

Seniors Enquiry Line Snippets

2023 Issue 3
September to December

In the spirit of reconciliation, UnitingCare pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging and the unique role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples play in the communities we serve. We acknowledge our gratitude that we share this land today, our sorrow for the costs of that sharing, and our hope to move to a place of justice and partnership together.

Seniors Enquiry Line

Seniors Enquiry Line is an information and referral service for Queensland seniors, proudly sponsored by the Queensland Government and operated by UnitingCare.

Helplines

COVID-19 Helpline - 1800 171 866
National Debt Helpline - 1800 007 007
Elder Abuse Helpline - 1300 651 192
Carers Gateway - 1800 422 737

Mental Health Support & Counselling Services:

Lifeline - 13 11 14
13 YARN - 13 92 76
Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636
1800RESPECT - 1800 737 732
Family Drug Support - 1300 368 186
Head to Health - 1800 595 212

Contact us

📞 1300 135 500
✉️ sel@uccommunity.org.au

seniorsenquiryline.com.au

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament

In late 2023, all eligible Australian citizens aged 18 years and over will vote on whether Australia should change its Constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia by establishing a body called the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

The Voice would be an independent and permanent advisory body. It would give advice to the Australian Parliament and Government on matters that affect the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have called for members of the Voice to be chosen by First Nations peoples based on the wishes of local communities.

You can read the Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through a Voice Information Booklet on The Voice Referendum website at www.voice.gov.au. Or you can go to: www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/support-a-voice-to-parliament

Disclaimer: The materials and information included in this edition of Snippets newsletter are provided as a service to you and do not necessarily reflect endorsement by the Seniors Enquiry Line Program. The Seniors Enquiry Line Program is not responsible for the accuracy of information provided from outside sources. Groups and workshops detailed in this flyer are for your information and are not coordinated by or connected to Seniors Enquiry Line in any way unless specified.

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Queensland Government

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UnitingCare

Have you heard of these services?

Do you know of a service or support that more seniors should know about?
Call us on 1300 135 500 or email us at sel@uccommunity.org.au to let us know

Brighton Wellness Hub One-stop-shop for healthy ageing

The Brighton Wellness Hub supports community to age in health and wellness.

They provide a wide range of activities and services - most free and some for a small fee. Their activities change regularly but information on how to achieve a healthy life is available daily.

Some activities include:

- barefoot bowling
- cooking demonstrations
- technology demonstrations
- chair yoga
- mindful meditation.

They also provide free community information sessions to community members on various topics to help support them in their living.

For full details on “What’s on @ the Brighton Wellness Hub” check out their webpage:
www.metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/community/locations/brighton-wellness-hub

Address: Cnr Nineteenth Ave and Hornibrook Hwy, Brighton QLD 4017

Phone: (07) 3631 7568

Email: COH-

Engagement@health.qld.gov.au

Care Finder

The aged care system is complex, and some people find it more difficult than others to navigate and access the services they need.

Care finders support vulnerable older people who would not be able to arrange services without intensive support and do not have a family member or friends who can help.

If you or someone you know would benefit from support navigating the aged care system then visit the link below to learn more and find your nearest care finder service provider.
www.myagedcare.gov.au/help-care-finder

Fishability QLD “Fish and Forget”

Fishability QLD formed through a partnership between “Bribie Island Boat Charters” and several smaller community groups in 2013.

Fishability QLD provide a range of socially inclusive fishing and outdoor recreational opportunities for people who experience disadvantage, isolation and marginalisation.

Fishability QLD’s qualified staff and dedicated volunteers regularly head out into Bribie Island’s Pumicestone Passage on 8-12-seater BBQ boats, and explore the aquatic treasures hidden in our local surrounds.

They also offer health and wellbeing programs during off peak periods, community onshore fishing and other fishing events in varying accessible locations such as Wynnum.

