

# CommunityChat

ISSUE 1, Spring 2016

News from Uniting AgeWell Community Services



*A different approach to ageing*



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# A POSITIVE COMMUNITY

**As people age it is a normal expectation they will want to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. This, combined with the general ageing of the Australian population, will result in a significant increase in demand for community-based services.**

As a result, the range of services people will need to keep them independent and healthy will also need to expand.

Some people will seek services to help them remain in their own homes and continue to enjoy the independence they regard as important to their lifestyle.

Others who may have experienced a significant health issue will be seeking forms of restorative support to enable them to resume their normal lifestyle activities in their community.

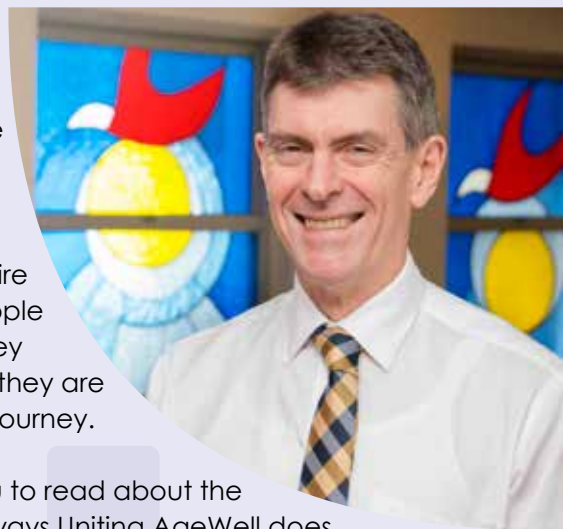
While other people will be seeking 'pro-active' support that enables them to maintain their current levels of health physically, mentally and socially.

For all these people, the common theme is for them to live and age well. Uniting AgeWell recognises and supports this desire by enabling people to live the life they want, wherever they are on their ageing journey.

I encourage you to read about the many different ways Uniting AgeWell does this in the first edition of Community Chat. Inside you'll find information and advice about how we are helping people to remain independent, healthy and connected as they age.

Please enjoy.

Peter Folliot  
Interim Executive Director





**Hobart seniors can now access advice and information about aged care in the one place, at the first Uniting AgeWell Community Hub.**

In response to reforms in the aged care sector, particularly community services, Uniting AgeWell has opened a shop front in Moonah, Tasmania.

This allows Uniting AgeWell to respond more effectively to consumer needs and expectations.

The Community Hub is a one-stop-shop for all Uniting AgeWell services in Hobart including:

- ▶ Home Care Packages
- ▶ Residential care
- ▶ Independent living
- ▶ Respite and carer support
- ▶ Social support

The community can also attend information sessions, use an internet kiosk, receive support and training on how to access MyAgedCare, speak with staff about services available to support their needs and obtain brochures and information packs.

The Community Hub was officially opened by Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania on September 6.

*The Community Hub is located at:  
92-94 Main Road, Moonah T: (03) 6282 1193*

# COMMUNITY HUB NOW OPEN IN HOBART



**Above:** At the official opening. (L-R) Federal Labor Member for Franklin and Shadow Minister for Ageing and Mental Health, Jullie Collins; Uniting AgeWell Interim Executive Director, Peter Folliot; Her Excellency Prof. The Hon. Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania; Community Programs Coordinator, Lee Marsh; Uniting AgeWell Deputy Board Chair, Wendy Quinn; Acting General Manager Tasmania, Jane Johnston; Labor Senator for Tasmania, Lisa Singh

## KEEPING UP WITH REFORMS

**The Federal Government is introducing a number of reforms to community services over the coming months and years. It is important all Uniting AgeWell clients are aware of the changes and how they may impact you.**

In July 2015, services previously provided through the National Respite for Carers program, Day Therapy Centres and Assistance for Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA) were integrated to become the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP).

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) provides entry-level home support for older people who need assistance to keep living independently at home and in their community.

From July this year, responsibility for funding and management of Home and Community Care

(HACC) services in Victoria was transferred to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme.

The Victorian Government will continue to fund and manage services for people under 65, with some HACC services and clients transferring to the National Disability Insurance Scheme as it rolls out in Victoria.

For existing clients of these programs, there will be no change to current services. New clients wanting to access CHSP services or existing clients needing additional services will need to be assessed by My Aged Care. Uniting AgeWell is happy to provide assistance to clients to access the My Aged Care system. For more information speak to your Client Liaison Officer.

