

# Snippets from the Aged Task Force Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> February 2005

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2005, 9.30AM**

## **A New Format**

Welcome to 2005 and another year of successful activities for the Aged Task Force (ATF). In 2004 we trialled a new format to present ATF activities, apart from a set of formal minutes. 'The Snippets' have been very well received and as a result of this, future ATF activities and meetings will be presented in a summary and action format.

## **Meeting Attendance**

The meeting was chaired by Sarah Varley, present were Norm Melvin, Nancie Melvin, Pam Hennen, Pauline Milton, Jan Rosen, Julia Hutten, Peter Hutten, Karen Tavener-Smith, Reg Lobb. Apologies were received from Anita Mulally (IECC) and Joni Braham (DADHC)

## **Working Groups Update**

### **Photographic Library: Celebrating the 'Time of Our Lives'**

Plans for a photographic library are well on the way. The long-term aim of the photographic competitions held over the last three years has been to create a library of high quality photographs of Illawarra seniors being actively involved in community life. The photographic library will provide the Aged Task Force and community organisations with an exhibition which will inspire older people and the community to become involved in positive ageing activities. It will be loaned free of charge to promote services and activities that are focussed on older persons and their needs.

The library will contain up to 40 photographs selected from those submitted to the competitions. Photographs will be a good size and laminated to be light, transportable and readily mounted. The Aged Task Force welcomes anyone with expertise and knowledge in this area to assist with the library's development.

**Action:** *Working Party of Norm and Nancie Melvin, Pauline Milton, Pam Hennen and Colin Markham to progress selecting and laminating photos. HCI to develop captions and support materials. Plan to look to launch library in October again for the International Day of Older Persons.*

## **Social Isolation in the Elderly**

The taskforce was excited to see the “Cooinda Day Club” (the social isolation in the elderly initiative) appoint a part time project officer, Yan Yan Lam who will work from Wollongong Meals on Wheels. Yan aims to establish small group, social meal outings for frail older people. Volunteers will be the social link with the groups and encourage interaction over lunch, as well as advocating for the needs and issues that arise for the older members. The project is viewed as a bridging program for older people allowing them to gain confidence and progress on to existing community activities. For more information please contact Yan at Wollongong Meals on Wheels on 4226 5869.

**Action:** *ATF to continue to support initiative as it develops.*

## **Oral Health**

The Oral Health Working Group has completed and distributed a report based on a survey of local residential care facilities. Research has shown that older people’s oral health can deteriorate dramatically when they enter residential care. The management of oral health also becomes increasingly difficult as people develop dementia and become physically dependant. Timely provision of care has the potential to deliver a range of benefits to older people, caregivers, families and professional staff. To this end a stakeholder meeting is to be held in March to progress recommendations from the report, consider priorities for action and to look at what we can achieve by working together to improve oral health in residential care. Recommendations made from the report include sharing the survey results with private and public dental facilities; exploring with relevant stakeholders opportunities for preventative oral care programs in residential care; supporting public dental facilities in implementing strategies for maximizing use of resources available; investigating the prospects of establishing more formal links between residential care facilities and private dental services and training opportunities for aged care staff in oral health.

**Action:** *Coordinate stakeholder meeting.*

## **Gerontology Seminar**

Reg Lobb continues to lobby the Gerontology Association regarding holding a regional seminar in Wollongong. Taskforce members agreed that if this was successful we will work with the association on organising the seminar on an issue of interest to local seniors. Suggestions included “Healthy Cities for Seniors” covering a range of topics from emotional and mental health issues to caring for the environment and retirement planning.

**Action:** *Reg to continue to monitor progress for ATF.*

## **Seniors and Banking**

A new working group has also been established to approach local banks and building societies on the use of new banking technology by older people. Letters have been forwarded to all local branches to gauge their interest in this issue. The group plans to investigate opportunities of working with local banks and building societies on developing training/support programs for seniors around use of ATMs and technology such as phone or internet banking.

We have found out that the Commonwealth Bank runs free **Banking Made Easy Workshops**. They will conduct a workshop at a time and venue that suits a group of interested seniors. To find out more call 1800 003 797 during business hours.

**Action:** *Await responses to letters and look to organising meetings with representatives regarding strategies that may be possible.*

## **Interested in joining the taskforce?**

Is there an issue you would like to raise? The Aged Task Force has open membership and always welcomes new members, for more information please call Karen Tavener-Smith on 4226 5000.

As a guide to what we aim to do, here are our goals:

- To have a taskforce that is broadly representative of all stakeholders, including older people, aged care service providers, government and non-government agencies.
- To provide a forum for the exchange of information between service providers, older people and those with an interest in matters which affect older adults.
- To increase community awareness and response about the issues which affect the health and well being of older people in the Illawarra.
- To listen to the needs and concerns of the older community and prioritise these and develop strategies to address them.
- To advocate for the best possible level of service provision for older people.
- To form project working parties to address specific issues and to co-opt other members with expertise to these committees as required.

## **For your diary: meeting dates for 2005**

Starting at 9.30 am

- Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> May
- Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> August
- Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> November

## **Aged Task Force Review of Mailing Details**

Do you still want to receive information about ATF activities?

If you wish to continue receiving correspondence.....do nothing!!! If you wish to be removed from the mailing list or have a new address please inform us by calling **(02) 4226 5000**.

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**at Healthy Cities Illawarra, 63 Auburn St, Wollongong  
Please RSVP by phoning (02) 4226 5000 or  
emailing to [programs@healthycitiesill.org.au](mailto:programs@healthycitiesill.org.au)**