For more information, contact Fishability on 0435 778 510 or info@fishabilityqld.org.au between 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Queensland Government

Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme

The Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme helps with electricity costs for people who have a chronic medical condition, such as multiple sclerosis, autonomic system dysfunction, significant burns or a severe inflammatory skin condition, which is aggravated by changes in temperature.

It currently provides \$479.03 (including GST) per year to eligible applicants (eligibility is reviewed every two years).

www.qld.gov.au/community/cost-of-living-support/concessions/medical-concessions/medical-cooling-heating-electricity-concession-scheme

Concessions and Rebates Finder

Check out the Queensland Government’s concession finder website to find out what you are entitled to:

www.concessionsfinder.services.qld.gov.au

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Older Persons Advocacy Network

Self-Advocacy Toolkit

Self-advocacy or speaking up means having the right information to get the care and support you need.

Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) has created a self-advocacy toolkit which equips you with the skills, information and resources you need to speak up for better aged care.

They have information on:

- your aged care rights
- your aged care options and their costs
- solving common aged care problems
- protecting yourself from harm
- help with decision making

The toolkit takes the guesswork out of aged care and includes bite-sized summaries and videos of advocacy in action, as well as links to factsheets and key government updates so you don't have to go looking.

You can find these resources at www.opan.org.au/toolkit. You can also order physical copies through the OPAN website at www.opan.org.au/contact-us/order-resources

Amputees & Families Support Group QLD

The Amputees & Families Support Group Qld Inc (Amputees Queensland) was established over 35 years ago by a group of individuals who felt alone and isolated when they first lost their limb(s) and were trying to accept and integrate this change into their personal, professional and recreational lives.

Amputees Queensland provides a range of services and activities to individuals, families and the wider amputee and limb different community. Their services include information relevant to limb loss or limb difference, peer support, social events and information workshops as well as short term loan equipment.

Through their peer support program, they connect individuals with someone that has had a similar experience, they are available to provide understanding, emotional and practical support as well as information to individuals, families and carers pre and post amputation.

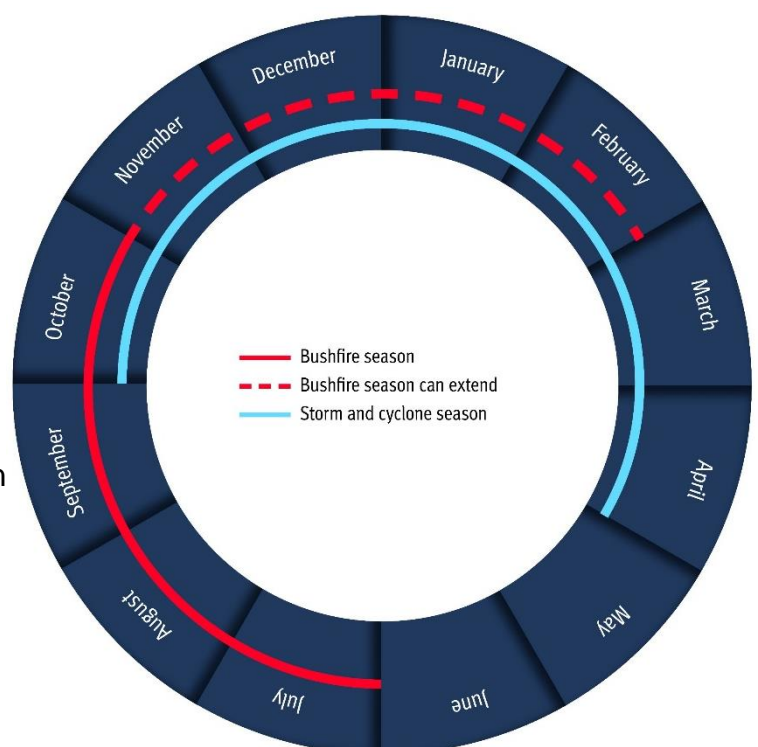
Visit the website www.afsg.org.au or contact Amputees Queensland on 07 3290 4293 or email lynda@afsg.org.au.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Travelling in Queensland

As you travel in Queensland, you will be driving through some of the most diverse land in Australia, bringing a range of conditions and the potential for natural disasters. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) personnel respond to emergencies all year, including bushfires, cyclones, floods, and severe storms. It is important to prepare for these dangers when travelling in our state.

