

Spiritus Social Worker Vicki Hunt says her work's a privilege and an honour

There's not much that Spiritus Social Worker, Vicki Hunt, hasn't seen in her line of work.

Based at the Gold Coast branch of Spiritus Community Care, she now works primarily with the elderly, particularly those with no family. She has seen all types of people dealing with their own life's challenges. She explains

"I'm often meeting up with clients who have been referred to Spiritus during the ACAT (aged care assessment) process. They may be finding it difficult managing at home for all kinds of reasons. They could be experiencing changes in their health and be looking at options for care or they may be grieving following the death of a husband (or wife) for whom they've cared for a long period. Many of these relationships are sixty years old. Often they don't talk about their loss and feel very alone. We are able to offer substantial practical and emotional support for them through our Bereavement Program here at the Gold Coast office."

Working at the Gold Coast also brings its own challenges as she often meets people who have moved 'to the sun' upon retirement and may be living in caravan parks but who, as they age, have no family support and little in the way of resources when they need them most.

She said

"There's a slice of the population which is quite transitory too and many who find it difficult making friends or who may be depressed and aren't looking after themselves. We are able to connect them with our own Spiritus services as well as with things that are happening in their community and of course to help them work through some of the possibilities for their future lives. It's important to build relationships with people."

She brings wide experience to her workplace after years working with the victims of domestic violence and assault, those with mental health and anger management challenges, clients living with abusive or controlling relationships and both young and old who are dealing with grief and loss. This experience makes her an asset to the Spiritus team and helps her to recognise unresolved problems in her clients' lives.

She said

"It's a privilege and honour to share the intimate details of a person's life. It's wonderful, very satisfying, to be able to support people when they don't think they can manage or find it hard to communicate or have very low self-esteem. When I sometimes find the 'system' frustrating, I remind myself that one person can make a positive difference. Also our Spiritus team is the most supportive group with whom I've ever worked."

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