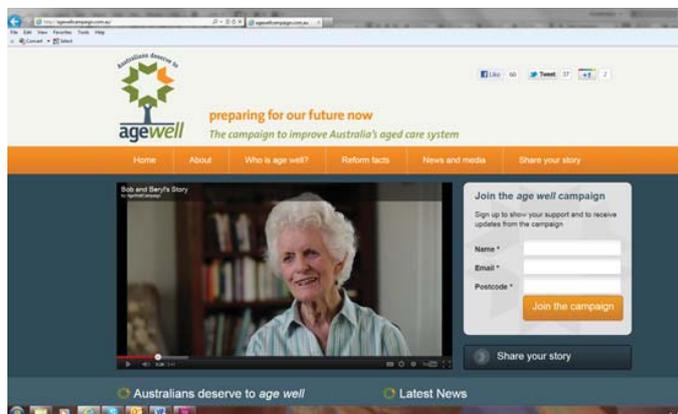


# Mar The Bugle

## UnitingCare Community Options

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



## Age Well Campaign

Participant, Beryl Wilshusen, and UnitingCare Community Options (UCCO) Partnership Worker Lorraine Murray are starring in a new online video to help launch a new campaign for reform of the aged care system.

The Australians deserve to age well campaign was launched in January to help raise awareness of aged care issues and lobby the Federal Government to action the recommendations that were put forward in the Productivity Commission's 'Caring for Older Australians' report in August last year.

The report suggested a host of changes that would result in a less confusing and complex system, a more people-centred approach to the provision of aged care and greater choice in the type of services that are available.

Neither the Gillard Government nor the Opposition have officially responded to the report or committed to its recommendations and yet we know our

population is ageing. It is estimated that, by 2050, more than 3.5 million Australians will be accessing aged care services each year. This is more than a threefold increase on a system that is already buckling under pressure today.

We are all ageing and are likely to be seeking access to the system at some stage in the future but key questions around funding and how the current (but out dated) system can provide all of us with the choice, quality and dignity we deserve remain unanswered.

The campaign is driven by an alliance of organisations in the aged care sector – including UCCO - who recognise the urgent need for reform and will continue to lobby MPs around the country to make a commitment to significant aged care reform.

If you have found it difficult accessing services to help you remain living at home or in residential care near loved ones, then the campaign organisers want to hear from you.

Simply visit the campaign website at [www.agewellcampaign.com.au](http://www.agewellcampaign.com.au) and submit your story.

Whether you've had first-hand experience, work in the aged care sector or just know someone who has experienced difficulty with the system, your story can help make a difference.

To find out more about the recommended reforms and what the campaign is doing to help keep them on the agenda, turn to page 8.

[www.ucco.org.au](http://www.ucco.org.au)  
A Good Life For All



## A message from the Chief Executive's Desk

FIRSTLY, a belated happy new year to you all and I trust you had a happy and restful festive season.

Thankfully we all had some time to recharge our batteries during the summer because we have certainly started 2012 with our foot on the gas!

The Age Well Campaign is now well underway and is working towards its goal of ensuring reform of the Aged Care sector remains a priority throughout the year and into the future.

The campaign itself is based on the recommended reforms the Productivity Commission put forward in August last year and we are one of many organisations in the aged care sector that will be helping support the push to have these recommendations adopted as soon as possible. You can find out more about the Age Well Campaign on page 8.

The campaign for the NDIS took a significant step forward in late January, when Federal Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott, publicly committed a Coalition government to its introduction once the budget returned to surplus (see page 3).

While we would have preferred to have seen the Opposition commit funds and a definite timeline for its introduction,

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it is perhaps the strongest statement of political intent for the NDIS yet and we look forward to having an open dialogue with Coalition representatives throughout the year.

Elsewhere in this edition, we bid a fond farewell to our Pastoral Care representative, Pam White, who retired at the end of 2011, we take a closer look at what the Young Carers got up to during the busy summer break and, in our Spotlight On...' feature we explore the great work being done by our Commonwealth Respite Carelink Centre team.

We are also delighted to bring you three very heart-warming stories about our participants. Each is a different example of the type of assistance our participants need and how UCCO has been able to make a difference to their lives and we thank them for sharing their stories with us.