Here is a handy graph which shows the months impacted by bushfires, storms and cyclone seasons.

www.qfes.qld.gov.au/safety-education/travelling-in-queensland



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STAR Community Services

STAR Friends

STAR Friends is a free service providing quality social connections for those on a Home Care Package or on the national waitlist for a Home Care Package.

If you, or someone you know, would enjoy seeing a friendly visitor once a fortnight who will come to your home and spend quality time with you, please reach out to STAR.

Your STAR Friend will be matched with you based on your interests and hobbies. You can choose to simply

- enjoy a cuppa and chat
- go for a walk or an outing in the community
- play games together such as cards and chess
- arts and crafts
- rekindle old hobbies
- cook your favourite meals together or have fun exploring new recipes.

The service is available in Toowoomba, Darling Downs, Ipswich & West Moreton, Brisbane South / Redlands and Logan.

If you are a home care package client or are on the waitlist for home care package, please call Jessy Byrnes at STAR on (07) 3821 6699 or email starfriends@starct.org.au.

Able Australia

Lasting Letters Program

Lasting Letters is a pen pal program that is a gentle and fun way to help reduce social isolation for seniors over 60 in Ipswich, Somerset region, Lockyer Valley and Scenic Rim.

www.ableaustralia.org.au/launching-lasting-letters-program-for-seniors

If you would like to join, contact Able Australia on (07) 5600 0733 or you can email alps@ableaustralia.org.au

Australian Cyber Security Centre

ReportCyber

Cyber incidents are on the rise and increasing in severity. It's important to know what you can do if you're impacted by an incident or cybercrime.

The ACSC has useful resources to help you stay aware of current cyber threats, and report and recover from an incident. If you encounter a cybercrime or incident, make sure you report it immediately via the ReportCyber portal on www.cyber.gov.au

What you can do? Visit ReportCyber

Every report counts. Reporting helps build a strong understanding of the national cyber threat picture for all Australians and informs our ongoing cyber security guidance, tools and services.

If you're the victim of a cybercrime, your reports can be made confidentially and will also go to the relevant state or territory law enforcement agency. Any financial losses should be immediately reported to your financial institution.

You can also get advice from the ACSC to help you recover from cybercrime and incidents. They have step-by-step guidance which will help you respond and recover from an incident and help you improve your cyber security posture to protect yourself against further harm.

Call for help or advice

The Australian Cyber Security Hotline, 1300 CYBER1 (1300 292 371) is available 24/7 to all Australians seeking cyber security advice and assistance, or wanting to report cyber incidents.

Access resources on cyber.gov.au

- Report early via the ReportCyber portal
- Visit the report and recover pages on www.cyber.gov.au for advice on reporting and recovering from a cybercrime or incident, and taking the steps to protect yourself.
- Use the **Have you been Hacked?** tool to find out what to do to recover if you've been the victim of a cybercrime

Parkinson's Disease

by Michelle with Parkinson's Queensland

This progressive, neurological condition is the second most common neurological condition in the world and is the fastest growing. Unfortunately, it remains vastly misunderstood by the general community and those in the health system.

Over 18,000 Queenslanders have a diagnosis of Parkinson's which means the dopamine in their brain is depleting. Dopamine is the chemical used by the brain to get messages to the body, emotions and mind to tell it how to move, feel and think.

With a reduction in this, the symptoms that can occur are widespread and unpredictable. Whilst over 80% of people with Parkinson's are over 65, 20% are still younger and still of working age. Every hour, there are 37 Australians given this diagnosis.

