

Mar

The Bugle

UnitingCare Community Options

If you would like to contribute to The Bugle, please email info@ucco.org.au or ring (03) 9239 2500. We welcome any ideas or suggestions you may have.



Scott (left) hands the reins over to Interim Chief Executive, Andrew Johnston

Scott joined UCCO in late 2009 after a five year stint as Chief Executive Officer at Wallara Australia Ltd, which specialised in providing accommodation, employment and community-based support services to people with a disability. Since then, Scott has overseen a period of growth for UCCO and he has shared some of the highlights of his time at the helm on page 2.

UCCO Board Chair, Michael Lanyon, thanked Scott for his contribution to the organisation and said the search for a new Chief Executive was already underway.

"The Board is united in its belief that the strategic direction we have adopted will ensure the long-term growth and sustainability of our organisation and I can assure you we will be taking our time to recruit the best possible person to lead this exciting new chapter in our story," he said.

In the meantime, Group Manager Quality & Disability, Andrew Johnston, has been appointed interim Chief Executive. Andrew joined UCCO from World Vision Australia and has previously held a number of senior leadership positions across a range of industry sectors. Andrew's particular areas of experience include operational management, customer service and sales management, training & development and organisational design.

"I'm honoured the Board has asked me to step in as interim Chief Executive and I will be doing all I can to keep our strategic plan on track while ensuring we continue to deliver our promise to our participants," he said.

Moving on

AFTER three years at the helm, Scott Sheppard has stepped down as Chief Executive at UnitingCare Community Options (UCCO).

Scott finished up at UCCO on 13 March to take up a new role with Able Australia and said that while he was excited about his new role, he left the organisation with a heavy heart.

"A part of me is sad and heavy hearted, especially when I think of all the wonderful participants I have crossed paths with here, the great people I have worked with and all of the great things we have accomplished together," he said.

"However, having achieved many of the things I set out to do when I took on this role, the time seems right for me to pursue a new challenge, confident that the path and goals that we have set will serve UCCO well into the future."

www.ucco.org.au

'A Good Life For All'



A message from the Chief Executive's desk

IT'S hard to believe that three years have passed since I was appointed Chief Executive at UCCO. My time here has been an amazing journey which has brought plenty of challenges but also countless highs.

Like most people, I tend to not spend too much time thinking about achievements when I am busy but, since announcing my resignation as UCCO's Chief Executive, I've had the opportunity to reflect on the many things we have achieved together during the past three years, including:

- Our research projects – particularly the implementation of the People At Centre Stage project
- The piloting of our Direct2Care service
- Our strategic direction and the various achievements it has brought
- The improvements we have made to our Information and Communications Technology – especially our new client information system, Procura
- Refining and defining our practice model

While I am proud of all our achievements, I would have to say the participant experience we are now delivering

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gives me the greatest satisfaction. Our reputation as an agency that cares, can be trusted and has a genuine impact on the lives of those it serves is renowned throughout both the sector and the wider community and I am delighted to have played a role in making that happen.

Before I go, I would like to say goodbye and thank you to the many people who work so hard together to make UCCO what it is today, in particular to the Board for their leadership and support and to the Executive Team for their expertise and experience.

I would also like to thank the entire UCCO team for their dedication and commitment to the delivery of our programs.

Finally, to all of our Participants, all the best and good luck in the future. I truly hope we have in some small way been able to help you achieve your desired goals and dreams.

Scott Sheppard
Chief Executive

Recognising carers



THE rights and role of carers in the local community has been officially recognised by the Victorian Government via its Carer Recognition Act 2012.

The Act complements the Federal Government's Carer Recognition Act 2010 and seeks to recognise, promote and value the role of carers, while formally acknowledging:

- the important contribution that people in care relationships make to the community
- the unique knowledge that carers hold about the person in their care

It's expected the Act will not only help sustain the caring relationship, but also support the health and wellbeing of both the carer and the person needing care.