Happy reading.

Regards,

**Scott Sheppard**

Chief Executive

# NDIS: COALITION'S CONDITIONAL SUPPORT

UCCO welcomed the Federal Opposition's conditional support for the introduction of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), but believes it falls well short of being the firm commitment required to make this important social reform a reality.

Speaking at a National Press Club function in January, Federal Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott, said the Coalition strongly supported the Productivity Commission's recommendation to introduce a NDIS, but only once the budget returned to strong surplus.

UCCO Chief Executive and Chair of the Victorian NDIS Campaign Committee, Scott Sheppard, said while the announcement was a step in the right direction, it was essentially a 'get out of jail free' card for a potential new government.

"We are delighted the Coalition is openly supporting this important initiative, but their decision to link it to the national budget returning to surplus is a bit of a backhanded compliment," he said.

"In our view, if Mr Abbott is happy to publicly support it and really believes in what it will provide for all Australians, then he should put his money where his mouth is, invest in it and make it happen."

"People with disability have waited long enough for an initiative like this so we look forward to having an open dialogue with the Coalition to seek out further detail and determine some clear timelines," he added.

## 100,000 supporters and counting

THE campaign for the introduction of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) took another significant step forward just before Christmas when it officially registered its 100,000th supporter.

The ambitious target of 100,000 supporters by the end of the year was set early in 2011 but was reached with almost two weeks to spare after a concerted pre-Christmas awareness campaign.

At the time of publication, this number had grown to more than 108,000.

After campaigning hard for the introduction of a NDIS throughout the year, UCCO secured more than 600 new supporters in one week via an exhibition at Brandon Park Shopping Centre.

Culminating with International Day of People With Disability on 3 December, the exhibition was a great opportunity for members of the Participant Committee and UCCO staff to interact with the local community and raise awareness of the NDIS and the difference it would make to thousands of lives around the country.

The challenge for 2012 will be to continue building on the momentum and maintain pressure on the Federal Government to keep the introduction of a NDIS firmly on the agenda.

## Send in your story of support

The Every Australian Counts campaign is looking for your stories of support for the introduction of a NDIS.

Whether you have a personal story about yourself or someone you know who has a disability or whether you just want to go on record as a supporter of the scheme, we want to hear from you so we can show our MPs that we all believe it's time to make the NDIS real.

To make your voice heard, simply visit [http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/make\\_it\\_real/](http://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/make_it_real/) and either write your story of support or upload a video of yourself and/or your friends telling the world that the time for a NDIS is now.



**NDIS** | revolutionising disability services

# UNITING CARE COMMUNITY

## UCCO CE 4 NDS

SCOTT Sheppard, Chief Executive of UnitingCare Community Options, has been elected the new Chair of National Disability Services (NDS) Victoria.

Estelle Fyffe, CEO of Annecto, was elected Deputy Chair.

"I am honoured to be stepping into such an important role and I look forward to working with Estelle and the rest of the Committee and making sure we keep the pressure on the Federal Government to make the NDIS real," said Scott.

In announcing the appointment, the State Committee congratulated Scott and Estelle, saying they looked forward to seeing what their strong working relationship can produce as the campaign for a NDIS enters its next phase.

The Committee also thanked outgoing Chair, Richard Dent, for his exceptional contribution to the work of NDS, both in Victoria and nationally. He also acknowledged for his vision, strategic leadership and commitment.

## Vic govt recognises carers

Last month, the Victorian Government honoured an election commitment to introduce legislation recognising the role of carers in Victoria.

The Carers Recognition Bill 2012 is a welcome piece of legislation, but Carers Victoria CEO, Caroline Mulcahy, said, "While the Carers Recognition Bill is long overdue – Victoria being the last state to introduce legislation for carers – we know that many carers will see the Bill as largely a symbolic gesture... recognition is just the first step."

To find out more, visit the News section on the Carers Victoria website at:

[www.carersvictoria.org.au](http://www.carersvictoria.org.au)

## AFL star joins Opening Doors reunion

Graduates from the 2011 South East Opening Doors program were surprised to see an AFL legend join them at their first reunion last month.

