Council on the Ageing
Queensland

SENIORS SOCIAL ISOLATION PREVENTION PEAK

Seniors Social Isolation Provider Newsletter — November 2026

Welcome



Welcome to the November edition of the Seniors Social Isolation Provider (SSIP) Newsletter. Supporting older people to stay socially connected is at the heart of everything we do. In this edition, we share peak and sector updates, community stories, professional development, grants and funding opportunities, and practical resources to support your work and help strengthen social connection for older Queenslanders.

Inside This Edition

- SSIP Peak Updates
- Sector News
- Community Stories
- Grants & Funding Opportunities
- Resources & Tools
- Events & Key Dates
- Share A Good News Story
- Connect With Us

We hope you find this edition informative and inspiring as you read through it 😊

SSIP Peak updates

Our Final 2026 Community of Practice

We hosted our October Community of Practice on **Wed 28 October** on the theme **Housing and Homelessness**.

Thank you to our amazing guest speakers!

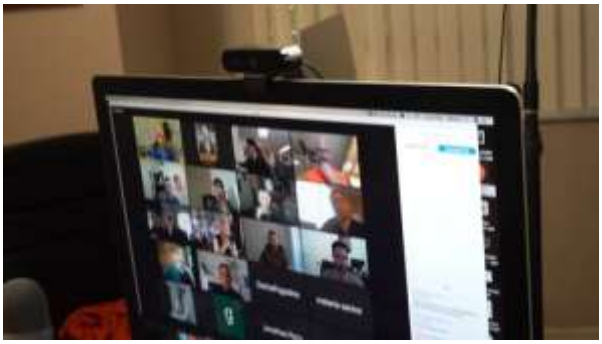
- Niura Martinez Casas, Coordinator, Older Women's Network.
- Kylie Lowe, Community Engagement Lead, Footprints Housing Older Women's Support Service (HOWSS).
- Alison Gray, Executive Officer, Sharing with Friends - Innovative Co-Housing for Older Women.

💻 **Recording now available on YouTube!**

Final session for 2026

- **19/11/26:** International Men's Day – CANCELLED!
- **09/12/26:** Reflecting on the Year: Our Stories, Our Achievements, Our Impact (brought forward from 16/12/26)

📄 Download Dec 2026 Agenda.



Recap on 2026 CoP Sessions

What a great year of connecting, sharing and learning! Our Community of Practice sessions have brought people together to swap ideas, share experiences, explore new perspectives and learn from one another.

Missed a session or keen to revisit a favourite? No worries! You can catch up anytime, with recordings of all our sessions available in the **Video Gallery** on the SSIP Hub. Grab a cuppa, settle in and enjoy the conversations and insights!

Here's a list of the sessions

🖧 Community of Practice

- **18/02/26:** Digital Confidence and Access
- **15/04/26:** Reporting 101: The Department
- **17/06/26:** Safety, Rights and Respect
- **23/09/26:** Mental Health and Dementia Awareness
- **28/10/26:** Housing and Homelessness

🍽 Lunch & Learn

- **19/03/26:** Introduction to the SSIP Hub
- **21/05/26:** Supporting Healthy Ageing through Volunteering
- **16/07/26:** Sharing Knowledge to Strengthen Community Outcomes

👥 Connect & Share

- **30/04/26:** Data Collection and Reporting in Practice

💻 Training

- 26/03/26: Building Volunteer Capacity
- 11/05/26: Mental Health Essentials

Thank you for being part of our Community of Practice in 2026!

Seniors Month Highlights

Seniors Month was a powerful opportunity to connect communities around three things that matter at every stage of ageing:

- Knowing your rights
- Preparing for life's changes
- Building resilience through connection

Across Brisbane, Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast, Noosa and beyond, we connected with older people, carers, community organisations and service providers at events and expos, and heard firsthand what helps older people feel informed, respected, prepared and connected.