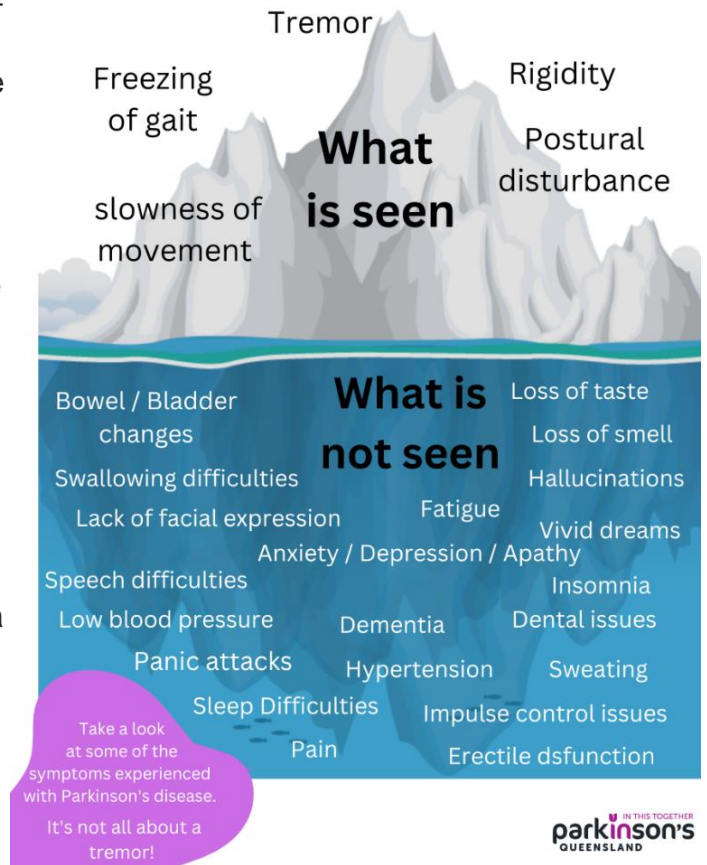
Every single person with Parkinson's presents with different symptoms or rate of progress, which is frustrating for them and for those caring for them. Those who are diagnosed can do a lot to help slow the progress of their Parkinson's symptoms and many will live long and valued lives.

These individuals will benefit even more if we all appreciate the complexity of their diagnosis and allow them the support and the space to continue to conduct a fulfilled social life.

Parkinson's is not just about the tremor; in fact, only 60% of people with Parkinson's have a tremor! Take a look at the image here to see some of the common symptoms.

If you want to know more or would like to gain support for someone living with or impacted by Parkinson's, contact Parkinson's Queensland on 1800 644 189 or visit the website at www.parkinsonsqld.org.au

Parkinson's - the real picture



Seniors Oral Health

by Leonie Short with Seniors Dental Care Australia

Did you know that approximately 50% of older Australians have never consistently attended regular dental check-ups and do not have good oral health?

Sadly, this disadvantage multiplies over time to a point where they have lost teeth or the remaining teeth are decayed or broken down, and their gums are sore and infected. For those who had their teeth taken out decades ago, their dentures may be worn down, ill-fitting or lost. So, what can you do right now to improve your oral health?

1. People should be performing twice-daily oral health care to improve their general health, not just their oral health. Twice-daily oral health care can assist in reducing inflammation and infection as well as to improve their sense of well-being and quality of life.
2. Book a dental appointment to receive feedback and advice on toothbrushing, denture cleaning, dental medicaments and aids – plus learn how lifestyle factors impact our dental health.

Seniors Dental Care Australia offers oral health training and education for health workers in the aged, home and disability sectors. You can find out more on www.seniorsdentalcareaustralia.com.au

What's it like?...

This year we will be bringing you a series featuring stories from seniors and community organisations as they navigate new experiences and services. If you have an experience or story you would like to share, please call us on 1300 135 500 or email sel@uccommunity.org.au

What it's like to attend a mental health support group? Thank you to Mark from Bundaberg for sharing his story

Hi. I'm Mark and I'm 70 years of age and retired. Recently, I was asked to write about a program that I have been attending called Grow. Grow is a community mental health organisation with a 12-step recovery program of personal growth incorporating the principles of mutual help and peer support.