Gary Ablett Snr is a member of the AFL Hall of Fame and kicked more than 1000 goals in 248 games and decided to join his brother and Opening Doors Patron, Cr. Geoff Ablett, at the informal get together.

More than 30 graduates and family members attended the day which was a great opportunity for the team to catch up again and share their experiences with the various community projects they have put together.



## "Did you know...?"

... that YOU can contribute to The Bugle?

Do you have a personal story to tell?

Would you like to voice your opinion?

Do you have any incidents you want to share with other participants?

Do you have any questions or dilemmas you want addressed?

If so then we would like to hear from you.

Typed or hand written, you need not worry about English, grammar and punctuation; it will be edited as needed, and published in The Bugle which comes out quarterly.

# OPTIONS NEWS AND VIEWS

To contribute to the June edition, please have your item ready by the beginning of May.

Send your contributions to:

parcom@ucco.org.au



## More good news for Ron

Regular readers of The Bugle will be aware of Ron's story - a participant who had been searching for a new home and his long lost family.

While UCCO was able to help Ron find a new home, the search for members of his family had turned up very little.

Earlier this year, the Department of Human Services contacted UCCO Housing At Risk Worker, Fran Atcheson, to say they had located Ron's younger brother Wayne and he was happy for Ron to contact him.

Later that day, Fran helped Ron call his brother and they had a great catch up, discovering along the way that Ron also had three sisters, all of whom still live in the Bendigo area.

Wayne and his wife plan to visit Melbourne to catch up with Ron in the near future.

## More respite services for carers

The Federal Government has guaranteed funding for more than 650 community-based respite services around the country for the next two years.

In announcing the funding, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, said the government had allocated more than \$293 million to ensure the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP), including Demonstration Day Respite Services, would remain active at least until 30 June 2014.

"Caring for someone full time is physically and emotionally demanding and carers need to be able to take time out from their caring responsibilities," said Minister Butler.

"These respite services allow carers to go to work, relax or catch up with friends and know that their dependents are being looked after".

In addition, the Government will also extend funding for Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres until June 2013 and provide a further \$74 million in funds.

The Coalition has welcomed the commitment to Demonstration Day Respite program - a four-year initiative announced by the Howard Government in its 2007-08 budget.

To find out how the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre may be able to help you, please call 1800 052 222 or visit [www.ucco.org.au](http://www.ucco.org.au).

# Farewell to Pam

DECEMBER 2011 was the end of an era for UCCO with the retirement of Rev. Pam White as Pastoral Care and Outreach representative.

We caught up with Pam before she left as she pondered her time with UCCO and what retirement had in store for her.

## **How long have you been with UCCO?**

I started in the Pastoral Care role at UCCO during January 2009 but I had been associated with the organisation for two years prior via the Boroondara Community Outreach ministry. UCCO management was very generous in enabling the Outreach to continue in some form, despite its funding limitations. When officially joined the UCCO team I had just had a knee replacement so I think I got a sympathy vote as I settled in.

## **What changes have you seen during your time in the role?**

I have seen many things change over time but the biggest development I have seen is the gradual and growing acceptance of the role. Even people who espouse a different faith or no faith at all have gradually found that pastoral care may have something to contribute to their lives or to the lives of their participants. There have been times of very meaningful conversation around different beliefs and world views.

## **What will you remember most fondly about UCCO?**

There are many things but one highlight for me was the connection I made with the Glen Waverley congregation around the needs of a young participant. The congregation gave generously of their time and financial resources to help a family at a time of considerable need. This shows that good relationships can grow between agency and congregations.

Staff conferences have also been amazing experiences and the learning, laughing and experiencing we did together was a wonderful morale booster for us all I think.

Being able to offer something of the church's ritual in the context of bereavement, marriage and seasonal times has also been a real privilege.

## **What will you miss most?**

Definitely the people. Without doubt I have enjoyed the company and confidence of many staff and participants and I know I will miss this.

