

Advancing the  
rights, needs,  
interests  
and futures  
of older  
Queenslanders

# Strategic Plan

2023 to 2026





# Statement of Acknowledgement

Council on the Ageing Queensland knows the important role older people play in the lives of their families, their local community and in our broader society.

They are carers, our local volunteers, our source of advice, holders of knowledge and skills, and keepers of culture and tradition.

We celebrate the great diversity of culture, language and histories of all older people in Queensland however we also recognise the special connection to this land of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders.

**Council on the Ageing Queensland acknowledges Australia's First Nations Peoples as the original custodians of this land.**

**We recognise their cultures, histories and ongoing relationship and obligations to the land, sky and waterways.**

**We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.**

First Nations people have a deep sense of belonging, both ancient and contemporary, because they are part of the world's oldest surviving, living culture.

We specifically acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders play in preserving traditional culture, sacred wisdom and lore.

Elders are those who have gained recognition within their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community rather than having reached a specific age. They are highly respected for their stories, art, song, language, guidance, and counselling.

Strengthening the role of elders helps to empower communities not only to address social, health and economic issues but to transfer knowledge, culture and language to future generations.

# What Guides our Strategy?

## OUR VISION

Ageing in Queensland is a time of possibility, opportunity and influence.

## OUR MISSION

We advance the rights, needs, interests, and futures of Queenslanders as we age.

## OUR VALUES

### Respect

We respect and value the contribution and lived experience of people as we age and support each person's right to make choices and participate in their community.

### Diversity

We value the great diversity that characterises people of all ages and are committed to genuine exchange and engagement.

### Collaboration

We communicate and work collaboratively with older people, with each other, with our partners and with the Queensland community to achieve COTA Queensland's vision and purpose.

### Integrity

We operate ethically, openly, honestly and with accountability in all our interactions.

### Equity


We recognise the impact of systemic inequalities, disadvantage and discrimination on some Queenslanders as we age and are committed to speaking out on these issues to achieve our vision.




# Our Value Proposition



Engaging diverse community voices to inform independent evidence-based insights



Collaborating with local, national, and international experts and networks



Creating innovative and real impact



# Our **Strategic Agenda** for Ageing Well in Queensland

## **A Decade of Influence**

<p><b>Engaging diverse community voices to form independent evidence-based insights</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advocate for older people and their supporters to be engaged in all areas that matter</li> <li>▪ Strengthen and expand COTA Queensland’s network of older Queenslanders</li> <li>▪ Build capability of service sectors to engage with older people and their supporters</li> <li>▪ Break down barriers affecting groups that struggle to be heard, due to prejudice, ignorance and/or system inadequacies</li> <li>▪ Expand COTA Queensland’s activities in ways that strengthen the voice of older Queenslanders.</li> <li>▪ Inform Queensland government policies to protect and uphold the rights, needs and interests of older Queenslanders</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaborating with local, national and international experts and networks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build focused collaborations and partnerships with seniors interested organisations</li> <li>▪ Build and grow COTA Queensland policy, advocacy, research and evaluation capability through effective partnerships with universities and related organisations</li> <li>▪ Develop the capacity of an independent vehicle for new collaborations beyond Queensland, which builds knowledge, capability and learning for those involved in ageing &amp; aged care activities</li> <li>▪ Strengthen relationships that support COTA Queensland’s unique consumer peak role to improve community access to voice and advocacy</li> <li>▪ Form partnerships to enhance responses to the unique needs of older Queenslanders who identify as LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, or from diverse cultural, linguistic and/or religious backgrounds</li> </ul>
<p><b>Creating innovative and real impact</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote the development of age-friendly environments</li> <li>▪ Improve opportunities for social inclusion and community connectedness</li> <li>▪ Advocate for improved quality, accessibility and integration of health and social care</li> <li>▪ Advocate for older Queenslanders to age well through adequate income, housing and social entitlements</li> <li>▪ Strengthen early intervention and health promotion activities</li> <li>▪ Improve service responsiveness to regional, rural and remote areas</li> <li>▪ Advocate for and support unpaid carers</li> <li>▪ Encourage opportunities for lifelong learning</li> <li>▪ Remove barriers for active participation in volunteering</li> <li>▪ Foster opportunities for intergenerational activities</li> <li>▪ Reduce the digital divide for older people</li> <li>▪ Promote the development of age friendly workplaces &amp; reimagine retirement</li> <li>▪ Challenge ageism, discrimination and support improved responses to reduce elder abuse</li> <li>▪ Promote involvement &amp; safeguards for older people in times of emergencies and disasters</li> </ul>

