



SENIORS SOCIAL ISOLATION PEAK SERVICES PROGRAM

Seniors Social Isolation Provider Community of Practice (SSIP-CoP)


Minutes of Meeting for Connect & Share - April 2026

Date/Time	Thursday 30 April 2026 (12–1pm)
Topic	Data Collection and Reporting in Practice
Location	Online via Zoom Meeting ID: 844 7250 8258 Passcode: 046450
Facilitator	Karen Wilson , Executive Officer, Seniors Social Isolation Peak Services Program, Council on the Ageing (COTA) Queensland
Recording	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msXZGslMag8
Apologies	<p>SSI Provider (n = x) <i>List of providers who declined the meeting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active 60 & Better Deception Bay – Lesa Lane • Care Balonne Active Seniors Program - Tenielle Jennings • Charleville and District Healthy Ageing Program – Deb Alick • Hinchinbrook Community Support Centre - Seniors Service – Glynis Romano • Noosa Seniors Connect – Alison Hamblin • Older Women's Network Qld - Niura Martinez Casas • Seniors in Focus, Hervey Bay – James O'Connor • Star Community Services, East Ipswich - Janine Smith • UnitingCare Community – Juan Du Buisson • World Wellness Group – Ketaki Alate
Attendees	<p>SSI Providers (n = 5)</p> <p>Central Queensland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barcaldine 60 & Better - Jean Williams. E. jeanw@barc.qld.gov.au <p>South East Queensland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donald Simpson Community Centre, Cleveland - Thomas Jithin, Chief Executive Officer. E thomas@donaldsimpsoncentre.com T. 07 3821 1089 <p>South West Queensland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Creek Community Centre (OPAP), Clare E. opap.assistant@eastcreek.com.au • SeniorNet Association Inc - John McVeigh and Margaret Ann Jenson <p>Contact details provided with permission of providers</p>

Discussion, Key Points and Actions

	Topic and Key Discussions Points	Actions
1	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	Meeting starts at 2:05 mins
1.1	<p>Acknowledgement of Country Karen joined from Meanjin (Brisbane) and acknowledged the Turrbal and Yuggera peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which was located, and paid respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Respect was also extended to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples joining the online meeting.</p> <p>Karen welcomed everyone to today's session on data collection and reporting in practice and invited attendees to introduce themselves.</p> <p>Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John and Margaret from SeniorNet • Thomas, CEO of Donald Simpson Community Centre • Jean from Barcaldine Regional Council's 60 & Better Program. • Clare from East Creek Community Centre (<i>joined the end of the meeting</i>). 	
1.2	<p>Housekeeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees were asked to add their name, organisation, program and contact details in the chat for attendance recording. • They were advised the meeting will be recorded and shared on the Hub. • It was noted that Bidgerdii Elders Social Engagement Program (BESEP) - Lauren and Marissa, added read.ai meeting notes to the meeting. 	
1.3	<p>Why are we here today?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up to the Department's Reporting 101 session held on 15 April. • The Minutes and Recording from the 15 April meeting are available on the SSIP Hub under Resources for Providers → Community of Practice → 2026 Minutes & Recordings. 	Link to SSIP Hub
2	DATA COLLECTION & REPORTING IN PRACTICE	Recording starts at 6:25 mins
2.1	<p>This provider-led session shared real experiences of collecting, managing, and reporting data in day-to-day service delivery. We explored what's working, common challenges, and different ways of working, along with discussion on volunteer recruitment, retention, and succession planning. The session provided an open, practical space for participants to learn from each other.</p> <p>Karen acknowledged the varied approaches to data collection, including sign-in sheets, Excel spreadsheets, ChilliDB, and Word documents. She also invited feedback following the Report 101 session, particularly any issues to raise with the Department and shared experiences of data collection and reporting.</p>	