## **What does retirement hold for Pam White?**

Everyone wants to know what I will do! In deciding to retire I have come to the conclusion that we don't have to be 'doing' all the time. Our existence does not have to be justified, we can 'be' simply because we 'are'. That being said though, I will be minding three year old grandson Nicholas two days each week and may spend the rest of the week recovering! My garden is a growing passion and I look forward to spending more time with my wonderful friends. If I manage to learn to speak some Spanish I may visit Spain or Mexico and deep within me somewhere there is some writing that wants to emerge.



*Pam plans to spend more time with the grandchildren after three years with UCCO.*

# What is Zest?

HOW would you like to be in charge of your own supports?

Well now you can thanks to Zest.

Zest is a tailored 'fee-for-service' arrangement which assists older people, people with a disability, mental illness and their carers to improve their quality of life in tangible, sustainable ways.

It is ideal for people currently receiving an Individual Support Package or those who are self-funded.

Best of all, it puts you in complete control. If you decide you want case management for two hours per week for three months, then that's what you get.

For a fee, you can even access the Circles of Support or Community Development programs at any time and for however long you wish.

Through Zest, we can provide:

- Case management
- Support in planning changes in your life

- Tailored administrative support
- Care coordination
- Assistance with the employment of support workers
- Support to help you access your community
- Flexibility in choosing and changing service providers

Our staff can help you plan and manage your supports, help you access community resources or simply answer your questions.

To find out more, contact us on 1300 651 463 or visit [www.ucco.org.au](http://www.ucco.org.au).

The logo for Zest, featuring the word "zest" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters are dark green with a slight motion blur effect, suggesting speed and energy.

## New Chair for UCCO Board

We're pleased to announce that Michael Lanyon has been appointed Chair of the UCCO Board of Governance.

Michael takes over from Nancy Nicholas who stepped down from the role earlier this year after spending 12 months in the position.

Michael has been practising law for more than 30 years (predominantly in the commercial property area) and was a founding partner of law firm, Logie Smith Lanyon.

He is also Chairman of the Glen Iris Uniting Church congregation.



# UCCO joins in the fight

UCCO is actively supporting a new awareness campaign to ensure the Productivity Commission's aged care reforms remain on the political agenda.

The Commission's 'Caring For Older Australians' report was released in August 2011 and contained a series of recommended reforms for the aged care sector which would provide a system that is more simple, fair, affordable and equitable for all Australians.

Since then the Age Well campaign – driven by a coalition of organisations in the Aged Care sector (including UCCO) – has been set up to ensure these reforms are followed through by the Federal Government.

The campaign is only a couple of months old but is already gaining momentum. To help with campaign launch, Participant Committee member, Beryl Wilshusen and UCCO Partnership Worker, Lorraine Murray are starring in one of several videos that have been developed to help communicate the need for reform.

## The Blueprint

Last month, the campaign organisers travelled to Canberra to deliver their 'blueprint for reform'. This blueprint outlined a series of steps the Federal Government could follow in order to implement the Productivity Commission's recommendations and included:

- Making a public commitment to an entitlement-based aged care service system and set out a timetable for its implementation.
- Establishing a high level Aged Care Reform Council involving representative stakeholder groups to work with the Government to drive the development and implementation of reform.

- Start developing an entitlement-based system, including wellness-based assessment tools for older people and carers, with an integrated funding model, including the HACC Program.
- Establishing the key bodies – the Gateway and the Australian Aged Care Commission (AACC) – which will drive and enable reform to occur.
- Undertaking an independent cost of care study to set initial prices for care entitlements (pending the establishment of the AACC) which will provide enough funding for quality service delivery and enable the payment of fair and competitive wages.
- Responding to the increasing and unmet demand for care at home by continuing the phased increase in community care packages, particularly at the high needs level, along with the introduction of a mid level package between CACPs and EACH/EACHD.
- Starting the phased increase in the Government accommodation payment for supported residents until it reflects the real regional cost of construction as determined by the AACC.



