

WELCOME – Our first morning tea and monthly meeting were a great opportunity for so many members to catch up after the holiday period, and we were delighted to welcome everyone back. Our guest speaker, Alana Cresswell from Advance Care Planning, provided some very relevant information on the importance of thinking about and planning the type of care you would like in the case of unexpected emergency health issues, which should provide peace of mind to yourself and your family when required. NSA head office has been actively promoting their *Keep Cash* campaign and it was great to see four of our members attend a media shoot to help the cause. While the hot, humid weather continues, keep cool as best you can and stay hydrated!

BRANCH MEETINGS

Our next branch meeting will be on **Thursday 13 March** at the Coorparoo RSL Club. Arrival will be at 10:00am for a 10:30am start with guest speaker, updates on branch and national activities, fun time, raffles and refreshments. The cost has been increased to \$8.00 cash per person payable at the door as agreed at our February meeting.

With St Patrick's Day the following weekend, members are encouraged to celebrate everything Irish and "*be seen in green*". This could be through clothing, wigs, glasses, hats etc – use your imagination!

Our guest speaker will be Andrew Campbell from Neuaudio Hearing & Brain Health to discuss how potential hearing loss can impact your lifestyle and relationships. Andrew is a Masters trained, independent adult rehabilitation specialist audiologist and a pioneer in the field of cognitive health and hearing. His passion is to help patients return to a fuller participation in life through a holistic approach to hearing health.

The dates for 2025 are:

10 April	8 May
12 June	10 July
14 August	11 September
9 October	13 November

MORNING TEA CATCH-UP

Our next morning tea catch up will be on **Monday 17 March** from 10am at Easts Leagues Club. This is always a great informal way to get to know fellow members outside the confines of a branch meeting.

The dates for 2025 are:

14 April	19 May
16 June	21 July
18 August	15 September
20 October	17 November

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Best wishes to *Cheryl Cunial, Wayne Francis, Evelyn Jamieson, Lorrie Knight, Robyn Morton, Denise Munns, Graham Tienan and Pat Will* who celebrate birthdays in March. We hope you enjoy your special day with family and friends.

MARCH DAY BUS TRIP – IT'S A MYSTERY DESTINATION

Our first day bus trip for 2025 will be on **Monday 31 March** departing the Coorparoo RSL Club at 8:00am and returning at approximately 4:30pm. The destination is a mystery which will keep everyone guessing until we get closer to the venue for lunch.

Cost is \$65.00 per person which includes the coach, morning tea, and two-course lunch. Please advise any dietary requirements and your menu selection from below at the time of booking:

- WAGYU ROYALE BURGER – premium beef pattie, candied bacon, lettuce, special sauce & chips
- CHICKEN PARMIGIANA – crumbed chicken breast with Napoli sauce & cheese, salad & chips
- CHICKEN CAESAR SALAD – soft boiled egg, crisp prosciutto, creamy anchovy (GF available)
- GREEK SALAD OF LAMB FILLETS – marinated in garam masala, rosemary, garlic, kalamata olives & Greek style fetta (GF)
- SALT & PEPPER CALAMARI – light salad, chips & chilli lime dipper
- FISH & CHIPS (beer battered or grilled – GF) mixed leaf salad, lemon & funky tartare sauce
- DESSERT – is ice cream
- TEA & COFFEE – available at your own expense

All bookings and enquiries should be made with Pat Will on M: 0437 774 049; T: 3398 8726 or E: patsywill@gmail.com. Payment can be arranged at the 13 March branch meeting or by direct deposit to the Coorparoo National Seniors, BSB: 084 391; Account: 047949379. If using this method, please include your name so it can be matched to the payment.

COMMUNITY PANTRY DRIVE

If you would like to contribute to a local community pantry to assist those in need in our local area, please bring along some items of good quality non-perishable food to our branch meetings. We will collect and distribute them to a local organisation. Please ensure that all items are well within use by date.

CARE KITS FOR KIDS

Care Kits For Kids provides backpacks filled with basic necessities for Queensland children who are displaced through no fault of their own. They provided an astounding 4,700 Care Kits in 2024.

As part of our relationship, our branch members contribute small items each month with some suggestions of items listed below that can be brought to our monthly meetings. Most can be purchased at discount shops, and not everything needs to be provided each month.