Discussions highlighted the diverse challenges faced by older people and carers, including grief, dementia, mobility changes, financial hardship and social isolation. Lived experiences reinforced the importance of culturally safe, inclusive and accessible support that respects everyone's rights, choices and identities.

From Brisbane City Council's Anti-Poverty Week event and community activities hosted by Leeanne Enoch MP, City of Moreton Bay, Noosa Seniors, Encircle Pine Rivers and BlueCare North Lakes, to RAQ's *My Life, My Choices* workbook launch, the National Loneliness Conference and Housing and Homelessness CoP, Seniors Month celebrated connection, collaboration and resilience, highlighting the importance of accessible support and strong community connections.

Together, these are the foundations of stronger, more connected and resilient communities where everyone can thrive.

See below for a selection of photos from the various events held.

Celebrating. Connecting. Collaborating



Connecting with community at the Southside Seniors Expo, Calamvale Community College



Meeting BlueCare clients and carer workers at their Seniors Social Connection Event in North Lakes



Connecting with Sanna (Senior Social Connection Program) and Jen from RAQ at the Noosa Seniors Expo



Connecting with Kenzo at the Noosa Seniors Expo



Hosting a table with COTA Qld Volunteer Celsie Mead at the Bluecare Social Connection Event in North Lakes



Hosting a table with Lesa Lane from Active 60 & Better Deception Bay at the Redcliffe Seniors Wellbeing event

Sector News

OZHARVEST

Would your organisation like to host NEST?
NEST stands for **N**utrition **E**ducation **S**kills **T**raining or **N**ice, **E**asy, **S**imple **T**ips.

A free, evidence-based nutrition and cooking program that helps improve food security, reduce social isolation, build kitchen confidence and enhance overall wellbeing.

Now delivering to seniors across **Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast**, NEST offers:

- One 2–2.5-hr session p/w for 6 weeks.
- Practical nutrition education and hands-on cooking.
- Preparation and sharing of affordable, nourishing meals and snacks.
- An Everyday Cookbook to take home.

What's required from your organisation?
A suitable venue for 6–15 participants, with power, a sink, tables and chairs. OzHarvest provides everything else, at no cost to your organisation or participants.

Brisbane and Sunshine Coast Providers - Interested in hosting NEST?

We'd love to hear from community organisations keen to bring this valuable program to their local seniors.

Sunshine Coast NEST Coordinator:
Beck Donovan
(Glasshouse Mountains area to Gympie)
T. 0411 463 968
E. rebecca.donovan@ozharvest.org

Brisbane NEST Coordinator:
Mateila Conroy
(reaching from Caboolture to Logan).
E. mateila.conroy@ozharvest.org

Find out more about NEST here!

Community Stories

Caloundra Community Centre

The *Pets for Life* Program, delivered by Caloundra Community Centre as part of their Seniors Social Isolation funded "Live Life Program", connects volunteers with older people who are wanting extra support caring for their pets at home.

Over the past year, they've noticed a common theme among participants, with many experiencing social isolation and looking for opportunities to connect with others.

In response, they expanded their 2026 Seniors Month community events, bringing together *Pets for Life* participants and the broader community.

Ways to build community connection has been a keen focus this year. And this was highlighted when they hosted **Drag Queen Bingo** during Seniors Month, encouraging seniors to connect and celebrate. It was a fun, fabulous and free event, where participants were encouraged to brighten up their day with a splash of red, pink or purple and join the community celebration.

Seniors, carers and community members came together for a morning of fun, connection, and laughter. Taking part in bingo, games, opportunities to win prizes and enjoy complementary morning tea.

The event was hosted by Asphyxia from Dragged To**! at Baringa Community Centre.**



Thank you Shirley for the story and photo!

A Little Creative Pottery Studio

Shirley Hammill from Pets for Life – Caloundra, also shared that they held their final gathering for Seniors Month on 28 October, in Bulcock Street, Caloundra at '*A Little Creative*' pottery studio. Their host Lindy walked them through making their fur baby out of pottery!