# for aged care reform

- Establishing the Australian Pensioners Savings Account and the Australian Aged Care Home Credit Scheme to give people greater flexibility in making aged care co-contributions, without having to sell their homes.
- Removing the outdated and dysfunctional distinction between residential low and high care places, giving consumers the right to the best package of care for their needs and giving service providers the flexibility to respond by tailoring service models and planning to meet local needs.
- Announcing a wages bridging supplement and signing a Heads of Agreement, establishing the payment mechanism and paying the first installment.
- Establishing an Aged Care Workforce Ministerial Taskforce.
- Investing in dementia risk reduction and research to reduce future numbers of people with dementia.
- Implementing these reforms now has the support of all key stakeholders, including representatives of and advocates for older people, aged care providers, unions and professionals working in aged care.

## Why do we need reform?

According to the campaign team, the current aged care system was designed in the 1960s and has become increasingly complicated and confusing. In addition, the associated costs are putting pressure on the quality and availability of services.

Too often older people are missing out on the support they need to help them live at home or are having to move into residential care miles from family and friends – just when they need them most.



## Support and Dignity

Almost all the recommendations proposed by the Productivity Commission would result in greater support for ageing Australians.

Providing a gateway, removing arbitrary ratios, establishing a fairer funding system and providing better conditions for the workforce will mean we can all age with the dignity we deserve – regardless of where we live or how much money we have.

You can access the Productivity Commission report by visiting:

[www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/aged-care](http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/aged-care)

## Show your support

You can show your support for aged care reform by officially registering your details on the Age Well Campaign website.

The website also allows you to share your experiences with the aged care system by uploading your own stories and photos.

Find out more at:

[www.agewellcampaign.com.au](http://www.agewellcampaign.com.au)

# NEWS & VIEWS FROM THE

## Your voice in 2012...

AT the end of 2011, the Committee farewelled four members. Chris West, Denise Foenander, Suzanne Boyd and Heather Lewis have contributed their skills and precious time to the committee and will be sadly missed.

In February, the Committee also lost Peter Anderson, due to family and business commitments. As a representative on the Participant and Quality sub-committee, Peter also raised participant issues and committee findings with the UCCO Board.

Between them, over the past two years, these retiring members have helped the Committee grow into a proactive working group and helped increase its profile within and outside of UCCO. Most importantly, they have amplified the participant voice in all aspects of continuing improvement to the quality of services UCCO participants receive. We wish them and their families, all the best.

As always, their skills and knowledge will not be lost to the Committee and, when needed, will be available to assist ongoing work where their individual knowledge and experience will be much appreciated.

As you read this, the Committee is operating at full strength and, with increasing interest from participants in the Ageing stream, there will be an even balance of representation of both Ageing and Disability issues for the first time.

This will be reflected in the 'I do it MY way!' forum on 4 July at the UCCO Brandon Park offices. Australia-wide trends towards person-centred care and self-direction in care, both in the disability and the ageing sectors, will be discussed from the UCCO context.

After this, guests will be invited to express their thoughts and experience which will be collected to inform UCCO as an organisation. The focus will be on the way participants can be actively involved in receiving the services that are most wanted and needed.

Mark your calendar for this opportunity to find out more and to have your say - not to mention enjoying lunch with the UCCO community!

This year is shaping up to be another big year for the Participant Committee!

UnitingCare Community Options  
**Participant Committee**



**Self-directed care:**  
what it means for you

Wednesday, 4th July, 2012  
10:30 am — 2:30 pm  
Registration & refreshments from 10 am

**PLEASE JOIN US!**

RSVP 27th June



**FORUM**

# PARTICIPANT COMMITTEE

## Getting involved

My name is Padma and I am a carer for my 26-year-old adult son who has autism, an intellectual disability and global developmental delay.

I also regularly help my elderly in-laws, work part-time and volunteer for UCCO.

I joined the Participant Committee about three years ago after a long period of self-isolation, self-pity and low esteem. More than anything, I was grieving for a son I had lost through asthma and for Kiran, a son I will be looking after for the rest of my life.

Being a volunteer on the Participant Committee has given me opportunities to get out and about and connect with new people in the community. The Committee members share my interests and the opportunity to interact with them can be an amazing mood buster. In fact many of these contacts have turned into lasting friendships.

I am currently Chair of the Participant Committee and, since getting involved, I have been able to cope with stress better, have experienced lower depression levels and been able to put my administrative, organisational and interpersonal skills to good use.

