

News for You

Aged Care Advocacy Newsletter | June-July 2021 | Issue 1



Hello and welcome to our first issue of News for You, a newsletter for people receiving aged care services.

Our newsletter will bring you heartwarming personal stories and information about protecting your health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Plus, learn about support services to help you address issues you may be experiencing with your aged care and more!

We provide free and confidential advocacy support to help you keep control over and make decisions about your personal and social life, no matter where you live. Browse through and discover what's in this issue of News for You!

Staying COVID-19 safe once you are vaccinated

Your safety is our number one priority in Australia's national COVID-19 vaccination rollout.

Suppose you consent to a COVID-19 vaccine but haven't yet received it. In that case, you and your family will be notified once a vaccination date is confirmed for the aged care home where you live.

As winter approaches, your risk of becoming severely unwell with COVID-19 or other viruses increases if you're not yet vaccinated against them. You can

protect yourself from getting sick by following the basic personal hygiene steps below:



**WEAR A MASK
IN PUBLIC**



**WASH YOUR
HANDS WITH
SOAP OR SANITISER**



**KEEP A 1.5M
DISTANCE
FROM OTHERS**



**STAY AWAY
FROM OTHERS IF
YOU FEEL SICK**

ERA Elder Rights
Advocacy

 era.asn.au

 **(03) 9602 3066**

What can you do if you have age care issues?

GEORGE'S STORY

A decent nights sleep and getting out of bed

George enquired about his right to have a bed pole installed after he attended one of ERA's information sessions about the Charter of Aged Care Rights. He explained that with a bed pole he would be able to move his position in bed at night and also be able to get out of bed without having to call for assistance from staff (which was not always

provided in a timely manner). The Advocate was aware that while a coroner's recommendation had been made on the use of certain poles in certain circumstances, there was not a total ban. Working in partnership with George, the Advocate requested that the provider arrange for an occupational therapist (OT) assessment. This request was met with some resistance from the provider, however the Advocate and George were undeterred and pressed ahead. The OT assessment



identified that a bed pole would be appropriate for George and that he was not affected by any risk factors. The recommended bed pole was fixed to the bed, greatly improving George's quality of life simply by being able to readjust himself in bed at night.

JOAN & MICHAEL

The "Extra Services" fee merry-go-round

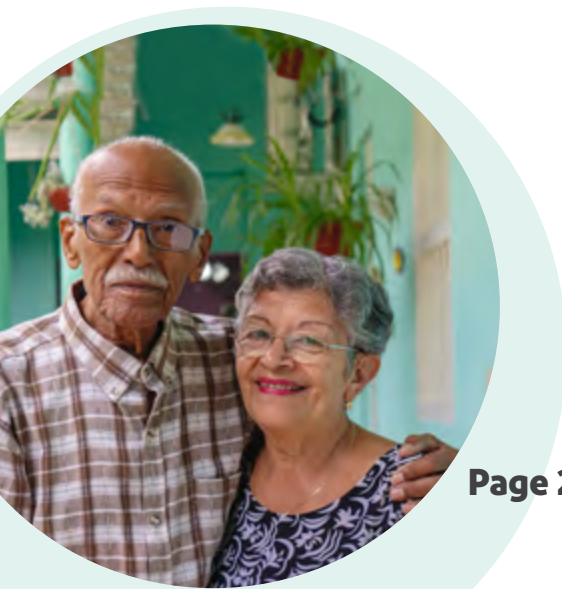
Joan and Michael contacted ERA as they were concerned about an "extra services" fee that their facility was charging.

Costing \$600 per month and known as a "silver membership", it involved services such as additional wifi, hairdressing, some group physio training and clothes labelling. The couple had been clear from very early on that they did not want the additional services.

However, their attempts to get the fee stopped had been unsuccessful, despite the fact they had provided the facility with notification in writing from their accountant. After discussing options

to resolve the issue, the couple indicated they would like our Advocate to contact the facility and advocate on their behalf.

It was a not a straightforward process, involving discussions with the facility manager and the company's finance department before being escalated to a Regional Manager. The Regional Manager promised to investigate and a few days later came back with an apology and agreed to stop charging the fee and refund monies owed.