March – Books – lined writing, colouring or scrap books

April – Face washer, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush

May – Long pants, jackets, tops, beanies (sizes 0-16)

June – Underwear, socks (all sizes to 16)

July – Hair brush, comb, bands, clips, baseball cap

August – roll-on deodorant (no glass or spray), shampoo, conditioner (travel or small size)

September – Summer pyjamas, girls crop tops (all sizes to 16)

October – Reading book (all genres & ages), small soft toy or doll (no beads or stick on eyes)

November – Backpack, small lunch box

Coorparoo branch recently featured on Care Kits for Kids Facebook page following our February donations dropped off by member Julie Jermy. Thanks, Julie!



Care Kits for Kids Qld

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It was lovely seeing Julie J at our sheds on Thursday. On behalf of Coorparoo National Seniors, she delivered bags of donations which tick many of the boxes on our wishlist ... like a Valentine's Day gift for our charity. Thank you very much to everyone who contributed!



ENJOY READING?

Don't forget our book swap at each monthly meeting. There are some great books available for only a gold coin (\$2 or \$1) donation which goes towards our club charity donations. Donated books are all in good condition and can be swapped back another month.

WELLBEING OFFICER

If you are, or know of any member who is ill, injured, or in need of help please notify Jan Jackson on 0411 987 174 so that we can give our support where needed.

BRANCH RECYCLING ITEMS

If you are interested in recycling used tablet blister packs, please bring them along to any of our monthly meetings. We will investigate other items for recycling throughout the year.

MATESHIP IS KEY TO TACKLING LONELINESS

As we get older, we sometimes lose contact with old friends. It's never too late to reconnect. Social connection is a cornerstone of wellbeing, and for many people, especially those reaching middle age and beyond, loneliness can become a significant challenge. Studies show that men are especially susceptible to loneliness in later life – and one solution to this lies with the traditional Australian concept of mateship.

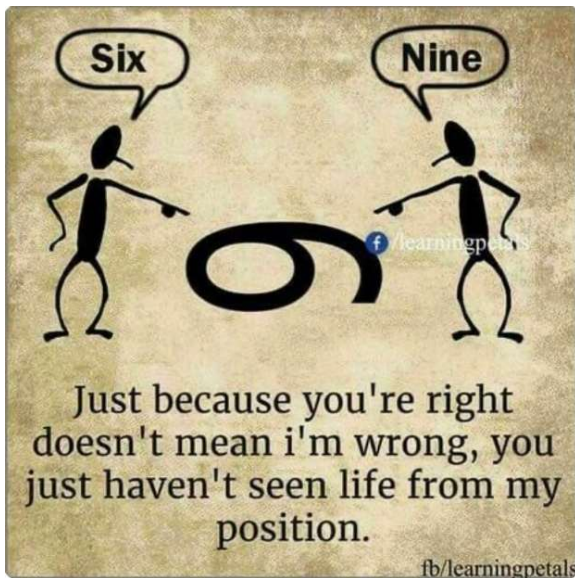
Traditional gender roles often discourage men from expressing emotions and seeking social support. This can lead to social isolation, particularly after significant life changes like retirement, divorce, or the loss of a spouse. Men may also find it difficult to build new friendships later in life, lacking the established social circles they may have had in their younger years. Chronic loneliness has a demonstrably negative impact on both physical and mental health. It can increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and dementia. Loneliness in men and women can also lead to depression, anxiety, and a decline in cognitive function.

Mateship is posited as a powerful antidote to loneliness because it fosters a sense of belonging, provides emotional support, and encourages shared activities. Here are some practical steps anyone can take to combat loneliness and build stronger social connections:

- Reconnect with old friends: reach out to former classmates, colleagues, or neighbours.
- Join a club or group: find activities that interest you, whether it's a sports team, a book club, or a volunteer organisation.

- Seek out social events: attend community gatherings, local festivals, or neighbourhood barbecues.
- Embrace technology: use online platforms or social media groups to connect with like-minded individuals.
- Seek professional help: if you're struggling to overcome loneliness, consider talking to a therapist or counsellor.

Remember: social connection is vital for everyone, and reaching out for support is a sign of strength, not weakness. Taking a small first step today could help you build a network of strong social connections to combat loneliness and live a healthier, happier life.



SUPPORT AT HOME PROGRAM STARTS IN JULY

The Australian Government is improving in-home aged care to help older people live independently at home for longer. The Support At Home program will bring together some current in-home aged care programs, with the aim of ensuring a more equitable system for older people.