# A GARDEN FOR ALL SENSES

With garden ornaments for visual effect, lavender for smell, baby woolly bush for touch and vegetables for taste, the Noble Park Community will soon have their senses stimulated in the new Wellbeing Garden.

The garden took another step towards completion when Bunnings Springvale generously donated plants, seedlings, tools and their time to help clients and residents with the planting stage.

The Wellbeing Garden is part of Noble Park Community's 'From Seed to Table' project which aims to promote healthy eating, exercise and community engagement. It will also participate in the free food movement, giving locals free access to the garden's bountiful harvest.

Noble Park Community Programs Coordinator Michelle Thompson said Bunnings came out with their horticulturist to help Noble Park clients begin planting.

Michelle said it was pleasing to see how far the Wellbeing Garden had progressed since work began earlier this year.



"We hope the next stage of the project, the construction of an outdoor activity shed and kitchen, will begin in the coming months," she said.

When completed, the Wellbeing Garden will provide opportunities for leisure and lifestyle activities, rehabilitative and restorative programs, while educating people about healthy eating options and developing new skills.

With herbs and shrubs planted, the garden will hopefully now attract birds and wildlife, providing the sounds of nature.

To learn more about community services at Noble Park or to get involved with the Wellbeing Garden, please contact Michelle Thompson on 9554 0722.



**Above:** A Bunnings Springvale staff member assists client Frank Bart with planting in the new Wellbeing Garden

**Left:** Uniting AgeWell Noble Park Community Activities Assistant, Cheryle Phillips with client Conceffa Biondo





## OAM FOR KALKEE CLIENT

Services offered by the Uniting AgeWell Kalkee Community Care Program have enabled Geelong client Pauline Stewart to remain independent and contribute to the local community.

The 84-year-old was presented with the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) by Victorian Governor Linda Dessau AM, for instigating the Court Network program in Geelong in 1987, where she volunteered as team leader and then became Regional Program Manager until her retirement in 2014 at the age of 82.

Uniting AgeWell provides Pauline assistance with day-to-day activities, such as changing sheets and gardening, through her Home Care Package.

Kalkee Client Advisor Belinda Smith says Pauline is fiercely independent, choosing to remain at home for as long as possible, driving herself everywhere and contributing to the community.

*For more information about Kalkee Community Care programs, contact Community Programs Coordinator Teresa Roberts on 5243 9566.*

## RELAX & RESTORE AT SYNOD 2016

**From tai chi, balance exercises and Nordic walking to virtual reality glasses, Uniting AgeWell demonstrated its diverse allied health and therapy services at the 2016 meeting of the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.**

Dozens of delegates tried their hand at a variety of wellbeing activities during a lunch time activity session.

Participants were particularly impressed with the virtual reality glasses, which can transport a user to another city, a foreign world and even under water.

Glenda Plavin, Community Programs Coordinator at Hawthorn Centre and Oakleigh Rehabilitation



Programs, said the session highlighted the way Uniting AgeWell's community programs helped people restore and maintain their wellbeing as they aged, and remain independent at home.

"Many visitors came in to speak to staff and enquire about talks on falls prevention and get balance assessments and five minute massages," she said.

"Many were surprised to learn how much our community programs provide."

*To find out more about our community programs or to find the nearest Uniting AgeWell Allied Health and Therapy Centre in your area, please contact 1300 783 435.*

A close-up photograph of several stalks of rhubarb, showing their characteristic red and green colors. The stalks are cut into thick, diagonal slices and are arranged in a pile on a light-colored, textured surface, possibly a wooden table. The lighting is bright, highlighting the vibrant colors of the rhubarb.

# Recipe

## Rhubarb Relish

### INGREDIENTS

- ▶ 900g rhubarb finely chopped
- ▶ 3 cups sugar
- ▶ 4 medium onions (finely diced)
- ▶ 1 ¼ cups vinegar (half brown half white)
- ▶ 2 teaspoons salt
- ▶ ½ teaspoon pepper
- ▶ 8 teaspoons curry powder

### METHOD

1. Grease the bottom of the pot. Put all ingredients in together.
2. Bring to the boil and simmer for 40 minutes stirring occasionally.
3. Bottle while hot.



# COTTAGE CLUB COOKS WITH RHUBARB

**Clients are rediscovering old passions and developing new skills while learning about self sufficiency at Mornington's Cottage Club in Hobart.**

Monday group clients have been growing rhubarb on site and at home to make rhubarb relish and champagne as part of their weekly activity program.

The rhubarb relish and champagne were even presented to Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania, when she dropped in for a visit in May.