This event was proudly supported by the Sunshine Coast Council's grants program.

They hope to be able to do more events like this in the future. Everyone had a great time and new friendships were formed.





Grants & Funding Opportunities

Positive Ageing and Elder Abuse Awareness Grants

In case you missed the promotion of the latest Queensland Government Grant: **Positive Ageing and Elder Abuse Awareness Grants**

There are **2 funding streams** available:

- **Local Awareness grants** of up to $15,000 for place-based projects that challenge ageism and raise awareness of elder abuse
- **Statewide Awareness grants** of up to $50,000 for projects that build capability and promote awareness across Queensland.

For more information visit:

Positive Ageing and Elder Abuse Awareness Grants | Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety



Community Engagement Program Grants

Applications are expected to open in November 2026 for grants up to $10,000 for eligible initiatives.

This funding is to ensure people living with dementia, their families and carers, are supported to remain socially connected and meaningfully involved in community life.

For more information visit:

💻 **Find out more information here!**

Resources & Tools

Multilink Social Support Group (Logan)

MultiLink Community Services Inc runs a Social Support Group Program for seniors in the Logan area.

They are currently trying to increase participation in the program and attract new members, particularly for their Wednesday and Friday groups.

If you are a provider in the Logan or surrounding area, and you'd like to learn more about this program, please contact:

Madeline Alvarez
Social Support Group Program Leader - Aged Care Services

p: 07 3808 4463
f: 07 3808 6337
m: 0432 264 402

Events & Key Dates

Queensland Government – Seniors Expos 2026



Date	Location	Address
Thurs **12 Nov**	Carina	Carina Leagues Club 1390 Creek Road, CARINA QLD 4152 Session fully booked
Thurs **26 Nov**	Capalaba	Alexandra Hills Hotel 332 Finucane Road, ALEXANDRA HILLS QLD 4161 Register now
Tues **8 Dec**	Kingaroy	Kingaroy Town Hall 28 Glendon Street, KINGAROY QLD 4610 Register now

For more information see the Seniors event calendar - qld.gov.au

Dementia-Friendly Communities Forum

Dementia Australia is planning a one-day Dementia-Friendly Communities Forum in Brisbane for mid to late January 2027!

They want to make sure the forum reflects what matters to the people making change happen across Queensland.

- What would you like to explore?
- How would you like to connect?
- What would make the day genuinely useful for you?

Take our **short 3–5 minute survey** and help us shape the day!

✍ Complete the **Survey here**!

Free Webinar

Nutrition and Health As We Age

Dr Jessica Turton PhD will present on the fundamentals of nutrition for improving both physical and mental health in older adults. Diet is the cornerstone of all aspects of health. Simple diet and lifestyle changes can help you get more energy, improve bone density, increase lean tissue mass, support cognitive function, improve mood, and reduce risk of chronic disease. Jessica will cover the importance of proteins, energy, and micronutrients, while providing you with practical strategies for enhancing your diet.

This session will also include time for questions.

Date: 26th November 2026
Time:12pm-1pm AEDT

Register here!



Social Isolation and Loneliness Community of Practice: Connection to Country, Culture and Community

Date: Tuesday, 24 November 2026
Time: 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Location: Online

Join us for our final Social Isolation and Loneliness Community of Practice for 2026, where we will explore how connection to Country, culture and community fosters belonging and helps address social isolation and loneliness.

Register here: https://lnkd.in/grdvCKEa

Planning Ahead: Check out What's On in the SSIP Hub

Looking for ideas, events and opportunities to engage your community? Don't forget to explore the **What's On** section of the SSIP Hub!

It's your go-to place for key dates, awareness days, events and expos throughout the year, with links to useful resources to help inspire and plan your activities.

The 2027 calendar will be available in December, so keep an eye out!

Make the most of this handy resource when planning your upcoming programs and activities.