As part of my role, I work with Committee members who are carers themselves, have a disability or are actively involved in the ageing sector. Every one of them has a wealth of knowledge and are an excellent group of people to work with. They have a wide variety of skills and have given the Participant Committee a new lease of life. We all work very hard in the tasks we are allocated, and take responsibility in finishing the task.

On a more personal level, being a volunteer on the Participant Committee has me feeling spiritually satisfied.

I also feel like I am giving something back to the community... and that makes me an important part of it.

It has offered a change from my day-to-day life, opened up new opportunities and, above all, offered me a chance to have fun, find new interests and friends and enjoy new experiences.

Padma Saripalli

Chair - UCCO PARTICIPANT COMMITTEE



*Padma and husband, Ravi take some time out during Carers Week 2011.*

## Want to help?

- Would you like further information?
- Are there any topics or issues you would like the committee to address?
- Are you interested in becoming a committee member?
- Can you occasionally help the committee in its work to benefit all UCCO participants?

If so, you can talk to your Partnership Worker, or contact:

Barbara Blakey: Community Development Officer: Participant Committee Liaison

Email: [parcom@ucco.org.au](mailto:parcom@ucco.org.au)

Telephone: 1300 651 463

# THE SECRET TO AGEING WELL



THE power of positive thinking and a fierce determination to never give up is helping one UCCO participant continue living independently in her home at the ripe old age of 92.

Nancy Fitzgibbon moved into her Hawthorn home with her husband, Jack, more than sixty years ago where they raised two girls and two boys and, although the children are grown up and Jack has now passed away, Nancy still happily lives in her family home while many of her peers have moved into full-time nursing care.

"This is my home....I love my life," she said. "This has been my home since 1959 and I think I'd go mad if I couldn't have my own space and move around as I please."

Nancy still cooks all her own meals, goes out every Thursday with family, is an avid reader and fan of documentaries and loves nothing better than pottering around in her garden.

Until recently she had also worked for many years at the local St Vincent de Paul Op Shop and still wanders in occasionally for a chat and a smile.

Nancy first came to UCCO via a recommendation from the City of

Boroondara's Aged & Disability Department, after she injured herself while trying to lift her husband after a fall.

After a full assessment by her partnership worker, Jo Rodger, she was put on a Linkages package which provided assistance with heavy work around the house and garden.

Jo also provided information and helped facilitate the delivery of a four-wheel walking frame for Nancy after her 2011 operation for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

"My advice is to take advantage of whatever services are available to help you stay in your own home for as long as possible," said Nancy.

"It's incredibly important to stay positive because once you get to the 'I can't be bothered' stage you've had it!"

"Never give in I say!"

If you or someone you know could benefit from talking to a partnership worker about the services available to help you/them live at home longer, please call 9239 2500.



*Nancy with UCCO Partnership Worker, Jo Rodger.*

# SUMMER FUN FOR YOUNG CARERS

SUMMER 2011/12 was another action-packed program for the Young Carers, with plenty of fun activities to give everyone some valuable time out during the school holidays.

The year ended with a trip to TimeZone and the Gold Class cinema to help wind up another busy year, but the fun didn't end there just because the year did.

Throughout January, the team had the opportunity to go ten-pin bowling and play laser tag, while others headed off for a surf camp and a trip to the Geelong Adventure Park.

The 2012 program promises to be just as fun-filled and gets off to a great start with 18 young carers going on a trip to the Gold Coast later this month.

Unfortunately not everyone could be squeezed into this trip away so, the 10 young carers who missed out, have been offered the opportunity to take a ride on the St Kilda Spinner and jump some waves in Port Phillip Bay followed by a beach-side lunch.

Here's to another great year for Young Carers.

## Young Carers scholarship

Carers Victoria, in conjunction with the WCF Thomas Charitable Trust / Rotary Young Carers Scholarship Program, is offering a scholarship for Victorian secondary school students who provide care and support to a family member and/or friend with a disability or illness.

The scholarships give 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.

To get involved in Young Carers, please contact Karen or Aimi at [youngcarers@ucco.org.au](mailto:youngcarers@ucco.org.au) or on 1800 200 422.