Principles of the Act

1- A carer should:

- be respected and recognised as an individual with their own needs as a carer
- be recognised as someone with special knowledge of the person in their care
- be supported as an individual and as a carer, even if the care relationship changes
- be recognised for their efforts and dedication as a carer and for the social

and economic contribution they make to the community via their role

- if appropriate, have their views and cultural identity taken into account (along with those of the person they care for) in all matters relating to the care relationship - including when decisions are made that impact on the carer and the care relationship
- have their social wellbeing and health recognised in matters relating to the care relationship
- have the effect of being a carer on their participation in employment and education considered in decision making

2 - A person being cared for should:

- be respected, recognised and supported as an individual and as a person in a care relationship, including during changes to the care relationship
- have their views taken into account, together with their needs, cultural identity and best interests, in how they are cared for
- have their changing needs considered and taken into account regarding the way in which they are cared for

3 - A person in a care relationship should:

- have their care relationship respected and honoured
- if appropriate, have their views considered in the assessment, planning, delivery, management and review of services

Further information

A copy of the Act can be obtained from www.legislation.vic.gov.au. Information about the Act and the Victorian charter supporting people in care relationships can be downloaded from www.dhs.vic.gov.au/carersact

UNITINGCARE COMMUNITY



Follow us....

UnitingCare Community Options is now on Twitter!

Twitter is a great way to stay in touch with the latest UCCO news as it happens and get connected to other like-minded people and organisations. You can even use Twitter to ask us questions or share ideas of your own.

Not on Twitter? Visit www.twitter.com to get started and then search for our user name – uccovic.

State disability plan

The Victorian government has committed to almost 150 actions as part of an overhaul of its disability service framework.

Released in December, the Victorian state disability plan 2013–2016 sets out the Government's plan to tackle the barriers which prevent people with a disability and their families and carers from participating fully in community life and includes:

- A four-year strategic framework and set of key policy directions
- An implementation plan of approximately 140 actions to be undertaken across all relevant government departments in 2013 and 2014

- A companion document, which includes links to other government initiatives, statistics about the sector and consultation information.

The plan was developed through consultation with more than 500 people with a disability, their families and carers and sector representatives and identifies how government, business and the broader community can work together better.

Find out more at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/statedisabilityplan.

Milestone for NDIS campaign

Community support for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is continuing to rise, with more than 150,000 Australians having now registered their support.

The Every Australian Counts campaign has been encouraging all Australians to officially register their support and demonstrate to local MP's around the country that there is a genuine community support for change in the disability sector.

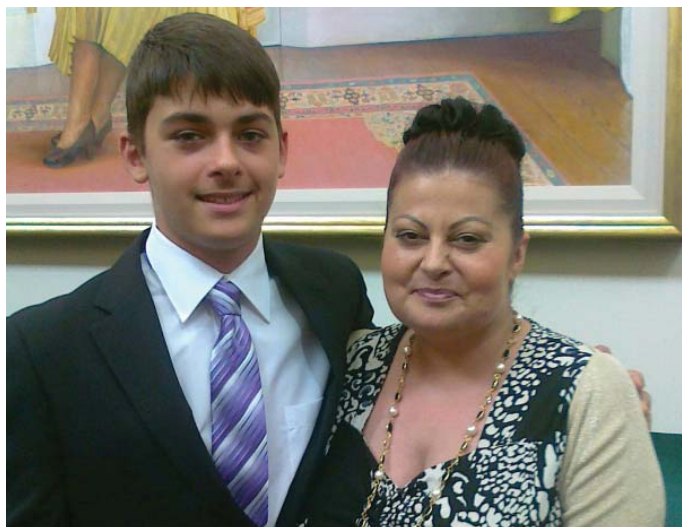
UnitingCare Community Options has been working closely with the campaign team to help raise awareness of the need for a NDIS which, if introduced, would revolutionise the way people with a disability, their families and carers are supported. It would transform the way services are funded and delivered and help ensure people have greater choice and control.

With a new Premier in Victoria and the National Disability Insurance Scheme bill due to go before Federal Parliament this month, it's now more important than ever to get on board and show your support.

To find out more, or to register your support for the NDIS, visit the official website at:

www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au

OPTIONS NEWS AND VIEWS



Jakub with Mum, Gosia.

Carers day out

ONE of our young carer participants recently had the rare opportunity to meet with some of the Victorian Government's movers and shakers via a special party at Government house.

When Carers Victoria was asked by the Department of Premier and Cabinet to nominate some young people with caring responsibilities to attend a special Australia Day party at Government House, they immediately thought of 14-year-old Jakub Kolo.

Jakub is the primary carer for his mother, Gosia, who has a range of physical and mental health issues that impact her on a daily basis.

In recent months Gosia has experienced a few hospital admissions (one resulting in rehabilitation) and Jakub has stepped up his caring role to meet his mother's needs. Despite these challenges, he has continued to excel at school, winning a number of awards for Science, Maths, English and Arts.