Uniting AgeWell Tasmania Coordinator Community Services, Lee Marsh, said Her Excellency was impressed and was given samples to take away.

"Our clients have done an incredible job as it is extremely time consuming cutting the rhubarb fine enough to make relish," she said.

"However, it's all worth it as the relishes were so popular we could not keep up the demand on our trade table. At this rate, we will need all hands on deck for our upcoming March fair."

The rhubarb champagne was also a hit among clients, with many taking bottles to lunches with friends who placed orders for more.

Try making your own rhubarb relish with our fabulous recipe on the opposite page.

*For more information about the Cottage Club, contact 6282 1150.*



# MEN'S SHED PROVIDES TOOLS TO HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

**While his wife receives physiotherapy after a stroke, James Tan is busily crafting her a hand-made wobble board at Hawthorn Centre's Men's Shed to help her regain her balance.**

Despite having no woodwork experience, the retired IT consultant is enjoying learning new skills, being creative and developing comradery with the other Men's Shed members.

James said he started attending the Men's Shed when his wife Rosalind began receiving physiotherapy at the Centre as part of her recovery program.

"I come from a really technical background and have never done woodwork before, so I wasn't sure what to expect when I signed up," he said.

"I now love it as it's a handy skill and allows me to be creative and make something useful.

"After completing the wobble board, I hope to build a folding chair and other pieces of equipment to help with my wife's balance and aid her recovery."



Uniting AgeWell has two Men's Sheds, at Rosetta Community, Strathaven in Hobart and Hawthorn Centre in Melbourne.

The Strathaven Men's Shed is also opened to residents from Strathaven and Strathglen as part of their weekly lifestyle program, with many men completing wood work activities.

Men's Shed Project Officer Ian Fenton says Men's Sheds are places where men can develop friendships, pursue new activities, learn new skills or become involved in physical activities.

"Our Men's Sheds provide a safe and stimulating environment where men can remain active in mind and body, while developing old-fashioned mateship," he said.

*For more information about our Men's Sheds, contact Strathaven Community on 6208 3208 or Hawthorn Centre on 9815 0155.*

## GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK

Uniting AgeWell welcomes and encourages any feedback you may have. Your feedback will be treated with the strictest confidence and used to improve the way we provide our services.

Uniting AgeWell feedback forms and the Australian Government Aged Care Complaints Commissioner

brochure, 'I have a concern', can be obtained from all our community programs staff and/or through the Department of Health.

If you prefer to give verbal feedback, please speak directly with one of our friendly community programs staff.





# RAY RECEIVES THE GIFT OF MUSIC

Ray tests out his new iPod with Girrawheen Centre Coordinator Rossella Frezza, left, and Music Therapist Winifred Beevers

**Girrawheen Day Centre client Ray McSweeney has found relief from the day-to-day strains of mental health issues thanks to Uniting AgeWell's Music For David program.**

Ray, 66, started accessing the music therapy program after a fundraising campaign by local café Tuccibrown and the Brighton Lions Club.

For the month of April, Tuccibrown donated 30 cents from every coffee sold to the Lions Club, which then passed it on to the Girrawheen Day Centre.

The money enabled Uniting AgeWell to place Ray onto the Music For David program.

Music For David uses selected music on an iPod or MP3 player to soothe yet gently stimulate people who are agitated or withdrawn due to the effects of dementia or mental health issues.

The music therapy not only provides a meaningful, relevant and enjoyable activity for the person, but supports carers by giving them short-term respite from the demands of their loved ones.

Music For David was established in memory of The Reverend David Hodges, the Minister at Toorak Uniting Church until his retirement in 1983.

Uniting AgeWell supported David and his partner, musician David Ross-Smith, from 2011 until his death the following year, and music played a significant role in David's care.

The Friends of Music For David, headed by David Ross-Smith, organise a number of fundraising events for the program each year.

"Music is not only beneficial for people with dementia, it also has therapeutic effects on healthy people," he said.

The latest Music For David concert in September featured renowned singers such as Judy Sporton, Amanda Stevenson and Torquil Syme performing songs from some of the world's greatest musicals including *Guys and Dolls*, *My Fair Lady* and *The Sound of Music*.

*To find out more about Music For David and Uniting AgeWell's Girrawheen Centre, contact Music Therapist Winifred Beevers on 9845 3143.*

# MAXIMISING SUPPORT AT HOME

## Are you getting the most out of your Home Care Package?

Many Uniting AgeWell clients don't use all the funding allocated to them by the Federal Government in their Home Care Package (HCP).