Visit the SSIP Hub today!

National Loneliness Conference 2026

The Ending Loneliness Together National Loneliness Conference held in Melbourne on 21-22 October, offered valuable insights into preventing loneliness and strengthening social connection across communities.

A key message was that **meaningful connection starts with listening, belonging and giving people a genuine voice**. Amber Brock-Fabel, Founder of the South Australian Youth Forum and 2025 SA Young Australia of the year, reminded us that people are experts in their own lives and that programs are most effective when designed *with* communities, not simply *for* them. Other presentations highlighted the importance of:

- **Transport and accessibility:** Community transport and supported approaches can help overcome barriers to participation, particularly following bereavement, illness or changes in independence.
- **Meaning and purpose:** Opportunities for storytelling, shared experiences and meaningful relationships help people feel valued and connected.
- **Reaching those often overlooked:** Place-based, digital and supported approaches can help reach people experiencing barriers such as disability, caring responsibilities, chronic illness and geographical isolation.
- **Technology with purpose:** Digital tools can create pathways to connection but should complement, not replace, meaningful human relationships.

For providers, the message is clear:

Preventing social isolation is about more than getting people through the door. It's about creating safe, welcoming opportunities where people feel heard, valued and able to contribute.

Let's continue creating opportunities for connection that are shaped by the people and communities we support.



Photo from: Staying Connected in Later Life Concurrent Session, Chaired by Professor Lisa Brophy. Speakers included: Lisa Bird, St John Queensland; Associate Professor Ken Ho, La Trobe University, and Tatia Power, Inclusee.

Share a Good News Story!

What's happening in your community that you're proud of?

We love highlighting the amazing work happening in your communities! From creative activities and successful programs to meaningful connections, volunteer contributions and moments that have made a real difference to older people.

Your SSI service strengths, achievements, successes and inspiring moments can help showcase what's possible and inspire other providers across Queensland.

📸 **Send us your story, photos or highlights** and help us celebrate the people, programs and ideas making a difference in our communities.

Email: karen.wilson@cotaqld.org.au or visit the SSIP Hub Submissions section.



Connect With Us

Have questions or ideas? We'd love to hear from you! Reach out and let us know how we can help.

Contact
Karen Wilson, Executive Officer
Seniors Social Isolation Prevention Peak
Part-time (Monday – Thursday)
Council on the Ageing Queensland
Level 6, 10 Market St, Brisbane QLD 4000
M. **0484 023 614**
E: karen.wilson@cotaqld.org.au

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season♥

As this is our final newsletter for 2026, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our providers for your ongoing commitment and dedication to supporting older Queenslanders throughout the year.

We wish you and your teams a safe, happy and relaxing holiday season and look forward to continuing our work together in 2027. Take care and enjoy a well-deserved break!

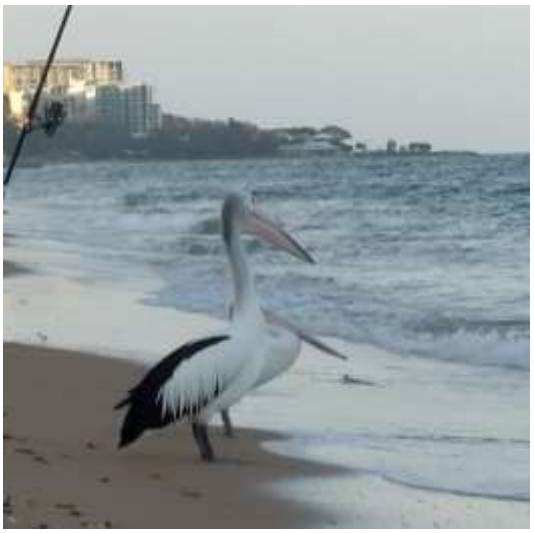


Photo taken at Margate Beach, Redcliffe Peninsula during my early evening wellbeing walk! Ageing well, staying connected in my community!