

# Council on the Ageing Queensland

# Your Voice



## Quarterly Newsletter

April 2025

In this edition of Your Voice you'll find:

- › Chair Message
- › Social Isolation news
- › CHSP team up north
- › Longreach Expo
- › Energy Champions
- › Tamara's tea cake

### News in Brief

- › We received 245 Seniors Month grant applications.
- › Our online survey seeking feedback on elder abuse to support our Parliamentary Inquiry submission received 96 responses.

## Council on the Ageing Queensland

Advocating for the rights and wellbeing of older Queenslanders and future generations since 1957.

### Contact us

07 3316 2999

GPO Box 614, Brisbane 4001

[info@cotaqld.org.au](mailto:info@cotaqld.org.au)

[www.cota.qld.gov.au](http://www.cota.qld.gov.au)

## A Message from our Chair

What a whirlwind year it's been already, with our thoughts going out to everyone impacted by the devastating flooding and cyclone activity.

We've started 2025 with a bold new look on our easy to use website. Check it out at [www.cota.qld.org.au](http://www.cota.qld.org.au)

While online is fine, we've also been out and about meeting and learning from older Queenslanders and the people and organisations that serve you.



**Darren Young**, our CEO with Lorna on Valentines Day at Currumbin Expo



**Jean McRuvie**, Board Chair Council on the Ageing Qld

I recently met with Queensland's Assistant Minister, Donna Kirkland and shared our rich history of advocacy and influencing policy development, service delivery and community planning.

I also had the pleasure of MCing an inspiring and empowering Women in Leadership event hosted by the Windsor Group which celebrated the strength and influence of women, the importance of lifting one another up and creating spaces for women to thrive.

**We look forward to representing you through our advocacy work to make sure you are valued and heard.**

## Age Well, Stay Connected Social Isolation Prevention Workshop

Our inaugural workshop for the Seniors Social Isolation Peak on 31 March proved the perfect launch bringing over 100 people and 50+ organisations together for an incredibly special day of gathering, connecting, sharing and collaborating.

Speakers ranged from Public Advocate Dr John Chesterman and ADA CEO Geoff Rowe to QCOSS Sector Development Manager Sarah Walker.



Dr Catherine Barrett - Director, Celebrate Ageing

Dr Barrett's keynote address highlighted the need to value ageing and challenge older people's 'internalised ageism'.

The day raised awareness on social isolation impacts and resource supports. It also encouraged collaboration innovation and strengthened networks.

Thank you to the Queensland Government for funding the workshop.



Community-led solutions Q&A Panel in action

## Aged Care Navigator Program Cairns Local Government Area

Our Navigator team help many vulnerable older Queenslanders to understand and access Aged Care and other supports in their region.

We assist Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities and people with disabilities.

In March, we joined the Cairns Senior Friendship Circle to present to over 20 members of the Bhutanese community.

## CHSP Sector Support and Development team heads north

Our Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) Team travelled to Far North Queensland in February to meet with CHSP providers and regional stewards from the Department of Health and Aged Care.

Providers from Cooktown, Innisfail, Kuranda, Malanda, New Mapoon and Yarrabah joined our Network meeting in Cairns. The Aged Care Act, quality standards, aged care navigation and meeting demand dominated discussion.

The team also facilitated a workshop with Tablelands providers exploring collaborative opportunities for meeting the needs of their communities.



Our team collaborated with the Tablelands team



## Energy4Seniors Become an Energy Champion

Rising energy costs are part of rising cost of living pressures for older people.

Energy4Seniors Energy Champions are volunteers who can connect with you and deliver face-to-face, small group information sessions to help:

- › Increase awareness of concessions, rebates and supports like hardship programs and services from the Energy and Water Ombudsman
- › Improve understanding of energy bills and usage including tariff and energy plans and smart meter use
- › Boost confidence

Join our team to make a difference, we will train and support you with resources.

Learn more about becoming an Energy Champion or booking a session at <https://cotaql.org.au/energy-4-seniors/>



***'I have always loved helping others in my community and this is the perfect opportunity to do just that'.***

Energy Champion Vivien Sweeney (Townsville)



Energy Champions Bob Brummel (l) & John Rewald (r)

## Central West Care Expo

Our commitment to older people living in regional and rural areas made sure we did not miss this great Longreach Expo.

Over 30 exhibitors showcased a range of care and support services available in aged care, disability, health, social, emotional, legal, financial and physical wellbeing in the Central West.



Dylan Olliver (l) with PHN Western Qld's Rachel Bock

## Parliamentary Inquiry into Volunteering in Queensland

Community, service provider and community organisation input helped shape our inquiry submission.

We combined this 'information gold' with the wealth of our program, policy and advocacy insights with to ensure diverse needs and ideas were heard.

Our recommendations included:

- › Reviewing Queensland's Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan to be more inclusive of older adults and sustainability of age-friendly communities.
- › Investment in sustainable volunteering to attract and retain older volunteers.

You can read our recommendations at <https://cotaql.org.au/seniors-peak/>

## Staff recipe from our Tamara Fowler, Finance and Business Manager



Apple cinnamon tea cake

### Ingredients

#### Base

- › 125g melted butter
- › 1 1/3 cups of self-raising flour
- › 3/4 cup of caster sugar
- › 3/4 cup of desiccated coconut
- › 2 tsp vanilla extract.

#### Layers

- › 2 thinly sliced apples
- › 2 eggs
- › 250g of sour cream
- › 2 tsp of ground cinnamon or cinnamon sugar.



Tamara Fowler - the pride of Brisbane town

### Cooking instructions

#### Base

- › Preheat oven to 180 degrees
- › Grease and line 20cm square tin with baking paper
- › Add butter, sugar, coconut and vanilla extract in medium size bowl
- › Sift over the self-raising flour and mix until smooth and creamy
- › Bake until lightly golden.

#### Layers

- › Place apple slices on top of the base
- › Mix sour cream and eggs with whisk or fork and pour over the apple slices
- › Sprinkle with cinnamon and bake in oven for 20 mins or when cream sets
- › Cool then place in fridge. Slice later.

## Boonah Seniors Expo - 11 March



Over 100 seniors and 24 exhibitors at Cultural Centre



Liz Buchanan (l) and Kayleen Johnston at Boonah

### COTA National Alliance

- › Australia
- › ACT
- › New South Wales
- › Northern Territory
- › Queensland
- › South Australia
- › Tasmania
- › Victoria
- › Western Australia

### Stay Connected