Jakub was honoured to be invited and, despite the occasional 'boring bit', thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Be scam aware

UnitingCare Community Options Reception and the Direct2Care team have been contacted by a number of concerned participants in recent weeks regarding door-to-door sales scams.

In these scams, a door-to-door sales person claims to be promoting free products or a home maintenance assessment which has been sponsored by the Federal Government. They then ask for entry into your home to complete the assessment before charging you for the necessary work that needs to be done.

If a tradesperson or someone that you have not requested knocks on your door promoting a service or product, we strongly suggest that you DO NOT let them into your home. Before closing the door make sure you have recorded their name, company name and telephone number as a reference.

When dealing with door-to-door sales people remember:

- Ask to see their identification up front(record all details)
- Don't agree to any deals on the spot - if you are interested, get some advice and follow up at a later time
- ALWAYS get independent advice if an offer involves significant money, time or commitment
- Read all the terms and conditions of any offer – free or cheap deals often have hidden costs.

To report a scam or obtain further advice, you can contact the Federal Government's SCAMWatch service on 1300 795 995 or Consumer Affairs on 1300 558 181. If you still have concerns, please talk to your Partnership worker or call Direct2Care on 1300 121 121.

UCCO NEWS cont'd...

Stay in the know

HAVE you subscribed to the UCCO e-news yet?

Launched in February, our e-news is emailed out every two months and is an easy and convenient way of staying up-to-date on all the latest news from UCCO.

Subscription is free and can be done simply by visiting www.ucco.org.au/news and entering your name and email address to the right of screen.

The next one is due in April so what are you waiting for?



Getting festive

UCCO's Reception and Direct2Care teams jumped right into the Christmas spirit late last year by compiling dozens of Christmas hampers for the needy.

The teams were overwhelmed by the response from staff and local church groups who wasted little time in donating food, personal care products and other assorted goods for the cause.

With the addition of cash donations from UCCO, its social club and local business, Joyce Painting & Building Services, 49 hampers were put together to help make Christmas 2012 a little brighter for those in need.



One Billion Rising

More than a dozen UCCO staff members banded together last month to shake their booty for One Billion Rising Day.

One Billion Rising Day (14 February) was a worldwide event designed to raise awareness of the need to eliminate violence against women.

To help get the message out, UCCO banded together with Amnesty International (and other like-minded organisations) to help create a special YouTube video to promote the campaign.

To find out more about the campaign, visit www.onebillionrising.org or look for the clip on YouTube.

Sport for all abilities

Having added a netball program to its existing offering, the Ringwood Spiders Football Club has changed its name to Ringwood Spiders Allabilities Sports Club.

The Club is run by volunteers with the support of Maroondah City Council, sponsors and community partners and provides sport, recreation and social activities for boy and girls with mild to medium intellectual disabilities.

To get involved, visit www.ringwoodspiders.com, email info@ringwoodspiders.com or call Clinton on 0425 818 590.

PARTICIPANT COMMITTEE



Bernadette with a published version of her story.

SINCE 2003, the UCCO Participant Committee has been a vital avenue for participants to provide essential feedback about the services they receive.

Newest member, Bernadette Clancy, joined the committee last year so she could contribute new ideas and 'give something back to UCCO' for the help, support and guidance she had received.

Bernadette is a carer for her daughter Colleen, who had a stroke when she was 22 and has fought a long but successful battle to keep her daughter out of a nursing home environment and living independently. It's a powerful story that has even been documented in a published book called *You Don't Know Who You're Dealing With*.

During the past five years, Bernadette and Colleen have been supported by UCCO via a Linkages package which provides a weekend carer for Colleen.

"This kind of support really provides the whole family with peace of mind," said Bernadette. "It makes me happy to see my daughter being looked after and able to do the young things she should normally be doing."

Bernadette hopes her presence on the Participant Committee will convey her appreciation for the difference UCCO has made to her daughter's life and encouraged others to consider getting involved.

"Without our Committee members, we wouldn't be able to continue improving and working together to provide a better quality and range of services for participants," she said.

UCCO recently reaffirmed its commitment to the Participant Committee in anticipation of another busy year and is now seeking new Committee members.

If you have a contribution to make and would like to get involved, please see the box below to find out how.

Want to help?

The Participant Committee performs a vital role in providing direct, ongoing feedback about the experience of the people we support.

The Committee consists of older people, people with disabilities and carers, all of whom receive services from us.

