



BeWellnews



**NEW
Aged Care
Act is
coming**

Welcome to the August 2024 edition of BeWell News

This winter has seen cold nights and bright, cool days – good weather to get outside and enjoy the sunshine. While the rainy days have not been as frequent, it is still important to be prepared for any storms in the future.

The State Emergency Service (SES) website has information on how to plan for emergencies, and when to call them if needed:

 www.ses.vic.gov.au

We also encourage you to stay up to date about the new Aged Care Act, which is being developed by the Commonwealth Government:

 www.health.gov.au/our-work/aged-care-act/about

There's lots to read about in this edition.

Occupational therapist Johnny Chan shares his tips for helping our vision as we age, while registered nurse Tania Heywood provides a wealth of information about continence.

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- Advance care planning

Feedback on  9518 3553

 communitysupport@monash.vic.gov.au

Next edition: December 2024

Public Holidays

- Grand Final eve: Friday 27 September
- Melbourne Cup: Tuesday 5 November



CITY OF
MONASH

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Tips to help your vision as you age

By Occupational Therapist Johnny Chan

Have you woken up in the middle of the night because of an urge to go to the toilet and then bumped into something, or tripped over by your beloved pet on the way? As we get older, our vision may have the following changes:



- **Blurred or smudged**
- **Difficulty focusing on an object**
- **Partially blocked by having cataracts or other eye diseases**



The weakened muscles in our aging eyes make our pupil (the hole where light enters our eyes) smaller and thus harder for us to see. When we can't see things, bumping into them is more than likely. So, what do we do about it? I would say **“let there be light!”**.

Below are some tips I always recommend to our older residents:

- **Switch on the light** whenever you are going to a dark or poorly lit area.
- **Make sure your light globes are bright** - not just lit, but bright. LED globes are good options as they are more energy-efficient and brighter than traditional light globes. It is recommended that a small room needs to have a minimum of 800 lumens of light (60 watts, or 9-13 watts for LED). More lumens are needed for larger rooms, and even more required if you are doing woodwork, painting or tasks that require precision.
- **Install motion-sensing nightlights** along the pathway from your bedroom to the toilet to illuminate the pathway. The closer nightlights are installed to the floor, the less disturbance there is to others.
- **Put signage outside rooms** to reduce confusion and the chance of going to the wrong room.



Occupational therapists at Monash Council can provide you with recommendations during a home visit; and the Home Maintenance team can assist with replacing dim or malfunctioning light globes.

More information:

 www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/lighting

ASK THE NURSE: CONTINENCE HEALTH

With registered nurse Tania Heywood

If you experience involuntary bladder or bowel leakage, you may have incontinence.

Incontinence describes any accidental or involuntary loss of urine (wee) from the bladder, known as urinary incontinence, or faeces (poo) or flatus (wind) from the bowel, known as faecal incontinence.

As you age, bladder and bowel function changes, including weakened muscles, nocturia (the need to go to the toilet more at night), and other health-related signs.

Factors worsening bladder and bowel issues include decreased mobility, medication side effects, and thin skin. Incontinence is a common condition that, with the right help, can be managed, treated and sometimes cured.



- **Help is available:** Seek advice and treatment. Consider pelvic floor exercises, bladder check-ups and management plans.
- **National Continence Helpline:** Staffed by Continence Nurse Specialists, 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday (☎ 1800 33 00 66).
- **Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS):** A yearly non-taxable payment to cover some of the cost of products that help manage incontinence. Basic eligibility requirements of the payment are that you:
 - have permanent and severe incontinence
 - have an eligible neurological condition or eligible other condition that is the cause of your permanent and severe incontinence
 - be aged 5 years or older
 - be an Australian citizen.

The CAPS team is part of Services Australia and operates from 8.30am to 5pm (AEST) Monday to Friday. Phone ☎ 1800 239 309. You will be required to fill out a form, including getting your GP or other health professional to fill out a section of this form.



For more information and for information in your language, see:

 www.continence.org.au

ASK THE NURSE: CONTINENCE HEALTH (CONTINUED)

PRODUCTS:

Products to assist with managing incontinence can include:

- Disposable pants and pads
- Reusable/washable pads and pants
- All-in-one products including wrap-around pads or pull-up pads
- Bed pads, bed sheets and chair pads
- Condom drainage for men.



Your choice of pad will depend on:

- The type of incontinence you have
- The amount of urine (wee) or faeces (poo) that is lost
- Your physical capabilities
- Personal preferences (e.g. colour, comfort, size)
- Cost.



Pull-up pads are great for during the day as they can be pulled up and down when you go to the toilet. All-in-one, wrap-around pads have the most absorbency.

Access to the toilet is also very important, but don't rush as you don't want to fall.

A bedside commode can be useful overnight, so you can transfer from your bed onto the commode without walking to the toilet.

Continence aids are available in pharmacies or through bulk delivery.



For more information and for information in your language:

 www.continence.org.au

NATIONAL PUBLIC TOILET MAP

There are many online websites where you can locate public toilets. The National Public Toilet Map is one of them.