WHAT IS ADVOCACY

Meet Michaela

Michaela, an Intake Advocate is the first voice you will hear when you call ERA.

Michaela's job is to provide you with the information you need, or refer you on to our team of advocates if you need more support with your issue.

She has a lot of experience in and knowledge of the aged care system, having previously worked as a social worker in the aged care and carer



sectors at Merri Health. Advocacy is 'the process of standing beside someone and supporting them to understand and exercise their rights, and have their voice heard on the issues that are important to them.'

To speak with Michaela, give ERA a call on (03) 9602 3066 or 1800 700 600.

Q Your Q&A

I grew up in Italy and love the food I shared with my family before moving to Australia. Living in residential aged care I don't get to eat that type of food anymore. What can I do?

- Giovanni

Giovanni, while you no longer live in your own home, you still have the right to eat the foods you want and to practice your culture under Australia's Charter of Aged Care Rights.

Speak to your nursing home manager about a meal plan that includes some of your favourite Italian foods. If you don't feel comfortable bringing this up, call us on 1800 700 600. We can connect you to an independent advocate who can support you to raise your concerns with the manager.

Call today on 1800 700 600

Advocacy and Information for Aged Care issues

What we do

- Listen to your concerns
- Support you to find solutions
- Provide information that includes your rights
- Assist you to explore your options and make informed decisions
- Confidential | Free | Independent

1800 700 600 or (03) 9602 3066 | era.asn.au

Q YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Recommendations and advice can be difficult to understand, so we've provided some practical advice and answered all your frequently asked questions, such as:

★ What is elder abuse?

Elder abuse can take many different forms. Sometimes it's hard to know if what is happening is abuse, especially if it's done at the hands of someone you trust.

★ Are there different types of abuse?

Abuse can take many forms including financial, physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and social or neglect. It can be difficult to seek support, especially if you're worried about something happening to you if you do.

★ How can I get help?

If you think you've experienced elder abuse, we can offer you support and information, help you access appropriate resources and services, and work with you to find a solution.

If you have questions or need support call ERA on 1800 700 600

Send your contributions to the next newsletter via email: enquiries@open.org.au



Your Right To Visitors

Just because you live in residential aged care doesn't mean you can't have the social life you had living in the community. Besides, getting visits can give you something to look forward to and keeps you up to date with what's keeping friends and family busy. Restrictions to stop the spread of COVID-19 have been lifted, so your visitors can return.

- ★ You have the right to do activities of your choice outside your residence.
- ★ You do not need to quarantine when returning from medical or other appointments.
- ★ Community visitors and volunteers can make social visits.
- ★ There are no time limits for social visits.

If you have questions about having visitors or going out contact your local advocate on 1800 700 600

Advocacy - Your Free Aged Care Support

How can we help you?

ERA offers free and confidential assistance to people like you to find solutions to issues or concerns you have about the care you're getting. Our job is to listen to your concerns and connect you with a friendly and knowledgeable support person - what we call an advocate - to work with you to find a solution. We put your needs first.

When do we help?

Everyone's needs are different, but we have the

knowledge and experience to help you to work through your situation. We can assist you if you feel under pressure to make a choice you disagree with or when you're unhappy with the care you're getting in your nursing home. These are just two examples of situations we can help with, but there are many more.

How does it work?

Sometimes an issue can be solved with one conversation over the phone with us. Others

might need several conversations or a face-to-face meeting with you or your nursing home to discuss your concerns and find a solution. We are here to support you and always put your needs and best interests first to improve your experience.

For independent, free and confidential aged care advocacy, phone our free advocacy service on 1800 700 600 or visit our website: era.asn.au

Q Your Rights in Aged Care

You are entitled to a unique set of rights under Australia's Charter of Aged Care Rights. The Charter demonstrates what you can expect from aged care providers. It puts your needs first and recognises your fundamental right to be treated with dignity and respect.