It started in Sydney in 1957. Prior to COVID, meetings were held face-to-face, meaning we would meet together in person at a venue. Following COVID, many Grow meetings changed to online to enable our groups to continue. Whilst online meetings can initially be a steep learning curve with learning to use Zoom, our online groups mean that they can be accessed by members from anywhere in Australia, which is great for people living regionally or rurally. As I live regionally, I attend an online group. Grow continues to run both a mix of online and face-to-face groups throughout Australia, so people can choose what works best for them and their situation.

I started attending Grow meetings as an answer to severe depression and anxiety. For many, talking about mental health is a taboo subject. Those suffering from depression will attest the very opposite is true.

I feel very fortunate being able to attend Grow meetings as many in their more senior years are no longer eligible for support at 65 years of age and are often referred to My Aged Care.

Whilst many of the attendees are aged between 40 to 50, we have members on either side of the divide which is wonderful to see. The one common denominator in Grow meetings is the sense of a caring and sharing community and a sense of belonging. Maintaining our mental health through attending Grow meetings is our common focus.

I have found regular sessions with a psychologist helpful in addition to my meetings. Many members maintain connections with their doctors and associated medical professionals.

The meetings are structured and are guided at each meeting by what we call the Group Method Card that we follow throughout the meetings. I really appreciate the structured nature of Grow meetings which are in stark contrast to former times. The Grow program is becoming a "new way of life" as is suggested in the program. A saying in Grow is "we can do it, but we can't do it alone".

Another saying that I found helpful when I first attended meetings was "move my muscles and legs". Maintaining mobility is so important. I don't have to climb Mount Everest every day, just factor some kind of activity into my daily life.

Another saying I quote regularly is "credit yourself for progress". It's so easy to get down on ourselves. In meetings we actively credit each other for progress that we have made and continue to make.

The Seniors Enquiry Line would like to thank Mark for sharing his experience of attending the Grow mental health peer support group. If you would like to learn more about Grow, please check out their website at www.grow.org.au or call them on 1800 558 268.

Time for Grandparents

Information and support for grandparents raising grandchildren

UnitingCare's Time for Grandparents program is a state-wide service supporting Queensland grandparents who have informal primary care of their grandchildren. Operating for many years, the program provides a telephone-based information, support service which provides referrals to relevant services. They can also provide:

Financial support

Time for Grandparents may be able to provide funding assistance for grandchildren to participate in extracurricular activities such as swimming, football, Scouts or to be able to attend their school camps, where they otherwise might not have financial capacity to do so.

Peer support groups

Time for Grandparents facilitates monthly peer support groups for grandparents, both virtually and in person. Peer support groups are a great way to connect with other grandparents and learn about supports available to grandparents and children.

Grandfamily Camps

Time for Grandparents operates Grandfamily camps over the school holidays in Redland Bay, Mount Tamborine and Gympie. These camps are a great opportunity for grandparents and grandchildren to make memories and be around other families who understand what they go through as grandparent carers.

Grandchildren are supported by qualified Outdoor Education Instructors to participate in adventure-based activities whilst grandparents have some well-earned 'time-out' to read a book, go for a bush walk, catch-up on lost sleep or watch the children participate in their ventures activities - it's your choice.

Pamper Days

Earlier this year, Time for Grandparents hosted the first 'Pamper Day' in Caboolture, Rockhampton and Springwood as respite and self-care for grandparent carers who rarely have the opportunity to spend time or money on themselves. The 'Pamper Day' provided an opportunity to connect with other grandparents as well as receive a massage and another treatment of their choosing. These days were a huge success and we hope to continue these in 2024.