Starting 1 July 2025, the Support at Home program will replace the Home Care Packages (HCP) Program and Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC) program. The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) will move to the new program no earlier than 1 July 2027.

Older people with more complex needs will have access to higher levels of care, helping them to stay home for longer. Support at Home will improve access to services, products, equipment, and home modifications to help older people remain healthy, active, and socially connected to their community. Existing in-home aged care programs will continue

operating normally until they move to the new program.

The Department of Health and Aged Care will soon be releasing materials to support older people and their families and carers to transition to the Support at Home program. To receive updates about the aged care reforms, including Support at Home, you can subscribe to the department's *EngAged* newsletter, or for more information, you can download the new Support at Home booklets for older people, families and carers. (Source: *Support at Home Program*)

AGED CARE FUNDING CHANGES BRANDED 'LAZY'

Most seniors will be paying more for care under the new system – and an expert predicts failure!

Seniors who are financially stressed may risk poorer aged care, the withdrawal of aged care providers and the closure of aged care services because of the Federal Government's aged care funding reforms. The reforms, which are now legislated, aim to cut the taxpayer subsidy of aged care.

The Federal Government projects the reforms will save \$18.88 billion. However, that will be achieved by shifting more costs onto consumers of home and residential care, and by expecting providers to absorb the risk of bad debts. That threatens the financial viability of many aged care services, particularly smaller, regional providers and community aged care providers who lack the reserves to absorb bad debts, according to aged care expert and Aged Care Royal Commission advisor, Professor Kathy Eagar.

Talking to the *HelloCare* newsletter, Prof Eagar said the financial burden on providers was "unustainable". "The government proposes a massive increase in consumer charges, expecting providers to collect these payments. If consumers cannot pay, providers face the dilemma of delivering unfunded services or ceasing care altogether. This creates a significant financial strain and jeopardises service quality."

She also doubts the government's assumption that older Australians can shoulder increased costs. "There's a perception that baby boomers are cashed up, but by the time they need aged care, most have depleted their resources," she said. *HelloCare* says data supports her claim: only 13% of Australians aged 85 or older have more than \$100,000 in superannuation.

"The reality is that these savings projections are overly optimistic and likely unachievable," Prof Eagar warns. "If the revenue gaps become too large, some providers

may reduce services or close entirely, further exacerbating the aged care crisis.

Support at home – Consumers will pay more for the government’s proposed Support at Home program. “When they say the top package is worth \$78,000, that amount includes the consumer’s sizeable contribution – it’s not additional,” Prof Eager said. For independence services such as personal care, self-funded retirees could be expected to contribute up to 50% of the cost.

For everyday living services such as domestic assistance, self-funded retirees can expect to contribute a massive 80% of the cost. “You’re talking about people potentially paying \$30,000 or more a year in some cases,” she says, adding that “many won’t be able to afford it”.

She predicts this will lead to a rise in the cash economy, with individuals hiring unregulated workers for tasks such as housekeeping, further compromising care quality. Additionally, the limited hours of support under these packages – a maximum of about 17 hours per week – are insufficient for older Australians with complex needs.

Increased burden on hospitals – Prof Eager warns the reforms could lead to a significant strain on public hospitals, with frail older people unable to secure residential care beds. “In my region...20% of all public hospital beds were occupied by people awaiting nursing home places.”

This situation, she argues, underscores the need for changes in the Commonwealth-state health reform agreement, due for renewal in 2025. “The states and territories need to be negotiating a special clause in that agreement about funding ... to actually cover the full costs of care for people approved for residential care who are sitting in public hospital beds.”

While there is a lifetime cap on consumer contributions to their aged care, the lifetime cap applied only to what the government refers to as non-clinical care. There is no lifetime cap on accommodation. Self-funded retirees will typically pay \$127,000 a year in residential care, with half of that in daily accommodation payments.

Another missed opportunity – Prof Eager is adamant about what the government should have done. “I would position aged care with Medicare,” she said, so that aged care is treated as a public entitlement, much like the healthcare system, and could be funded by a levy, similar to the Medicare levy.