- Are there any topics or issues you would like the committee to address?
- Can you occasionally help the committee in its work to benefit all UCCO participants?

If so, please talk to your Partnership Worker, or contact us on:

Email: parcom@ucco.org.au

Telephone: 1300 651 463

TAKING TIME OUT....



Terry with CRCC Partnership Worker, Natalie Karametos

BEING a full time carer for a loved one, spouse or partner can be a rewarding experience but one that can be physically and mentally challenging without regular respite.

Respite provides an opportunity for carers to take a break from their day-to-day tasks so they can rest, recharge and maintain their social contacts – all vital ingredients to ensuring the carer remains fit, healthy and in the best possible condition to continue their caring role.

One person who has benefited from regular respite is Terry Harrup. Three years ago, Terry's wife (Bev) required low-level care and was receiving some in-home respite and home care through the local council. But Beverley's condition soon deteriorated and her needs were upgraded to high-level care. Terry had his own health issues but was determined to keep Bev in their home.

Prior to Bev's decline in health, Terry was a very active member in the community and had a number of hobbies and passions such as Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra film and music nights at the local RSL and going to the football to cheer on his beloved Carlton.

But, as Bev's needs increased, Terry had to give up going to these events as she could not be left alone.

While Terry battled on proudly, he soon found the task was too great for one person and took up an opportunity to talk to someone from Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre – a special service operated by UnitingCare Community Options and funded by the Australian Government to provide carers with a short break from their role when needed.

"Ultimately it was the stress of caring for Bev full time that prompted me to make contact," said Terry. "I was tied to the house, always on call and had even been prescribed anti-depressants just to help me cope.....I really needed a break."

The CRCC team assessed Terry's needs and immediately arranged for some short-term respite care which gave Terry a few hours each week to get out of the house and do something for himself. Not long after, Beverley was accepted for longer-term support by the Department of Health and Ageing's Extended Aged Care at Home program.

Soon after, Terry was one of the first carers to be accepted onto the Consumer Directed Respite Care (CDRC) pilot program – a new way of care provision that allows the carer to control the type of support they receive rather than fitting into the traditional 'one size fits all' government model.

...A CARER'S STORY

As carer needs are often neglected, the support through the CDRC package has allowed Terry to pursue his passions and remain active in the community. It has allowed for Terry's needs as a carer to be met and given him some much needed time out from his caring role. Terry is extremely committed to his caring role but recognises the importance of having a break.

"High needs care can put a real strain on relationships and the constant demands have at times created real tension and arguments.

The respite gives me time out to recharge my batteries. I love going out for a coffee or shopping for DVDs or even spending time with other people in a similar situation so we can talk about our experiences."

"I've started going back to International Sinatra Society events, I'm a member of the Bing Crosby Club, I get along to see the Blues play 4-5 times a year and I've even fulfilled a life-long dream of visiting Israel. Without CRCC I wouldn't be able to do any of these things and I am very grateful."

Terry believes carers should never be too proud to take time out for themselves.

"You need to swallow your pride and ask for help if you need it. There comes a time when a carer needs to think about themselves as well as the patient. If you don't care for yourself you can't do your role properly," he said.

"I know people who feel so guilty about taking time for themselves they spent all their respite hours worrying and checking up. You've got to get out and keep busy – it has to be a complete break or it isn't really a break at all....it's not doing you any good."

"My goal is to keep Bev at home for as long as I can and this (regular respite) is helping me do that."

What is CRCC?

Since 2005, the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre has operated under the auspice of UCCO via funding from the Department of Health and Ageing and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

The service provides support to anyone in the Eastern Metropolitan Region who provides unpaid care and support for a family member or friend who:

- is frail aged
- is mentally ill
- is chronically ill
- has a disability
- has dementia

Through the Young Carers program, the CRCC also provides support to younger people who have a family member or friend experiencing the above or a dependence on alcohol or other substances.

To find out more, contact:

Disability: Freecall 1800 052 222
(except from mobiles)

Ageing: Freecall 1800 059 059
(except from mobiles)

Spotlight On.....

The Quality team.....



The Quality team - (L-R) Louise Scott and Rachael Scott (no relation!)

QUALITY means different things to different people but for UCCO it's about the work we do or the impact our work has on people's lives.

The word quality is commonly used with assurance because measuring what we do and the standard to which we do it assures people that the service provided is what they were promised it would be – in other words, it's a guarantee that the service we provide is first class.