Contacting Time for Grandparents

The Time for Grandparents program shares the same phone number as the Seniors Enquiry Line. You can contact the Time for Grandparents program on 1300 135 500 between 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday (*excluding public holidays*) and the helpline operator will transfer you through to a Time for Grandparents staff member. Alternatively, you can email Time for Grandparents directly at grandparentsinfo@ucommunity.org.au or visit www.grandparentsqld.com.au



Grandparents Day

In Queensland, Grandparents Day is celebrated every year on the last Sunday in October. This year, Grandparents Day will be Sunday 29 October 2023.

The relationship a child shares with their grandparents is incredibly special. This day acknowledges this important relationship and also recognises the contribution grandparents make to families, the community and the economy. It's a day for Queenslanders to thank grandparents for their care and support and for sharing their knowledge, experience and traditions with younger generations.

Many services will be hosting events such as Storytime or fun activities such as arts and crafts. You can contact Seniors Enquiry Line on 1300 135 500 to find Grandparents Day activities near you.

Scam Story: Remote Access and Overpayment Scam

Thank you to Phoebe from Mackay for sharing her story



My husband is 90 and I am 87; we have been involved with computers since they became small enough for ordinary people to own one - yet we were scammed.

We bought a TV from Harvey Norman and within three months the picture stopped working. We reported the problem and followed the warranty claim process. We sent the TV away as requested and were later informed that our claim was declined as they had switched on the TV and it behaved perfectly. In the meantime, we had bought another TV as we did not wish to be without one. The sick TV was returned to us and now stands in a corner as we prefer the newer TV.

Some months later we got a phone call to say that our warranty claim would be paid, but we had to have a PayPal account. We do not own a mobile phone and did not have a PayPal account. The scammer said he could set up a PayPal account for us if we opened a website he gave us. We opened the website and this allowed the scammer to access our computer (shock, horror). He said he was now paying us the \$400 warranty claim on the TV. A huge \$4000 showed on our computer screen and the man said he was now paying the claim.

\$4000 showed on the computer screen and the man, who was still talking to us on the phone swore and pretended to be in a panic for overpaying us. He then said he would have to talk with his supervisor as to how to reverse the payment. This is when we realised that we had been scammed.

We phoned our grandson and who was able to access our computer remotely. He removed everything the scammer had put on the computer while my husband contacted our bank to see if anything had been activated on our account. Unfortunately, \$1,000 had been taken out of our account. Luckily the bank limits daily withdrawals to \$1,000 unless they have been told otherwise.

The bank said they would investigate and duly reported that Harvey Norman's data had been hacked and that is how the scammer knew we had put in a warranty claim which had been denied. The bank said they would try to get our \$1,000 back but eventually reported it was untraceable.

We were truly scammed. We had thought we were too computer-savvy to ever get scammed. Just goes to show - you can always fall victim to scammers.

Who can you call if you are concerned about scams?

The Seniors Enquiry Line is a free, state-wide telephone helpline that provides information and referral support to Queensland seniors and their support networks.

In 2022, Australians reported losing \$3.1 billion to scammers. This is an 80% increase on total losses recorded in 2021. We are constantly harassed by scammers. Some scams are easy to spot so we ignore it and don't give it a second thought. Some scams though are really convincing and we might want a second opinion. In these cases, you can contact the Seniors Enquiry Line to discuss your concerns, we can help you work out whether it is a scam or not and what actions to take.

The Seniors Enquiry Line operates 9am - 5pm AEST Monday to Friday (*excluding public holidays*). You can call us on 1300 135 500 or email sel@uccommunity.org.au.

Upcoming Events

Queensland Seniors Month

For the third year in a row, Seniors Day will take place over the entire month of October.

Now in its 63rd year, the month-long celebration opens with United Nations International Day of Older Persons on Sunday 1 October 2023. Queensland's Seniors Month will include National Grandparents Day, on Sunday 29 October before concluding on Tuesday 31 October 2023.

This year's theme will continue 2022's theme of 'Social Connections'. Seniors Month aims to increase the social connectedness of communities throughout Queensland. Seniors Month aims to be a Connect Fest!