# Our Strategic Priorities for 2023-26



# Our Strategic Priorities for 2023-26

Our Value	Strategies	Why	Performance Measure
<b>Engaging diverse community voices to form independent evidence-based insights</b>	<b>Develop effective and efficient ways to regularly engage with the diversity of older Queenslanders, as well as engage with seniors-interested organisation who may be advocating on behalf of older Queenslanders.</b>	<p>Engagement is a core function of being a consumer peak and for many years we have relied on our membership and related networks. For the future, COTA Queensland needs to improve our reach and better reflect the diversity of all older Queenslanders. To achieve this, we are shifting away from an outdated membership model to a contemporary 'knowledge network' model which includes drawing upon lived experience of older people.</p> <p>Rural, regional and remote consumer experiences must be included in our engagement strategies. We realise that quality, real-time information from older Queenslanders is needed to inform and influence public policy and debate. Seniors-interested organisations may hold valuable information which can complement the views gained directly from older people.</p> <p>An effective model of engagement, co-designed with our stakeholders and older people, will increase our relevance and position us as a useful partner in future projects, services and advocacy initiatives.</p>	<p>✓ An engagement framework and methodology are resourced and implemented during 2023/4</p>
	<b>Increase diversity in both our direct engagement with older Queenslanders, and with the organisations we partner</b>	<p>Diversity is about what makes each of us unique and includes our backgrounds, personality, life experiences and beliefs, all of the things that make us who we are. It is a combination of our differences that shape our view of the world, our perspective and our approach.</p>	<p>✓ Increase diversity in both our direct engagement with older Queenslanders, and with the organisations we partner</p>



## Our Strategic Priorities for 2023-26

Our Value	Strategies	Why	Performance Measure
<b>Collaborating with local, national and international experts and networks</b>	<b>Build our partnerships regionally, state-wide and nationally, to improve and grow service responsiveness, build expertise, increase our competitiveness and bolster our relevance and influence</b>	<p>Social services organisations work in increasingly competitive environments, with specialisations and niche capabilities required to be successful. As a peak body, COTA Q has many relationships across different sectors, and its recent partnerships in aged care workforce development has led to significant impact in Queensland.</p> <p>We need to further convert some of our key relationships to partnerships, where we can collaborate for mutual benefit and greater impact for older Queenslanders. Our view on partnerships extends to the COTA Federation, where we believe there are new opportunities to collaborate for mutual benefit. Our partnerships interests also extend well beyond the borders of Queensland.</p> <p>Our future success lies with strategic partnerships with NGOs, Government, universities and the private sector, which bring a wider range of capabilities beyond that of a single organisation.</p>	✓ Partnerships which have translated to funded collaborations
	<b>Strengthen our regional relationships with older Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander people, and the state-wide and local organisations that support them across Queensland.</b>	<p>We acknowledge the Queensland Government’s commitment to Path to Treaty and the importance of participating in a reconciliation journey. COTA Queensland will not directly speak on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but we must have strong ongoing relationships to reflect, support their needs and interests.</p> <p>Our indigenous population is ageing, by 2031 it is expected that 1 in 5 Indigenous people will be aged 50 or over. Formal partnerships, communication protocols and personal relationships are needed – and our relationships must extend to local communities across Queensland as well as to state peak and leading indigenous organisations.</p> <p>In addition, to direct relationships, we may also form collaborations with individuals and organisations that support work with older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – and these may include related non-indigenous NGOs and universities.</p>	✓ We have commenced a Reconciliation Action Plan and established state-wide and regional relationships with Aboriginal controlled organisations