“We all contribute to Medicare from the day we start working, and I think it’s politically palatable to introduce

an aged care levy halfway through your working life,” the professor said. This approach would position aged care as a publicly funded and regulated system, similar to how Medicare is viewed today. “Medicare isn’t just public hospitals ... it’s private doctors, private specialists, non-government organisations,” she explains. By shifting the narrative from a private, for-profit industry to a public entitlement, she believes aged care could be embraced as an essential public service.

Expert’s forecast – Prof Eager offers a stark critique of the government’s approach to aged care reform, describing it as “lazy” and just “more of the same”. As the baby boomer generation enters old age, the need for innovative solutions is becoming ever more urgent. But Prof Eager slams the reforms as doing little to address the looming challenges, merely shifting more financial responsibility onto consumers while maintaining the same outdated care models.

“Put simply, the new Support at Home program is based on all the worst features of the NDIS applied to aged care. It’s an NDIS for old people, except they have to pay a lot of money for it.” (Source: *HelloCare, Health Dept*)

MOULD AND YOUR HEALTH

Mould is a type of fungus that lives on plant and animal matter. This can include building materials like wood and gypsum plasterboard and furnishings like carpet and curtains, and even books and boxes. Mould grows best in damp and poorly ventilated areas and reproduces by making spores.

Airborne mould spores are commonly found in both indoor and outdoor environments. When they land on damp spots indoors, they may begin to grow and spread. There is no practical way to eliminate all mould indoors; the way to control indoor mould growth is to control the source of moisture. It is important that your home has good ventilation to minimise internal moisture and prevent mould growth.

What does mould look like? – Mould is not always easy to recognise. It often looks like ‘fuzz’ or appears to be a stain, smudge or discoloration. The most common moulds are black, green or white. However, mould can be many other colours, ranging from grey to orange to brown and can also change depending on age or life-stage.

How mould affects health – Mould associated with damp buildings can trigger nasal congestion, sneezing, cough, wheeze, respiratory infections and worsen asthma and allergic conditions. People who are more susceptible to these symptoms and other serious health effects include those with:

- Weakened immune systems

- Allergies
- Severe asthma
- Chronic, obstructive, or allergic lung diseases.

You should seek medical advice if you are concerned about the effects of mould.

Causes of mould growth indoors – Mould only grows when there is sufficient moisture on a surface or humidity in the air. Common causes include:

- Leaking roof and walls
- Faulty plumbing including blocked gutters and downpipes
- Condensation from cooking, showering, clothes drying and in areas with poor air circulation e.g. cupboards, corners and furniture against uninsulated outside walls.

Avoid conditions encouraging mould growth by using heat, insulation and ventilation. The cheapest and easiest way of reducing moisture and humidity levels is by ventilating a room by opening a door or window. Use exhaust fans where available.

Actions you can take to reduce mould – The most important actions you can take to prevent mould in your home are those that minimise moisture.

- Fix leaky plumbing and roofs and other building faults
- Ensure gutters are cleared and maintained
- Reduce condensation by using exhaust fans, or open windows in the bathroom and kitchen when showering, cooking or using the dishwasher
- Wipe up excess water caused by condensation such as on single glazed windows and on shower glazing
- Air the home regularly by opening windows and doors on warmer days
- Vent clothes dryers to the outside and clean lint filters according to the manufacturer's instructions
- Use reverse cycle air-conditioning and or mechanical dehumidification if available
- Ensure sufficient exhaust openings to the outside of the building if using evaporative cooling. Evaporative coolers increase the moisture content in indoor air, so the manufacturer's instructions should be followed to ensure airflow in the home
- Maintain heating, ventilation and cooling systems (this includes regular servicing according to the manufacturer's instructions)
- Use a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter
- Avoid placing mattresses on the floor or surfaces without adequate ventilation
- Vacuum, and or turn mattresses, if it can be done safely

- Increase air circulation around furniture by moving the furniture away from the walls (*Source: Betterhealth.vic.gov.au*)

EXERCISE BURSTS BOOST HEART HEALTH

Incorporating short bursts of intense physical activity into daily life can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease, particularly for women, according to a new study. The research, published in the Journal of the American Heart Association, focused on vigorous intermittent lifestyle physical activity (VILPA), which involves brief periods of intense exertion, such as sprinting up steps or carrying heavy groceries.

The study found that women who engaged in an average of 3.4 minutes of VILPA per day experienced a remarkable 45% lower risk of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE), including heart attacks and heart failure. Even modest levels of VILPA, ranging from 1.2 to 1.6 minutes per day, were associated with a 30-40% reduction in heart disease risk for women.

