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## Media Release

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### **Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury – saving lives for 50 years**

Born of the generosity and care of its volunteers and staff, Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury (H2H) is today celebrating fifty years of dedication to the local community.

A credit to the vibrancy of the organisation, and its continuing relevance, it is hard to believe that so many years have passed since a group of interested people met in the old Methodist Church in William Street, Hornsby, with the intention of forming a committee to establish a branch of Lifeline locally.

Armed with a telephone and a room in Willow Park provided by Hornsby Shire Council, and a typewriter, table and chairs from Hornsby Rotary, the organisation has gone on to have the highest answered call rate on Lifeline Australia's national 24/7 telephone crisis line 13 11 14.

At larger premises in Gordon for the last 17 years, which are generously provided by Ku-ring-gai Council, Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury provides a suite of telephone crisis support and suicide prevention services, as well as face-to-face counselling, group programs and community services.

While many things may have changed over the last fifty years, one thing hasn't changed: the need to be heard. 'It takes instinct, and finely tuned skills, to hear behind the words someone is saying,' says one of Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury's longstanding telephone crisis supporters.

The skill of which can't be underestimated. As more and more people struggle with the pressure of everyday life, there are few among us who haven't lost someone to suicide, or knows someone who has. And as Wendy Carver, CEO of Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury says, 'Any death by suicide is one too many.'

For fifty years, Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury has been there, responding in a crisis, and supporting those in need. Much like it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a committed and extended family to provide that level of care and service to so many in crisis.

'It is our skilled volunteer and paid workforce, with their depth of knowledge and experience, their commitment and dedication, and their willingness to help, that is such a cause for celebration today,' said Carver.

Indeed, anyone who has been to the centre, visited the stores or book fairs, or been part of events like the Bobbo or the Sapphire Gala ball, will attest to not just the excellent reputation of the organisation, but its generosity and warmth, and its wholehearted dedication to saving lives, which for those within the organisation, and the many who have been touched by it, is most definitely a reason to celebrate today.

*If you are interested in becoming one of our telephone crisis supporters, please contact Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury on 9494 8805.*

#### **Media inquiries (not for publication):**

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