



Event Series Summary Report

SENIORS SOCIAL ISOLATION PREVENTION PEAK

Age Well Stay Connected 2025

Summary of Events

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Queensland, in partnership with ADA Australia and the Queensland Public Advocate, delivered a three-part event series in Brisbane, Townsville and Longreach between March and October 2025. The events brought together community and sector stakeholders to share insights, exchange stories, showcase local initiatives and explore practical opportunities for collaboration to support older Queenslanders to stay socially connected and maintain their wellbeing. The events aimed to:

- **Increase awareness** of social isolation among older Queenslanders, including First Nations, CALD, LGBTIQ+ and other often marginalised groups
- **Foster inclusive dialogue** that amplifies diverse voices and lived experiences
- **Gather community-led insights** and identify actions that reflect the priorities and aspirations of older Queenslanders
- **Strengthen relationships and cross-sector connections** to support ongoing collaboration and coordinated responses

The events were tailored to each region's unique social and cultural context and promoted through direct emails, social media, partner websites, and local flyers. Supported by [seniors social isolation services](#), local providers and older volunteers, participation was broad and inclusive, fostering trust and collaboration. Each event began with a Welcome from a First Nations Elder or representative, setting a respectful tone. Dr. Catherine Barrett delivered a keynote on social isolation and ageism. Throughout the day, attendees engaged in storytelling and knowledge sharing via presentations, discussions, showcases and interactive activities.

Participation & Reach

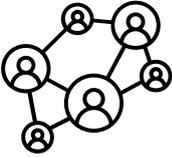
Participants came from diverse backgrounds, including First Nations and multicultural communities, and included older people, carers, Elders, volunteers, local service providers and sector professionals from aged care, health, social, community and support services.

Table 1. Number of participants by venue and location

Date	Location	Venue	Total Participants	Community members	Sector Stakeholders
31/03/25	Brisbane	Queensland Multicultural Centre	107	16	91
03/09/25	Townsville	Queensland Museum Tropics	57	26	31
10/10/25	Longreach	Civic and Cultural Centre	25	6	19
			189	48	141

Thematic Analysis

The following summarises the key themes that emerged from a thematic analysis of participant insights across all event activities.

	<p>1. Breaking Down Barriers and Building Connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address program gaps and provide transport solutions • Create inclusive and accessible housing, transport, and public spaces • Celebrate diversity and challenge ageism and loneliness stigma • Deliver person-centred care and expand intergenerational connections • Offer short-term, casual activities in remote and underserved communities to reduce barriers and encourage participation
	<p>2. Empowering Older People through Meaningful Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amplify older people's voices through storytelling, co-design, and participation in service and event planning and delivery • Recognise and celebrate the contributions of older people, including leadership and lived experience • Provide inclusive, tailored engagement opportunities that meet diverse needs, including First Nations peoples, and older men • Strengthen volunteer, mentoring, and advocacy programs to support connection and purpose • Offer meaningful, interest-based activities that foster learning, connection and community inclusion
	<p>3. Bridging Gaps: Improved Access to Information and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promote activities, services and events online and in-person • Build skills and increase knowledge, including digital literacy • Improve access to and navigation of services • Reach vulnerable and isolated older people with strengths-based messaging (e.g., social connection) across online and offline channels • Increase older people's confidence and capabilities with technology to support participation, learning and wellbeing • Leverage volunteers, local peer mentors, digital mentors and community champions
	<p>4. Working Collaboratively with Partners to Strengthen Impact and Reach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage local schools, councils, churches, community organisations, not-for-profits and clubs • Take a coordinated approach to event delivery across the state, leveraging local hubs, organisations, groups and resources • Strengthen partnerships to grow volunteering, peer support, and mentoring opportunities • Explore funding opportunities to sustain and expand initiatives



Outcomes

1. Stronger Community Networks and Awareness of Local Supports

- Increased understanding of social isolation and its impact on older Queenslanders
- Raised awareness of local initiatives and resources supporting social inclusion
- Enhanced place-based networks, enabling providers to connect and coordinate services more effectively
- Strengthened provider connections to support coordinated, community-led action