UCCO's Quality Team has the important task of casting a critical eye over the work we do as an organisation to make sure we are delivering each and every service to the best of our ability, while also providing a forum for participants to provide feedback on how we can do things better.

The team is also responsible for ensuring our organisation meets the expectations of funding providers. By consistently complying with the standards they set, we are able to maintain the funding we use to assist people in our community.

"We were recently audited by two different funding agencies which kept us on our toes throughout the summer," said Quality Manager, Rachael Scott.

"Our team worked closely with the rest of the organisation throughout the process to ensure that all of our systems were up to scratch and I am very pleased to say we passed with flying colours!"

So what does the Quality team do?

- Manage service provider options to ensure they meet UCCO's standard of service
- Advise the organisation about the development and revision of policies and procedures
- Manage the participant feedback process
- Manage the internal quality improvement function
- Develop Quality frameworks and monitor the delivery of all of UCCO's offerings
- Manage the Senior Practice Advisor role which provides guidance to the operations team regarding practice standards, especially in complex situations

This year, the Quality team will be introducing an outcome measurement process. UCCO is great at complying with the many and varied expectations held by funding bodies, but the new view is to get a better understanding of the impact our work has on participants. In other words - are we meeting the mark?

The team is excited about the future of this new quality framework not only because it will provide a clearer picture of what UCCO does, but because it has the capacity to enhance and improve our service offerings.

The development of our Quality practices is an ongoing activity so watch this space!

Summer fun



IT'S been a fierce summer but luckily the sweltering weather didn't get in the way of our young carers enjoying themselves at yet another round of activities and camps to tempt all interests.

The Christmas holidays started off for primary school aged carers with the Variety Christmas party – a special event for kids of all ages and backgrounds, featuring carnival rides, fairy floss, presents and plenty of fun. The day finally reached its climax with the best way possible - lunch at McDonalds!

The young carers rounded off December with an awesome all ages day out to see Wreck it Ralph in Gold Class, followed by an exclusive dinner at Switch.

The secondary school-aged carers had their turn when January rolled around via an opportunity to catch some waves at a surf camp where they paddle boarded, surfed and sailed the seas on a boat cruise. This great day out saw the group interact with seals, hang out at the beach, play dodgebee and lasertag in a jumping castle plus an evening out at a restaurant.

Meanwhile, the primary school-aged carers spent a day at Fun Fields, going on toboggans, sliding down waterslides, hanging out in the aquatic playground and munching on ice cream.

On the way home they even saw a lost kangaroo hopping across the road and through the McDonald's drive through..... not something you see every day!

For more information about the program, contact us on 1800 052 222.

Young Carer Scholarship program 2013

Carers Victoria's is once again offering Young Carer Scholarships.

These scholarships offer young carers attending secondary school the opportunity to participate in school or community based activities that enhance their skills, educational achievement and abilities, or that help them to participate more fully in their community.

Generously supported by Rotary Club of Mount Eliza, the WCF Thomas Charitable Trust and Portland House Foundation, Young Carer Scholarships of \$500 or \$200 are awarded to successful applicants.

Completed applications must be received by 5pm Friday 29 March 2013.

Find out more at www.carersvictoria.org.au or by calling 03 9396 9562.



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March 2013

ABOUT US

UNITINGCARE Community Options is a community services organisation, dedicated to assisting people to live good lives in their own homes and communities. We have been supporting older people, people with disabilities and the unpaid carers that support them since 1987. Each year, we support around 4000 people throughout Melbourne's east and south.

Our vision is to achieve 'a good life for all' regardless of their abilities. We aim to support people in achieving the goals they have and living the life they hope for. If you know anyone who might benefit from our support, please ask them to contact us.

FEEDBACK

We're always looking for ways to improve our service so please let us know if you have any feedback you'd like to share with us. If you have an issue or complaint, please raise the matter with your Partnership Worker who will raise the complaint with their Manager if they are unable to help. Issues that remain unresolved will be dealt with by Senior Management. You can also ask for support from an external advocate. See your Participant Information Pack for more information.

CONTACTING US

Direct2Care

Freecall: 1300 121 121

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre

Disability: 1800 052 222

Ageing: 1800 059 059

Head Office

Ground Floor, Building 5
Brandon Office Park
530-540 Springvale Road
Glen Waverley VIC 3150

Tel.: (03) 9239 2500

TTY: 133 677

Fax: (03) 9239 2522

Website

www.ucco.org.au

Interpreters Available On Request

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For assistance, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450.