You can use it on your computer, tablet and mobile phone. This image shows the public toilets near the Glen Waverley Train Station.



More information:

 <https://toiletmap.gov.au>

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Monash Council offers a range of social programs for older adults registered with My Aged Care.

Halcyon Dementia Day Centre

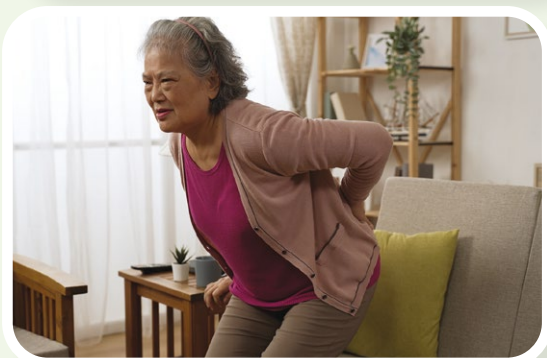
Step into a world of warmth and connection at our Halcyon Dementia Day Centre in Glen Waverley. Our program is designed to cater for Monash residents who are experiencing the early stages of dementia while offering respite for their carers. Halcyon fosters new friendships, laughter and a sense of belonging. Immerse yourself or a loved one in a supportive community that understands and embraces each individual journey.

Positive Ageing Activity Centre (PAAC)

Discover the joy of connecting with your local community at our Positive Ageing Activity Centre in Oakleigh. Embrace good company, social activities, exciting outings and programs that promote healthy, active ageing. If you're an older resident seeking a chance to socialise, step out and make new connections, we invite you to visit our centre.



To find out more visit  www.monash.vic.gov.au/social-programs or call the Social Inclusion Team on  9518 3555



RETRAIN PAIN WORKSHOP

Do you have chronic pain and want some help with relief?

Join a group in the Chadstone area for 10 sessions that will help you gain greater understanding of chronic pain.

Sessions will cover:

- **Information on why you experience pain**
- **Practical methods of managing pain and solutions to support your own pain management**
- **Information on how diet, exercise and your general health can impact pain management.**

Sessions will be run by different health professionals through Link Health and Community, and run on Tuesdays, 2pm-4pm. The last group for 2024 starts on Tuesday 8 October.

For more information and to book  1300 552 509

MEMORY LANE CAFÉ – VICTORIAN PRIDE CENTRE

The Memory Lane Café is an innovative program will provide a safe and inclusive space for people from LGBTIQ+ communities living with dementia and their carers, by creating a pop-up café in which participants can socialise while enjoying refreshments and entertainment.

Research highlights the prevalence and impact of social isolation and stigma experienced by people living with dementia. The successful Memory Lane Café program led by Dementia Australia, which has been embraced across the country, is changing this narrative. Dementia Australia National Patron Ita Buttrose AC OBE said for many people living with dementia, attending traditional social functions can be challenging.

How to attend the Café

Call the **National Dementia Helpline** on ☎ **1800 100 500** or ✉ **vic.memorylanecafe@dementia.org.au** to find out more or to register your interest in attending.

The Victorian Pride Centre is the first purpose-built centre for Australia's LGBTIQ+ communities. It serves as a home for vital health and community services, cultural organisations, and unique event spaces. The centre is free to visit and open seven days a week. It celebrates the past while paving new directions for the future of LGBTIQ+ communities.



More information: ☎ **7035 3592** or 🌐 **www.pridecentre.org.au**

OPEN DISCLOSURE

Open disclosure is the open discussion that a provider of care or services has with consumers when things go wrong that have harmed or had the potential to cause harm to a consumer.

This may also involve the consumer's family, carers and other support people when a consumer would like them to be involved.

It involves an expression of regret by the provider and a factual explanation of what happened, the actual and potential consequences and what steps are being taken to manage this and prevent it happening again.





ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP

Antimicrobial stewardship refers to the careful and responsible use of medications, especially ways to prevent antibiotic resistance.

The most important ways to prevent antibiotic resistance are to:

- **Minimise unnecessary prescribing and overprescribing of antibiotics.** This occurs when people expect doctors to prescribe antibiotics for a viral illness (antibiotics do not work against viruses) or when antibiotics are prescribed for conditions that do not require them.
- **Complete the entire course of any prescribed antibiotic so that it can be fully effective and not breed resistance.**
- **Practise good hygiene such as handwashing and use appropriate infection control procedures.**

Talk to your doctor about your personal circumstances.



Read the full article at:

 www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/antibiotic-resistant-bacteria

SENIORS' RIGHTS: LINDA'S STORY

Grandparents often have a special bond with their grandchildren, and this can sometimes be overlooked in parenting disputes.

Linda was very close to her eight-year-old twin granddaughters. Her daughter, Kathleen, had separated from the girls' father, Pete, when the girls were young, and they shared custody. When it was Kathleen's time with the girls, Linda would supervise them every second weekend.

Because Kathleen experienced ongoing drug and mental health issues, the Family Court ordered that Pete should have sole custody. Concerned for his daughters, Pete had stopped them from seeing their mother altogether. This meant that Linda and her husband were unable to see their grandchildren.