2. Practical Insights and Commitment to Future Action

- Identified effective ways to support older adults and carers to stay socially connected
- Showcased storytelling and graphic recording as tools to influence minds and policy
- Identified local hubs, intergenerational programs, volunteers, peer and digital mentors, and community champions as valuable resources for future action
- Built shared commitment to challenge ageism and loneliness stigma, supporting older Queenslanders to age well and stay connected

3. Laying the Groundwork for Continued Impact

- Insights will guide the future work of the Seniors Social Isolation Prevention peak
- Identified opportunities to expand the reach of Seniors Social Isolation Services
- Strengthened networks and connections across regional, rural and remote areas

Outputs

Participants	Stories	Insights	Visuals	Reports
189	19	16	5	3
48 community 141 sector	7 community 12 sector	World Café Insight reports	Storytelling graphics (Townsville)	Brisbane, Townsville, Longreach

Highlights and Challenges

Highlights	Challenges
<p>Inspiring keynote on challenging ageism and promoting inclusion.</p> <p>Collaborating to amplify local voices and share community stories.</p> <p>World Café conversations ensuring everyone had an opportunity to share their voice.</p>	<p>Encouraging older people to attend events remains a challenge, highlighting the need to bring activities to them.</p> <p>Actively engaging often marginalised groups, including carers, First Nations peoples, and CALD communities remains a priority.</p>

Lessons Learned

- **Meet people where they are:** Work with local providers and community leaders to ensure activities are accessible, culturally safe, community-based, and held in welcoming spaces that foster connection and conversation.
- **Value lived experience of older people:** Involve them in program and event design and delivery to ensure their perspectives shape meaningful and inclusive outcomes.
- **Tailor approaches to diverse communities:** Using place-based strategies, strengths-based engagement, diverse questions, and integrating storytelling with data enhances inclusion, reflects local priorities and ensures all voices are heard.



Recommendations / Next Steps

1. Build capacity, capability and knowledge-sharing for Seniors Social Isolation Services in Queensland

- **Develop a dedicated online platform:** Featuring Communities of Practice, collaboration forums, FAQs, digital inclusion support, grant opportunities, training, events, resources, and volunteer/peer support.
- **Conduct a targeted needs and gaps analysis:** Work with the Seniors Social Isolation Services across the state to build on findings from the event series and inform future policy, program design and continuous improvement.
- **Facilitate state-wide knowledge sharing:** Support service providers to strengthen programs through shared insights, learnings, and best practices.
- **Host a statewide hybrid event,** bringing together all Seniors Social Isolation Services, offering attendance in-person and online (e.g., in Cairns).

2. Strengthen collaboration and partnerships to improve service awareness and access

- **Share findings and insights from the events:** With collaborators and participants to acknowledge their contributions, demonstrate that their voices have been heard, and continue to build trust within the community.
- **Link Seniors Social Isolation Services with service providers and community organisations** to raise awareness of available supports, helping them share this information with older community members to strengthen their social connections (e.g., Carer Gateway, FriendLine, Queensland Council for LGBTI Health, Queensland Positive People, Seniors Enquiry Line, Wellways Australia).
- **Continue to work with community, government, advocacy, education, volunteering, and digital support organisations** to strengthen service coordination, referral pathways and the delivery of education and information (e.g., local councils and libraries, multicultural community groups, carer and advocacy organisations, education providers, volunteer and community leadership programs, and digital navigation and support platforms).
- **Leverage partnerships to co-design and deliver programs:** Share expertise and enhance both service delivery and awareness of available supports for older people.