# Spotlight On.....

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre



*Just a few of the helpful CRCC team.*

DO you provide assistance or care to a loved one, family member or a friend living in the community?

If so, you are one of more than 2.6 million Australians who provide care to a loved one in some capacity every year. Every caring role is different and may range from the provision of 24-hour care through to helping a person with daily tasks such as banking or shopping.

One thing that is consistent however is that, while caring for someone can be very rewarding, it can also be physically and mentally challenging. Everyone needs time out from these challenges to rest and recuperate, but finding the time or support to do it can be difficult.

This is where the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre (CRCC) can help.

Operated under the auspice of UnitingCare Community Options, the CRCC provides information, respite and other types of support to anyone in

Melbourne's East who provides unpaid care to a friend or loved one with a disability, mental health issue, chronic condition, life-limiting illness, dementia or frailty.

The CRCC team can:

- Provide subsidised or fully-funded support for unexpected and emergency situations
- Provide information about the range of community services available
- Plan and fund or subsidise short-term respite options
- Provide after-hours emergency respite assistance
- Link you to longer term supports (if required)

## Contact us

If you or someone you know could benefit from a little time out from their caring role, help is just a phone call away. The CRCC team can arrange immediate services or help you plan ways to meet your needs and those of the person you care for.

Contact us on 1800 059 059 or visit [www.ucco.org.au](http://www.ucco.org.au)



# Accepting help

a carer's story

SANDY was a scientist who was still writing papers at the grand old age of 91 and, although polio had paralysed him from the waist down, he and his wife, Lois, lived a happy life together.

Sadly, Sandy's health took a turn for the worse in 2007 which saw him placed in intensive care for three weeks followed by six weeks of rehabilitation.

Despite the offer of assistance, Lois felt uncomfortable about having a stranger help out and was determined to take on the caring role herself.

"I really wasn't comfortable with the thought of someone coming into our home to help. I think women in particular hate that sort of intrusion.....it's like having visitors every day of the week," she said.

However after several discussions with an UCCO partnership worker, Lois slowly came to accept that she might need some help.

A comprehensive, person-centred care plan was developed in partnership with Lois and she soon had in-home assistance.

"Once we made the decision to 'let someone in' it was terrific.....it just meant I could cope," she said.

"As Sandy got older and more frail I really was limited to the home and having a carer come and help a few days a week made it possible for me to have time out."

In time, Lois developed a strong and trusting relationship with her UCCO contact and was open to the idea of more support when her partnership worker spoke to her about the Olivet Planned Respite Program - a special facility that allows carers to pre-book longer term residential care.

"Olivet was life saving for me. It was recommended to me at a time when I

really started to wonder how I was going to manage," she said.

"This was discussed with my Partnership Worker who referred me to the CRCC who coordinated the program and a worker from the team soon visited with information on how the facility can assist carers. I was offered a two-week block of care every three months which was fantastic. It was a caring, happy atmosphere there and really good for him."

Sandy has now passed away but Lois believes that, despite the obstacles they faced, their last years together were happy ones thanks to UCCO's support.

"They know the ropes and were proactive enough to suggest options that might work for us. They had the experience I needed because I was totally non-plussed and really didn't know what I required."

And her advice about asking for help?

"If you need help, you just have to come to terms with sharing your role with carers.....just take the step and you will realise the benefits of accessing services to support you."



*Lois (right) with UCCO Partnership Worker, Eileen Edwardes.*

# The Bugle

Issue 1, March 2012

## 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.

## RAISING ISSUES OR CONCERNS

If you have an issue which you would like to have addressed, please first raise the matter with your Partnership Worker. If your Partnership Worker is unable to solve your issue, you can raise the complaint with their Team Leader. 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 Carelink Centre

Freecall: 1800 052 222

### Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre

Freecall: 1800 200 422

### Head Office

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

Tel.: (03) 9239 2500

Fax: (03) 9239 2522

### Direct2Care Office

Suite 3034, Knox Ozone  
Shopping Centre,  
509 Burwood Highway  
Wantirna South VIC 3152

Tel.: (03) 9800 6800

Fax: (03) 9887 0554

### Website

[www.ucco.org.au](http://www.ucco.org.au)

### Interpreters Available On Request

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