While men also benefited from VILPA, the effects were less pronounced. Men who averaged 5.6 minutes of daily VILPA experienced a 16% lower risk of MACE. Researchers think this gender disparity may stem from women generally exerting themselves more during these short bursts of activity compared to men.

"These are short bursts of vigorous incidental activity, typically lasting between 10 seconds and one minute, that are part of people's daily living," said Dr Emmanuel Stamatakis, lead author of the study. "This kind of activity may be more feasible than structured exercise for many people as it does not require preparations, time commitment, or travelling to a facility to be active."

The findings have significant implications as they offer a readily accessible and practical approach to improving cardiovascular health. VILPA can be easily integrated into daily routines, making it an attractive option for individuals who find traditional exercise programs challenging or time-consuming.

"My initial reaction to this study is one of optimism," said Dr Rigved Tadwalkar, a cardiologist. "The findings suggest that even minimal amounts of VILPA can significantly reduce the risk of MACE in women who typically do not engage in structured exercise. This is especially encouraging for patients who find it challenging to adhere to traditional exercise regimens."

Experts emphasise the importance of incorporating VILPA into everyday life: "The easiest would be to use your environment to your advantage," said another

cardiologist, Dr Cheng-Han Chen. "For instance, if there are stairs in your home or in your workplace, then we're talking about just taking one to two-minute brisk walks up and down the stairs just a few times a day to accomplish what the study has shown."
(Source: Medical News Today)

SCAM EMAIL ALERT

Beware of scam emails circulating from hacked BigPond and Outlook accounts. These emails may appear to come from your branch committee members, a family member, or a friend, and start with a simple question like "Can you confirm you received my mail? Can I ask a favor". It may even mention laryngitis. If you reply, the scammer follows up with a request for an Apple gift card, claiming it's for a sick friend or relative with cancer.

If you receive such an email, follow our Keep SAFE steps:
STOP – do not reply, send any money or purchase gift cards.
CHECK – notify the sender that their email account has been compromised. Advise them to change their password and inform their contacts. Suggest they report the breach to Telstra or their email provider.
REJECT – delete the email.

BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries please contact our Secretary, Graham Tienan, on mobile 0407 736 453 or email nsacooparoosec@gmail.com. Do remember to update any changes to your details. Emergency contacts need to be current.

SMILE – IN HONOUR OF ST. PATRICK

A Welshman, Scotsman and Irishman meet for the first time. The Welshman is asked his name and says, "I was born on St Davids day, so my parents called me David."

The Scotsman was most surprised. "Well that is truly amazing. I was born on St Andrews day, so they called me Andrew."

The Irishman replied that he was truly staggered that all three in the one room were called after the day they were born on. "So, you're called Patrick then," commented the Welshman.

"No," replied the Irishman, "its Pancake."

Paddy was driving down the street in a sweat because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place. Looking up to heaven he said, "Lord take pity on me. If you find me a parking place I will go to Mass every Sunday for the rest of me life and give up me Irish Whiskey."

Miraculously, a parking place appeared. Paddy looked up again and said, "Never mind, I found one."

On their 60th wedding anniversary Sean and Mary took a walk back to their old high school, holding hands all the way. The school building was not locked, so they entered, and wandered around the corridors and classroom, reminiscing about their happy school days together.

On their way back home, an armoured car passed them, and a bag fell out, practically landing at their feet. Mary quickly picked it up, but not being sure what to do with it, they took it home. There, she counted the money. The bag contained \$50,000!

Sean said, "We have to give it back."

Mary said, "Finders keepers." She put the money back in the bag and hid it up in their attic.

The next day, two garda detectives were canvassing the neighbourhood looking for the money and knocked on their door. "Pardon me", the detective said, "but did either of you find a bag that fell out of an armoured car yesterday?"

Mary said, "No."

Sean said, "She's lying. She hid it up in the attic."

Mary said, "Don't believe him, he's getting senile."

The detectives question Sean, "Tell us the story from the beginning."

Sean began, "Well, when Mary and I were walking home from school yesterday..."

The first detective turns to his partner and says, "We're outta here!"

Why don't you ever iron a four-leaf clover?
Because you don't want to press your luck!

How is St Patrick's Day good for global warming?
People go green on March 17!

