

Notes from the Aged Task Force Meeting Tuesday May 16th 2006

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 15th August at Healthy Cities Illawarra, 63 Auburn Street, Wollongong. RSVP on 42265000

Other Meeting Dates: Tuesday 14th November 2006

Welcome to the second addition of the “Aged Task Force Meeting Notes” for 2006. We had a long agenda and managed to have some lengthy and interesting discussions, as well as make exciting decisions for upcoming activities of the Taskforce.

Meeting Attendance

The meeting was chaired by Sarah Varley (WCC)

Present were: Pam Hennen, Norm Melvin, Pauline Milton, Peter Hutten, Jan Rosen and Caitlin Marshall (HCI)

Apologies were received from: Nancie Melvin, Julia Hutten

Oral Health

The Dental chairs have been received positively in the Nursing Homes. Caitlin will be arranging visits to each home to see the chairs and provide information about the Oral Care DVD that has recently been produced by Peter King.

Peter King has recently launched a website: www.dentalrescue.com.au which is an online guide for information regarding oral health for older people. He has also produced the DVD entitled Dental Rescue: A Guide for Carers of the Elderly. This is available for purchase for \$70 however if the ATF arranges a bulk purchase we may be able to get 20% discount. We will flag this at the carer education workshop (discussed below).

In discussing how to complete this project, the Taskforce decided to run a community carers education workshop on ‘Oral Healthcare for the Elderly’ using the DVD resource and possible guest speakers. The Council would be able to provide a venue and invitations would be open to community carers and residential and nursing home staff.

Action: Caitlin to pursue this and arrange for education workshop to be provided in the next 3 months.

Mobile Phones and Seniors

Three schools have been contacted requesting interest in running some in-depth workshops on using mobile phones. As it is school holidays we are waiting to hear back from them if there are students who may be interested in this activity.

There was discussion about following the 'Computer Training for Seniors' model where people use their own equipment during the workshop – in this case – their own mobile phone. It was also suggested that the workshop will be far more useful if participants and trainers sit down 1:1 to go through using the phone.

Most of the discussion highlighted that people want clear and thorough instructions on the basic functions of their phone – not necessarily how to use the 'extras' that often come with new phones at the moment.

While finding young people to provide this training is a great opportunity for intergenerational linking and relationship building, the workshop is not bound to this idea. Members agreed to speak to relevant contacts e.g U3A and Community centre staff regarding this idea of technology training.

Action: Caitlin to continue scouting around community groups for possible tutors eg. Scouts, youth groups, churches and contact ATF members once we have secured some tutors.

Grief and Cemetery Visits

Caitlin has spoken with Anita Mullaly at the IECC who is pursuing this issue through contacting the cemetery management. The Taskforce would like to keep up to date with this issue and are happy to provide supporting letters or statements to assist in lobbying for improved access for cemetery visits.

Attitudes towards Older People

There was discussion about the prevalent social attitudes towards older people, particularly the tendency for assumptions to be made about an individual's capacity and understanding when they are experiencing illness or gradual loss of mobility and faculties. Despite growing community awareness about the reality of ageing and illness, offensive and discriminatory behaviour and attitude remains common. Peter Hutten presented a paper on some of these issues and there was lengthy discussion about how this impacts on older people in their everyday life. There was a suggestion to work towards developing a campaign for Seniors Week 2007 regarding this issue, and as such agreed to keep this issue on the agenda of the ATF for more structured discussion next meeting.

Other Business

La Vie Development Company has approached the ATF requesting a meeting to discuss the development of a new aged care residential facility in the Dapto area. After some discussion the ATF agreed to write to Dr Gooley and invite him to attend our next meeting.

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. Meeting dates for 2006 are: Tuesday 8th August and Tuesday 14th November.

Our aims are:

- 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 and develop strategies to address them.
- To advocate for the best possible level of service provision for older people.

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.