3. Promote inclusive engagement and meaningful community participation

- **Build on established relationships and prior engagement:** Actively involve often marginalised groups, including CALD communities, First Nations peoples, and other populations not yet represented, by leveraging local provider networks and community leaders, to reach them where they are.
- **Go to communities:** Continue engaging older people across all areas, including remote and regional locations, by leveraging local Seniors Social Isolation Services and capturing lived experiences to ensure programs reflect the needs of those with limited access to services.
- **Embed inclusive participation and storytelling:** Apply strengths-based, place-based strategies to promote equity, cultural safety, and community trust; using insights from the event series to guide future program design.



Schedule for Implementing Recommendations

Activity/Task	Milestone/Deliverable	Start Date	End Date
Create an online SSIP Hub for internal testing and feedback	SSIP Hub ready for internal testing (content complete, links functional, basic navigation tested)	01/11/25	15/01/26
Conduct internal testing of SSIP Hub	Internal testing completed and reviewed by Communications and Engagement Officer	19/01/26	30/01/26
Pilot SSIP Hub with small group of 10 SSI services to test functionality, useability and content.	All 10 pilot participants have accessed the SSIP Hub, provided feedback, and key issues for improvement documented.	02/02/26	27/02/26
Launch SSIP Hub to a larger subset of the network (e.g., additional 10 services) after pilot feedback has been incorporated	Soft launch completed with feedback incorporated for full rollout	02/03/26	31/03/26
Roll out the SSIP Hub to the entire SSI-Network across Queensland	SSIP Hub launched to all SSI services, with access available to all users, support in place, and initial usage metrics captured.	01/04/26	30/04/26
Conduct a needs and gaps analysis of the seniors social isolation services	Needs and gaps analysis completed and approved and submitted to Funders	01/12/25	28/01/26
Share findings from the Age Well Stay Connected events with key stakeholders	Findings shared with stakeholders via our website, SSIP Hub and social media.	05/01/26	28/02/26
Identify and engage potential partners arising from the Age Well Stay Connected events to explore collaboration opportunities and strengthen service delivery.	5-10 potential collaborations identified, documented, and initial engagement commenced	05/01/26	30/06/26
Identify key local providers, community leaders and networks from CALD, First Nations and other marginalised communities and create a contact list to guide targeted outreach.	Diverse community contacts identified and documented	02/02/26	01/04/26

Activity/Task	Milestone/Deliverable	Start Date	End Date
Facilitate inclusive storytelling within the Communities of Practice (CoPs) using strengths- and place-based approaches to engage providers	Inclusive storytelling sessions completed within CoPs during 2026 and feedback received	01/02/26	30/11/26
Connect SSI services with providers and community organisations through COPs and SSIP Hub to raise awareness of supports and strengthen social connections for older people.	10-15 new SSI-providers engaged through COPs, with engagement documented and evidence of increased awareness or collaboration opportunities captured	01/02/26	30/06/26
Strengthen service coordination through CoPs and the SSIP Hub by fostering cross-sector collaboration to improve referral pathways, coordination, and information sharing.	Service coordination strengthened through collaborative mechanisms, with at least 3 cross-sector coordination activities facilitated and feedback captured.	01/02/26	30/06/26
Conduct ongoing engagement with SSI services across Queensland through phone calls, the SSIP Hub and scheduled visits.	Community engagement completed across target regions, with at least 15 phone calls and up to 5 site visits conducted each quarter.	01/02/26	30/11/25
Facilitate state-wide knowledge sharing via Communities of Practice (CoP) and SSIP Hub	Statewide knowledge sharing delivered via the SSIP platform and CoPs	01/02/26	30/11/26
Collaborate with community, government, advocacy, education, volunteering, and digital support organisations to strengthen service coordination, referral pathways, and delivery of education and information.	Cross-sector collaboration strengthened and coordinated with at least 3 key organisations engaged each quarter through meetings, workshops, or communications; education and information resources shared with SSI providers, and engagement outcomes documented.	01/02/26	30/11/26
Plan and deliver a statewide hybrid event co-designed with SSI providers and older people to build capacity, share best practices, and explore collaboration.	Statewide hybrid event successfully delivered with participation from SSI providers and older people, and key learnings and collaboration opportunities documented.	01/07/27	31/10/27