You have the right to:

- ★ Safe and high quality care and services.
- ★ Be treated with dignity and respect.
- ★ Have your identity, culture and diversity valued and supported.
- ★ Live without abuse and neglect.
- ★ Have control over and make choices about your care, and personal and social life, including where the choices involve personal risk.
- ★ Be listened to and understood.
- ★ Have control over, and make decisions about, the personal aspects of your daily life, financial affairs and possessions.
- ★ Your independence.
- ★ Have a person of your choice, including an aged care advocate, support you or speak on your behalf.
- ★ Complain free from reprisal, and to have your complaints dealt with fairly and promptly.

These are just some of your rights under the Charter of Aged Care Rights. To learn more and get assistance to exercise your rights, call us 1800 700 600

New initiative - Stay Connected & Supported in Your Community

One in eight people aged over 65 living in Australia experience feelings of loneliness, and one in twelve experience social isolation. Feeling lonely and being isolated should not be a regular part of ageing. Connection to people of all ages provides security, support, happiness and a sense of purpose.

We are living longer than ever before, which means you will experience a range of age-related changes and may need to reach out for support.

The Older Persons Advocacy Network recently launched the Stay Connected and Supported in Your Community initiative. We are delighted to share it with you.

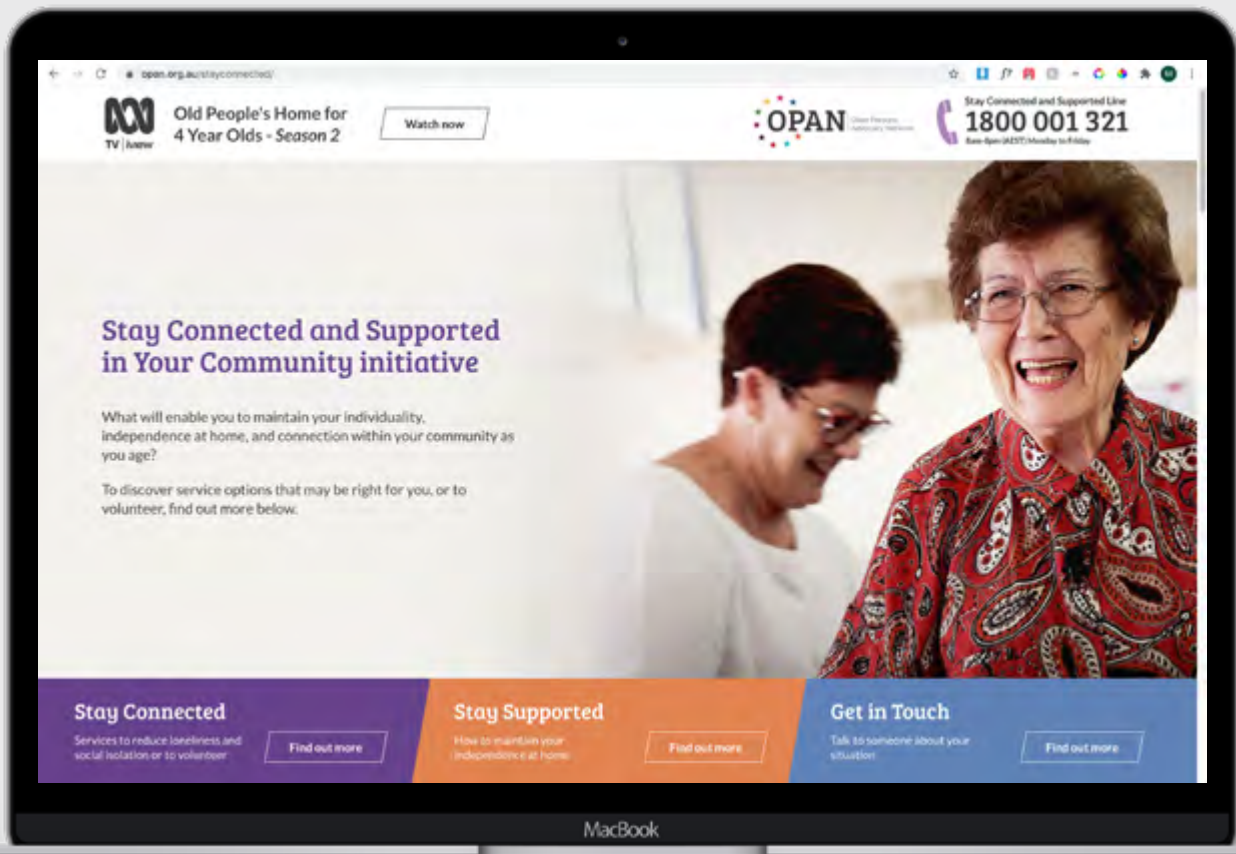
It includes our new Stay Connected website - opan.org.au/stayconnected - bursting with information about services that may be right for you.

