to our community and to help the elderly through this project. We had fun too creating training modules for HillsCarPal clients to use", said Year 8 student Nick Weiland.

And fellow student Cynthia Choy added, "We wanted to help Hills Community Aid with its HillsCarPal project, as it will assist older people to get around Sydney easily and simply."

With classmate Sarthak Kapoor saying, "HillsCarPal helps elderly citizens get to places around Sydney. Buses can drop them up to a kilometre away and walking long distances, particularly at night, is not really an option; and a taxi costs a pensioner too much."

The training modules developed by William Clarke College students covered Facebook, Paypal and email, which will be used by HillsCarPal clients to book trips around Sydney via their (or a family member's) PC.

The aim of the College's Year 8 Service Learning is for students to identify and address a specific community need and then participate in creating a project to address this need.

History & Legal Studies Teacher Kate Dundas, who was responsible for leading the students through the Service Learning program, explained "In HillsCarPal, we found that our students could contribute to

solving the often unrecognised community problem of Shut-in Syndrome; crossing generational boundaries whilst applying their skills and enthusiasm. It also gave them the opportunity to hear from local community service providers about the broader context of their work in the community."

Following an inspection tour, which included North West Disability Services, Hills Community Aid and other Hills community service facilities, College student, Annie Guo said, "Shut-in Syndrome is more real for me now after hearing that some older clients are lonely and can't easily leave their homes".

Call 02 9639 8620 or email [hillscarpal@gmail.com](mailto:hillscarpal@gmail.com) for more information on how HillsCarPal is tackling Shut-in Syndrome.

The following contacts may assist with additional comment on this story:

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Pics attached to email - supplied with the following suggested captions:

1. **Pic IMG\_9210** – Monzurul Hoque explains NWDS operations to HillsCarPal's John McQuarrie and WCC students, who were impressed at the care and program offered by North West Disability Services;
2. **Pic IMG\_9214** – Monzurul Hoque explains NWDS operations to WCC students, who were impressed at the care and program offered by North West Disability Services;
3. **Pic IMG\_9257** – WCC Students inspecting a cool room say, "There's no place for Shut-in Syndrome in our community";