# Our Strategic Priorities for 2023-26

Our Value	Strategies	Why	Performance Measure
<p><b>Creating innovative and real impact</b></p>	<p><b>Clarify and promote our role and value as a consumer peak in Queensland</b></p>	<p>We are the consumer peak with more than 65 years of history of amplifying the voice of older Queenslanders. COTA Q is the only ‘seniors peak’ funded by the Queensland Government and is regularly drawn upon by government departments, non-government organisations and media to represent the voice of older people.</p> <p>However, the role and functions of a consumer peak are not universally understood. We don’t represent ‘industry’ and we are ‘system’ advocates rather than advocates for individuals. COTA Q recognises the need to clarify our point of difference and better demonstrate our value proposition to consumers and stakeholders for policy, sector support and service development activities.</p> <p>Engagement is central to our role and value as consumer peak, and we must continue to proactively use our insights, information networks, data and partnerships to benefit older Queenslanders and maintain our position as an independent and trusted peak.</p>	<p>✓ Stakeholder and consumer feedback</p>
	<p><b>Grow our offering to older Queenslanders by proactively seeking opportunities to increase our service footprint and extend our social impact.</b></p>	<p>Advocacy and sector development has served COTA Queensland well over many years. COTA Queensland now has the appetite to increase its social impact - either directly with older Queenslanders or indirectly through projects that support and develop services. Our recent consortium to address workforce shortages in home-based aged care demonstrated our ability to ‘roll up our sleeves’ and achieve important social outcomes.</p> <p>Growing our service offering has additional benefits in improving our longer-term business viability and allowing us to strengthen our business systems and processes. We know that future service offerings must not conflict with our consumer peak role and should enhance our capability to influence government policy and decision making.</p> <p>We are interested in broadening our scope. To do this we must thoroughly assess each new business opportunity, ensure we are commercially competitive, efficient in our operations, and have safety and quality in the foundations of our work.</p>	<p>✓ Annual new business growth</p>

# About COTA Queensland

**Our Activity &  
Strategic Interests**



## Engaging diverse community voices to form independent evidence-based insights

**Listening Post** - face to face engagement across QLD to capture unique insights in partnership with QLD government. Aim was amplify the voice of older Queenslanders and capture unique insights on key matters for older adults aged 50 years and over and residing in metropolitan, suburban, regional, rural, and remote areas.

**Seniors Month** - Annual celebration held across QLD with local events and involving many community based organisations. Includes linkages to Largest Sunday Roast & World Elder Abuse & Awareness Day (WEAAD)

**Diversity Forum** - COTA Queensland delivered an event through CHSP Sector Support and Home Care Workforce teams in collaboration with ECCQ to explore diversity and implications for care.

**Communities of Practice** - Online engagement where resources, information and experiences are shared through presentations and discussions. Undertaken with CHSP Sector Support and organisations that have been funded for social isolation and loneliness services.

## Collaborating with local, national and international experts and networks

**Madrid International Action on Ageing** - Participation to progress initiatives, explore and develop global and national policy frameworks, analyse current examples of best practice, and learn from other countries and regions around best practice for age-friendly, healthy ageing, age inclusive, and mainstreaming ageing.

**Age Friendly University Initiative** - Participation with University of Queensland to embed age-friendly principles and approaches to design within the University campus environment, with potential to explore innovative design for future planning of learning environments

**Australian Online Loneliness Dialogue** - Online conference with guest speakers, a panel discussion, and general discussion following conference presentations and forum type spaces. COTA QLD was invited to participate as a speaker on the panel (based on our work on the Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into Social Isolation and Loneliness)

**World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Toolkit** – development of toolkit was led by COTA Queensland and in partnership with multiple organisations.

## Creating innovative and real impact

**Community Management Models** - COTA Queensland partnership with local communities in showcasing their community driven solutions to meet the gaps in aged care service provision in local areas, and provide information to help others achieve similar goals.

**Service Navigation Trial** - Personable, tailored information and referral supports in north Queensland for people who would have otherwise ‘fallen through the cracks’ in understanding and navigating services.

**Home Care Workforce** - getting 2,000 new workers into aged care across our state and offering lived experience as primary driver of workforce change, instilling confidence and know how in people who wish to contribute to the care workforce.

**Commonwealth Home Support Sector Support & Development** - providing regular community of practices and forum spaces so service providers and interested stakeholders across the state are supported through time of changes and reform



Housing & ageing in community

Economic & social inclusion & contribution



Technology, digital literacy & inclusion

Access & Equity



Workforce



Diversity & Inclusion

Health & Wellbeing



Service & systems design



Disaster Preparedness

Intergenerational relationships



Ageism & Discrimination

Transport



