

**For further information or photo opportunity please contact:**

**Shara Scott**

Media & Communications Coordinator

Primary Care Connect

0476 044 455

[SScott@primarycareconnect.com.au](mailto:SScott@primarycareconnect.com.au)

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

#### **Breaking Free from Drugs and Alcohol: Patrick's Journey to Recovery**

At the age of 23, life was looking and feeling pretty bleak for Patrick Maggs. Struggling with harmful alcohol use, carrying unresolved trauma, and unsure where to turn, Patrick found himself at a crossroads. What changed everything was one brave decision — reaching out for help.

Patrick first came to Primary Care Connect just over 12 months ago through the Youth Outreach Program. At the time, he was living at the Foyer and had recently stopped using cannabis, only to find himself relying more heavily on alcohol to cope.

Reflecting on that time in his life, Patrick said, "I had been smoking weed and when I stopped smoking, I really turned to alcohol. It became a Band-Aid - a Band-Aid for my weed use but also a Band-Aid for some trauma I was holding."

Knowing he couldn't do it alone, Patrick reached out to a worker for support and was referred to Primary Care Connect's Youth Outreach Program. Unsure of what to expect, but willing to try, Patrick decided to take that first step.

"I thought to myself 'I'll give this a shot, see how it goes.'"

Patrick began working with Youth Outreach Worker Ashlee, and through consistent, non-judgemental support, he slowly began to rebuild his confidence and learn healthier ways to cope.

Patrick says the support he received through the program gave him the "courage and gusto I needed, gave me more confidence and helped me learn that I can heal from past traumas."

In October, Patrick reached a major milestone in his recovery by moving into his own home. With the support of Ashlee, he has been able to make it feel safe and homely — a place where he can now care for his six-year-old daughter.

While recovery hasn't been without its challenges, Patrick says he now has the tools to manage difficult moments without turning back to substances.

Sometimes, Patrick says, he still waits for “the other shoe to drop” ... “but even if things do go wrong now, I have the resilience and coping strategies to get through it without turning to weed or alcohol.”

Today, Patrick is giving back to others, working at the Salvos refuge supporting people experiencing homelessness.

“I support people by helping them with resumes, job searches, and things like connecting with services for support. It’s a really good feeling giving back to community.”

Youth Outreach Worker Ashlee said Patrick’s journey is a powerful example of what can happen when the right supports are in place.

“I am just so proud of Patrick and the work he has done to change his life. In such a short timeframe and with the right supports, Patrick is working, has his own home and is connected with his daughter. It's so inspirational and I hope other young people who may find themselves in a similar situation to Patrick, see his story and know that there is help here, and that you can make the changes you need to create the life you want.”

Shara Scott, Media and Communications Coordinator for Primary Care Connect said, “We know that connection and support can turn things around for young people who have been using drugs and alcohol as a way to cope. Ash does such an incredible job running the Youth program, and we also want our community to know we have a whole team of Alcohol and Other Drugs clinicians to support adults, families and provide counselling and support.”

Patrick hopes that sharing his story will encourage others who are struggling to reach out.

“Substance use is like a Band-Aid, and if left on for too long it will fester and only get worse. I am so thankful to Ash and Primary Care Connect, and so happy that I can now give back to others.”

Primary Care Connect is reminding the community that help is available and that reaching out can be the first step toward change.

### **How to Access Support**

*Primary Care Connect provides drug and alcohol counselling and support services for young people, adults, families, and the broader community. You don't need to be in crisis to ask for help.*

*Community members can contact Primary Care Connect directly to find out what support is available and how to access services.*

**Primary Care Connect phone number: 5823 3200**

**Primary Care Connect website: [primarycareconnect.com.au](http://primarycareconnect.com.au)**

**Primary Care Connect self-referral form: [Referral Page](#)**