You can find in person or virtual events by visiting the COTA Queensland Seniors Month website www.qldseniorsmonth.org.au

Queensland Mental Health Week

Queensland Mental Health Week (QMHW) is an annual awareness week that aims to shine a spotlight on individual and community mental health and wellbeing.

Queensland Mental Health Week will take place between Saturday 7 - Sunday 15 October 2023 and this year's theme is "Awareness, Belonging, Connection".

Each year, people across Queensland come together during QMHW through local events, conversations and activities to raise awareness of the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing.

You can find events by visiting the Queensland Mental Health Week website at: www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au/search-events

Seniors Enquiry Line look forward to participating in many senior's expos and community events in South East Queensland this year. We'll see you at:

Morayfield Seniors Expo on Tuesday 26 September 2023 at Morayfield Sports & Events Centre

Bribie Island Seniors Expo on Thursday 28 September 2023 at Bribie Respite

Forde Seniors Expo on Friday 29 September 2023 10am to 2pm at Canterbury College Events Centre in Waterford

Ipswich Seniors Tech Expo on Tuesday 3 October 2023 from 9am to 12pm at Brothers Leagues Club

Redlands Seniors Tech Expo on Wednesday 4 October 2023 from 9am to 12pm

Logan Seniors Big Day Out at Logan Entertainment Centre on Friday 6 October 2023

Centenary QPS Volunteers in Policing **Over 50s Expo** at Riverlife Baptist Church in Seventeen Miles Rocks on Wednesday 11 October 2023

QPS Ipswich Crime Prevention Unit's Get Online Week's **Cyber Safety Workshop** at Tuesday 17 October 2023 at Ipswich Sports Club

Able Australia's **Ipswich Seniors Expo** Wednesday 18 October 2023 at Ipswich Showgrounds

National Seniors **Toowoomba Seniors Expo** on Thursday 26 October 2023 at Toowoomba Showgrounds

Please note that event details may change after the distribution of this newsletter. For most up-to-date information contact the Seniors Enquiry Line on 1300 135 500.

Updates from Seniors Enquiry Line

Community education

As well as the helpline, the Seniors Enquiry Line can provide community education to senior's groups, support groups, community centres and retirement villages throughout South East Queensland (virtual available for all of Queensland) on topics such as:

- scams awareness
- social media and online safety
- digital legacy
- deep dives into specific scams (i.e. unauthorised transaction scams or identity theft)
- concessions and supports available to seniors in Queensland
- overview of UnitingCare's Older Persons Programs.



For more information, you can find the "everything to know about community education through Seniors Enquiry Line" resource and expression of interest form on our website at:

www.seniorsenquiryline.com.au/about

Request for help in creating a new resource: guest speakers list

After facilitating an information session or guest speaking at a seniors' group, we are often asked for recommendations of topics or other guest speakers.

To help with these enquiries, the Seniors Enquiry Line is putting together a list of guest speakers and community education providers throughout Queensland.

If you speak at seniors' groups and would like to be included in this list, please contact us on 1300 135 500 or email Emily at emily.gould@ucommunity.org.au

Snippets distribution

We wanted to let you know that we are changing the distribution dates for Snippets. Issues will still be released quarterly however this will be the final Snippets for 2023. The next issue will be distributed in January 2024. There will be no changes to the mailing list.

Previous Snippets issues can be found on our website:

www.seniorsenquiryline.com.au/news-and-events/newsletters

FUN FACT

This is the 232nd issue of Snippets - the first issue was released in 2001!

We would love to learn more about you!

Do you have a recipe, event, story or joke that you would like to share with other readers? We want to hear from you! Seniors Enquiry Line might feature these in future newsletters.

Please send to:
Seniors Enquiry Line
Turrbal Country
PO Box 2376

Chermside Central QLD 4032

Alternatively, you can email us at sel@ucommunity.org.au or call us on **1300 135 500**