There's also a new phone line – **1800 001 321** – to speak to our friendly team who can connect you with volunteer visitors,

services like Friend Line and Dementia Australia or wellbeing support.

Volunteer visitors can be matched to you based on shared interests, and if requested, cultural background, gender and sexual orientation. They visit weekly or fortnightly for a chat, walk, activity, or outing – providing friendship and companionship.

Contact our team, who can assist you to connect to your community. **Call 1800 001 321.**





Interview with Aesh Rao from Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds

What happens when you bring together older people and pre-schoolers? The ABC's heartwarming series Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds shows us how intergenerational relationships transform older people's lives.

In this season, the show's older stars want to live independently in their own home but need support to remain healthy and happy enough to stay there. We had a chat with Sydney resident Aesh Rao, who stars in season two!

What made you want to be involved with the show?

It came at a very good time because we were locked down during COVID. I felt that this was a very good opportunity for me to go out, meet people and chat. That's

what I was thinking at the time - if an opportunity comes to you, it's a good idea to take it.

Tell us about the first time you the children who feature in the show?

They were very bubbly, and it was a very happy occasion. We waited to see what these kids were going to do and how they choose who they would go to. It was a very mysterious beginning.

How have the friendships you formed on the show changed your life?

It has given me an opportunity to meet a large number of people from other backgrounds, rather than the sub-culture that I was living in, just with my colleagues and friends I've had for a long time.



Keep these numbers handy

ERA
1800 700 600

Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission
1800 951 822

My Aged Care
1800 200 422

Dementia Australia
1800 100 500

National Seniors Australia
1300 76 50 50

Stay Connected
1800 001 321

Lifeline
13 11 44

Advocacy & Legal Aid Seniors Rights Victoria
1300 368 821

VIC State Health
1300 650 172

PUZZLE TIME - FIND THE WORDS


E C C E A D V O C A T E Z N I Y I N
P L H O Z J W D H P R I V A C Y N G
C E D O N T C U L T U R E D T U D C
H O R E I S L Y O A D N W L S I E R
A S T S R C E I D X K I N D A T P E
R V U T O V E N S I W S D R F P E S
T I H P V N A K T T G W W W E T N P
E F G Y P A A L I D E N T I T Y D E
R A G H D O W L U K Q N I H Y U E C
P I K B T N R W P E J K W T Z N N T
V R R X J S A T O K L W D Z Y S C H
L I S T E N C A R E B H E L P O E S

ADVOCATE	ELDER	PERSONAL
CARE	FAIR	PRIVACY
CHARTER	HELP	RESPECT
CHOICE	IDENTITY	RIGHTS
CONSENT	INDEPENDENCE	SAFETY
CULTURE	KIND	SUPPORT
DIGNITY	LISTEN	VALUE

We acknowledge the traditional land owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

OPAN Older Persons Advocacy Network

 opan.org.au

 **OPAN Advocacy Line**
1800 700 600
8am - 8pm, Mon - Fri
10am - 4pm Sat

Elder Rights Advocacy is a proud member of the **Older Persons Advocacy Network** with organisations to support you with free and independent aged care advocacy in each state or territory

ACT	VIC	NSW	TAS	NT - Top End
	 Elder Rights Advocacy	 Seniors Rights Service	 Advocacy Tasmania	
WA	QLD	NT - Central	SA	
 Advocare Empowering People	 ADA Australia Your aged and disability advocates	 CatholicCare NT	 aras aged rights advocacy services inc.	

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