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<p>Discussion Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barcaldine 60 & Better (Jean): Data is collected using sign-in sheets, headcounts, and notes to verify attendance. A spreadsheet is also maintained to record dates and numbers for Council and Department reporting. This approach works well for smaller participant numbers. • Donald Simpson Centre (Thomas): Regular attendance and fee-for-service activities are supported, including information sessions on topics such as downsizing and retirement living, open to both members and the wider community. Attendance is recorded using data sheets. A structured quarterly approach is used, with data linked across 3–4 events and activities for Department reporting. Staff support information access, including offering guidance on services such as My Aged Care and transport, focusing on education and helping people navigate info rather than providing direct recommendations. Strong community trust is central to the model, reinforced during COVID when the organisation became a key local information source and support hub, a point also reflected in feedback from local councillors. • SeniorNet (John and Margaret): Sharing resources between providers was highlighted as important, alongside ongoing challenges in encouraging attendance, with some people finding it easier to remain at home. While IT supports connection, there is a need to better share information, including through a potential COTA Qld online platform for providers and older people. For some participants, these groups represent their only regular social interaction. Programs include small membership groups, monthly coffee and chat sessions with guest speakers, and social lunches. Data is managed through spreadsheets for both membership and attendance, with activities shaped by participant interest. Due to small groups, topics are often repeated every 6 weeks, though there are some challenges in securing ongoing commitment and engagement, particularly as needs and interests vary. Some participants show strong, sustained interest in specific topics such as family history. <p>Karen promoted the newly created SSIP Hub as an online platform for SSI providers to share knowledge, information and resources https://cotaqld.engagementhub.com.au/ssi-hub</p> <p>Providers are encouraged to engage with each other in between Community of Practice meeting on the SSIP Hub via the Online Platform - Community Chat (Forum)</p>	<p>Access the SSIP Hub</p>

Topic and Key Discussions Points	Actions
 <p>Community Education and Guest Speakers</p> <p>Karen reminded attendees of the Seniors Enquiry Line Directory of Community Education Providers (formerly guest speakers).</p> <p>Discussion: Ageing Volunteers and Succession Planning</p> <p>Attendees discussed challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteers, including succession planning which is a challenge across Australia.</p> <p>Barcaldine 60 & Better (Jean)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-off or specific events often attract strong volunteer support, but sustaining long-term committee roles can be challenging. For example, a 90-year-old Treasurer is now transitioning out of the role on her own terms. Barriers include health issues associated with ageing and some reluctance among older people to take on ongoing commitments. <p>Donald Simpson Community Centre (Thomas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers are recruited through Centrelink (for people aged 50+ completing 15 hours per week to receive benefits), membership networks, job agencies, and Volunteering Redlands. • Centrelink referrals are generally the most reliable due to the structured requirement and sense of purpose, while job agency referrals are less consistent. • Roles are matched to skills and interests, with a range of activities available such as chess (18 participants), gardening, and other structured programs. • Flexibility is provided for volunteers who travel or need time away, and engagement is supported by a strong sense of purpose, which helps maintain participation. Coordination can be challenging at times. • Centrelink's proximity to the centre also supports recruitment, with administrative processes managed internally, and the centre offers trainee opportunities for school leavers in administration, supporting four young people to date. 	<p>Directory of Community Education Providers</p>

	Topic and Key Discussions Points	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some challenges remain in accommodating volunteers with special needs, who may require a carer to attend. Experiences in recruiting through Volunteering Queensland have been varied, with processes streamlined but not always fully aligned to organisational needs. Overall, Centrelink referrals and membership networks remain the most successful and reliable sources of volunteers, supported by an established partnership with the Donald Simpson Centre. <p>SeniorNet (John)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being incorporated was noted as a strong motivator for ensuring tasks are completed correctly and on time, with clear compliance requirements and consequences. Highlighted the importance of having experienced people who can guide and support others. VQ closed their Ipswich office. It was noted VQ have a heavy workload. <p>None of the providers online had yet accessed the one-to-one support offered by VQ.</p> <p>Any Reporting Issues</p> <p>Karen invited providers to raise any reporting issues to be fed back to the Department anonymously, but no issues were raised.</p> <p>Online Engagement Platform – SSIP Hub</p> <p>Karen invited attendees to explore the online SSIP hub available at: https://cotaqld.engagementhub.com.au/ssi-hub</p> <p>Attendees were invited to attend the Navigating the new SSIP Hub information session on Thursday 7 May (2-3pm) via Zoom. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81662317037?pwd=l5ihiAH8BNoU0P5JnB2qywQR8oayJM.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 816 6231 7037 Passcode: yt4mXr</p>	
3	CLOSE & DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<p>Monday 11 May (2-3pm): Mental Health Essentials Training. Download the Agenda: 20260430-Agenda-MHE-Training.pdf</p> <p>Thursday 21 May (2-3pm): Lunch & Learn. National Volunteering Week – Supporting Healthy Ageing through Volunteering. Download the Agenda</p>	<p>Dates and Agendas published on SSIP Hub</p>

Minutes by Karen Wilson, Executive Officer, Seniors Social Isolation Peak Services Program, Council on the Ageing Queensland at: karen.wilson@cotaqld.org.au