While Uniting AgeWell tailors Home Care Packages with each client to support them living independently at home, many people don't know

there are extra services they could be receiving.

Perhaps they need someone to walk their dog, wash their windows or take them to medical appointments? They may want to join a gym or social group, or need assistance getting to the movies, gardening club or computer course.

Uniting AgeWell can help all clients make full use of their funding, ensuring they continue to remain independent and doing the things important to them.

In addition, Federal Government reforms mean that from February 27 next year, when a client leaves their home care program, all unused funds will be returned to the Department of Health.

*To find out how you can make the most of your Home Care Package, contact your Client Advisor.*

## MEET CLIENT ADVISOR CHRIS RUMBOLD

### How long have you worked at Uniting AgeWell?

I have worked in the aged care industry for 21 years and am about to celebrate seven years as a Client Advisor at Uniting AgeWell in southern Tasmania, based at Mornington in Hobart. I look after Home Care Packages, which support our clients to stay at home through care, respite and activities.

### What do you enjoy about working at Uniting AgeWell?

I've made some wonderful friends throughout my career and I find it very rewarding helping clients meet their goal of remaining independent.

### How many Home Care Package clients do you look after?

We have 86 people on Home Care Packages in our community program in Hobart. We try and support people to remain independent in their own homes for as long as we can.

### How do you work with a client to develop a plan that meets their needs and goals?

We sit down with clients and their families and discuss their preferences, wants and needs and tailor a care plan that fits in with them. We provide a budget at the end of every month that shows where the money is spent and what is left over to be put into extra care or services.





# GIVING CARERS TIME OUT

**Uniting AgeWell's White Hills Haven has been a life-saver for Bendigo student Olivia.**

The 24-year-old juggles her university studies and a full social life with her role as full-time carer for her grandmother, Janice, who has early onset dementia.

Janice attends White Hills Haven's day respite program twice a week and overnight weekend respite every few weeks, giving Olivia valuable time to herself.

Olivia said her Nan loved day respite and the social interaction had slowed the progress of her dementia, keeping her mind stimulated while she participated in activities.

Weekend respite also gives Olivia time to relax and catch up with family. "It's nice when someone else can care for her, not just me," she said.

Respite at Uniting AgeWell can range from a few hours a day in one of its many day programs, to a couple of weeks at an aged care residence.



It gives carers a break, while providing a stimulating and supportive environment for the person they care for.

For seniors living at home, it's important they remain connected to the things that matter to them and continue to feel valued members of their community.

To find out more about respite and carer support with Uniting AgeWell contact your Client Liaison Officer.

# TECHNOLOGY CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

**Uniting AgeWell is using technology and social media to counter isolation and connect community clients with their families and friends in Latrobe, Northern Tasmania.**

Community Programs Coordinator Peter Cullen said studies had found socially isolated older people were more likely to experience severe physical and psychological health issues than those who were socially engaged.

"We are addressing the needs of clients who live alone or reside in more remote areas of the Strathdevon catchment area by using Skype and regularly connecting them with family and friends living interstate or overseas," he said.

Funded by the Federal Government's Community Visitors Scheme, clients are provided with a

pre-programmed tablet complete with broadband data and backed by local technical support. They are then able to chat with volunteers from Nundah Activity Centre in Brisbane.

Peter said the initiative gave clients living in remote areas an opportunity to contact others in a more personal way than a phone call.

The Platypus Club in Latrobe has also set up a social media network, enabling clients to establish connections and keep in contact with family and friends around the world.

Platypus Club Coordinator Linda King said games and programs on tablets stimulated the minds of seniors, especially those with dementia and depression. "We aim to offer other ways of keeping people motivated and happy," she said.

*For more information about the program or The Platypus Club, please call Peter on 6343 3933.*

**Front Cover:** Men's Shed participant James Tan tries his hand at woodwork with wife Rosalind Tan  
**Below:** Hobart Home Care Package client Pat Muskett and Direct Care Worker Jill Gluskie



## Here to help

Uniting AgeWell offers a broad range of community services that enable older people to remain active and independent and living in their own community as long as possible.

Whether you need a little assistance around the home or more complex care and support, Uniting AgeWell's community services can make a difference.

Choosing the right service to meet your needs is important. The Uniting AgeWell team can inform and guide you, tailoring a program of services that help you meet your goals.

Speak to our friendly team today and find out how we can support you to live and age well at home.



T: 1300 783 435  
[unitingagewell.org](http://unitingagewell.org)

*Uniting AgeWell is an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia*