Linda contacted Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV), wanting to re-establish contact and communication with her grandchildren. On her behalf, SRV sent a letter to Pete, explaining that Linda was keen to continue her relationship with her grandchildren and proposing visit and phone call times.

Pete and his partner, Zoe, eventually agreed on the terms. This meant that Linda was able to remain involved with her grandchildren through fortnightly calls and some face-to-face visits.



If you, or someone you know, is a grandparent in need of some support, you may find SRV's new Grandparenting Help Sheet useful:

<https://seniorsrights.org.au/resources/information-sheets/grandparents>

It includes information on where to obtain support and advice on issues that a grandparent might face.

If you are in Victoria and are experiencing or at risk of elder abuse, please call ☎ 1300 368 821.

For concerned friends or family members, please encourage the older person to call SRV, or you can access information and resources here:

<https://seniorsrights.org.au>

You can also find a lawyer via the Law Institute of Victoria: www.liv.asn.au/Referral

If it is an emergency, call ☎ 000.

Monash Council acknowledges this information is provided via Seniors Rights Victoria.



More information:

<https://seniorsrights.org.au/resources/information-sheets/grandparents>

DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE ANNUAL REVIEWS

Every year, Council is mandated to do a review of all clients for every domestic assistance service that we deliver.

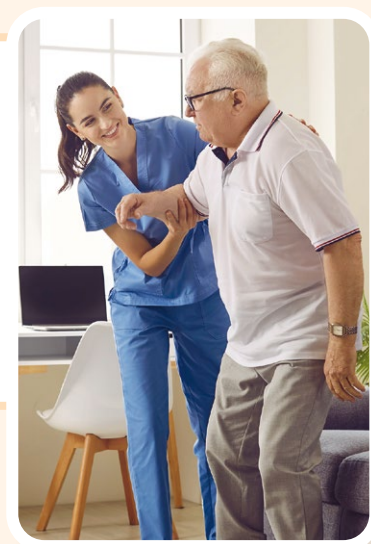
In September 2023, there were 1,464 domestic assistance review letters posted out to clients. In December 2023, there were 550 reviews outstanding.

We would like to give a big thank you to all the care workers that helped to deliver 491 of the 550 reviews over a three-week period for clients to complete. There were 383 returned out of the 491 – an 87 per cent return rate, which is a great result.

On 25 January 2024, we closed the review period. In total 1,232 reviews out of 1,464 were returned – a tremendous return rate of 84 per cent. We would like to say an enormous thank you to clients for the great work they do every day, and in supporting us to complete tasks like the annual review letters. The overall feedback from clients was fantastic.

- **Client satisfaction:** 95 per cent of the reviews returned – 876 clients were “very satisfied” and 289 “satisfied” with their service.
- **Services being delivered to meet a client’s needs and goals:** 589 strongly agreed, 597 agreed, 23 disagreed and 6 strongly disagreed so overall satisfaction was 97.6 per cent.
- **Care workers negotiating and prioritising tasks the results were amazing:** 97 per cent said ‘yes’.

Many clients added their own comments praising staff that attended including **“Thank You we like our Care Worker”** and **“Our care worker does a great job”**.



WHAT IS ADVANCE CARE PLANNING?

Advance care planning involves shared planning for your future health care needs.

It is a voluntary and ongoing process. It enables you to make some decisions now about the health care you would or would not like to receive if you were unable to communicate your preferences or make treatment decisions. Everyone should consider advance care planning, regardless of their age or health. Advance care planning gives you the chance to:

- **Talk to your family, friends and doctors about how you would like to be cared for in the future.**
- **Write down your own preferences for care and medical treatments.**
- **Choose who you would like to make medical treatment and care decisions for you.**



Where can I get more information?

Advance Care Planning Australia:  www.advancecareplanning.org.au

National Advance Care Planning Support Service:  1300 208 582

PROTEIN – MAINTAINING MUSCLE MASS

From around 50 years of age, humans begin to gradually lose skeletal muscle. This is known as sarcopenia and is common in older people. Loss of muscle mass is worsened by chronic illness, poor diet and inactivity.

Meeting the daily recommended protein intake may help you maintain muscle mass and strength. This is important for maintaining your ability to walk and reducing your risk of injury from falls.

To maintain muscle mass, it's important for older people to eat protein 'effectively'. This means consuming high-quality protein foods, such as lean meats.

Remember, maintaining muscle mass is crucial for overall health and independence as we age. Regular exercise and a balanced diet play key roles in preserving muscle strength and function.



Better health channel:

 www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au and search “protein”



When to call VICSES during a storm emergency

Call VICSES
132 500



000
EMERGENCY

If life threatening
call triple zero 000



Storm damage to roof



Tree damage to home



Tree blocking exit

LANGUAGE ASSIST

普通话 4713 5001
廣東話 4713 5002
Việt Ngữ 4713 5003

Ελληνικά 4713 5004
हिंदी 4713 5005
Italiano 4713 5008

한국어 4713 5010
සිංහල 4713 5020

தமிழ் 4713 5021
Other languages 4713 5000