



COTA

NORTHERN TERRITORY
for senior Territorians

Annual Report

FY 2022–23



Thank You

We thank and acknowledge the support received during FY 2022-23 from the following individuals, groups and organisations.

Patrons

His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie PSM, Administrator of the Northern Territory

(former) Her Honour the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AM, Administrator of the Northern Territory

Board Members

Janette Jewell, Dr Sadhana Mahajani, Kerryn Steward, Steve Thomas, Michael Walker, John Whyte

Volunteers

Steve Allen, Juliana Baptista, Bharat Desai, Julianne Du-Shane, Mary Fathers, Sue Firth, Toni Gullefer, Celia Hill, Jan Jarvis, Josie Kelleher, Lottie Kendall, Helen Kennon, Helen Kilgariff, Janet Marriott, Michael McDonald, Margaret McInnes-Villaflor, Deborah Pine, Ann Richards, Mick Sheridan, Carlos Silva, Sandy Stuart, Janine Watt, Karen Wilemen, David Wilson

COTA NT Members

Sponsors

- Northern Territory Government - Territory Families, Housing and Communities & NT Grants
- Australian Commonwealth Government
- Bendigo Bank
- City of Darwin
- Marshall and Cherry Perron
- nbn™
- Netball NT
- Palmerston & Rural Business Association
- Power and Water
- SuperAgeing
- Territory 104.1^{FM}
- YMCA Katherine

Partners

- Alice Springs Cinema
- Alice Springs Town Council
- Ann McNamara
- Australian Cyber Security Centre
- Barramundi Adventures
- BCC Cinemas Darwin
- Casuarina Lions
- Catholic Care NT
- Central Australian Women's Legal Service (CAWLS)
- City of Darwin
- Charlie King
- Christine's Exotic Eats
- COTA Australia
- Deckchair Cinema
- Health and Aged Care Commission
- Healthy Living NT
- Event Cinemas
- Event Cinema (Palmerston)
- House of Fulton
- Jewellery
- Jo Hersey MLA
- Katherine Cinema 3
- Landscapes in Watercolour
- Melaleuca Australia
- Member Wizard
- Northern Territory Government - Territory Families, Housing and Communities & NT Grants
- OPAN (Older Persons Advocacy Network)
- Our Common Threads
- PICAC Alliance
- Relationships Australia
- Sarrita King
- Services Australia (FIS)
- SuperAgeing

Collaborations

- Assistive Technology for All
- Embraced Socially Driven Arts Projects
- Step Up for Ageing Research
- Darwin Community Legal Services
- Darwin Frocktails
- Darwin Line Dancing
- Darwin Patchwork and Quilting
- Darwin Prosper Support Group
- Darwin Table Tennis Association
- Deckchair Cinema
- Dementia Australia NT Division
- Genealogical Society of the NT
- GROW
- Integrated Disability Action INC
- Katherine Senior Citizens Association
- Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
- Let's Sing
- Mature Athletes Darwin
- Melaleuca Australia
- Neighbourhood Watch NT
- NT Working Women's Centre
- Old Timers Trager Museum
- Parkinsons NT
- Probus
- Riding for the Disabled Top End
- Relationships Australia NT
- Royal Life Saving NT
- Seniors of Excellence NT
- Victims of Crime NT
- Wildcare

Club and Associate Members

- Alice Springs Netball Association
- Anglicare NT
- Arthritis Foundation of Northern Territory Inc
- AIR Association of Independent Retirees
- Careflight
- Carers NT
- Darwin Calligraphy

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I am in my 70's and still work a few days a month to keep my brain working, also do some aqua and walking my red heeler Ruby. I am fortunate to live in Pearl Retirement Village so have that support as well. Just read the latest magazine and it is just great. All of you at COTA do such an amazing job. Every time I have asked you about issues I have received thoughtful helpful assistance. Thank you for all you do.
Sally G, April 2022

About COTA NT

COTA NT is the peak body representing the interests and rights of people aged 50+ in the Northern Territory. For over 50 years, we have led government, corporate and community thinking about aspects of ageing.

COTA NT is a not-for-profit community organisation, an incorporated Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status (as Council on the Ageing (Northern Territory) Inc.). COTA NT is also registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission 86316991800. ABN 86 316 991 800.

We fund our activities with the support of governments, members, sponsors, advertisers and stakeholders.

Our vision

A just, equitable, age-friendly and humane community in which people are enabled to contribute and grow to

their fullest capacity, and have access, with dignity, to appropriate care and support.

Our purpose

To empower older people, those who work with them, government and the community into achieving well-being and social justice for older people.

Our values

Respect, inclusivity, integrity, professionalism.



Chair

Another year has passed, and COTA NT has again worked hard to benefit senior Territorians.

COVID has eased off, but crime and cost of living has been taking its toll on Territory seniors. There appears to be no end in sight for making our cities and suburbs safe and our representation to the NT Government appears not to have been listened to. COTA NT will continue to press these points home at every opportunity we get.

COTA NT will have a say in the Volunteer Assisted Dying Act and will make sure all aspects of this act are explored for the benefit of everyone who wishes to enable an early dignified death.

COTA NT will continue to advocate for all seniors both with NT Government and our input through COTA Australia to the Federal Government, especially in relation to the aged care reviews of the act.

I, along with the Board of COTA NT, would like to express our gratitude to the staff and volunteers of COTA NT for their loyalty and hard work in making sure that all our expos and seniors' events are well run. They are a great



opportunity for seniors to socialise, enjoy healthy exercises and have access to the papers and facts they need to help them as they age.

The staff of COTA NT do a wonderful job running the organisation and all their time and effort is very much appreciated. Sue, our wonderful CEO must be congratulated for her over and above work ethic which inspires the staff to be the best they can to help our seniors.

Sue, the Board and I very much appreciate all the hard work and extra time that you put into this organisation. This is easily seen by the esteem that COTA NT is held within government and organisations.

I would also like to thank the board for all their time and effort, especially to Mike our Treasurer, who runs a tight financial ship. Also, to Stephen with his Home Maintenance Scheme, which I am sure many members have now benefited from.

Thank you everyone for attending the AGM and I hope that I can continue to work for all seniors in the following two years.

Board FY 2022-23



**Jan
Jewell**



**Michael
Walker**



**Kerryn
Stewart**



**John
Whyte**



**Dr Sadhana
Mahajani**



**Stephen
Thomas**

CEO

From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, COTA NT has worked towards positive social change in the Northern Territory by ensuring the rights of seniors are considered in policy-decisions, legislation, stakeholder and government initiatives and programs.

Through our advocacy and other programs, we addressed a range of issues including: aged care, community/social inclusion, communication and information, human and specifically seniors' rights, economic security (cost of living, finances, employment for older workers, retirement income), education, health, fitness and wellbeing, housing, safety and voluntary assisted dying laws.

The scope of our work is documented more fully on our website, www.cotant.org.au. This Report offers a snapshot into our work during the Financial Year 2022-2023 (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023).

I would like to acknowledge the Board, staff and volunteers of COTA NT who have achieved so much, and to thank them for their ongoing dedication and



Sue Shearer
Chief Executive Officer
COTA NT

commitment to improving Territory seniors' well-being in all aspects of life.

As you can see from the snapshot on page 7, COTA NT significantly increased its reach, connections and service during this period. An overview of some of this work is provided in these pages.

Aged care

With an ageing population in the Territory (as across Australia and the rest of the world), aged care is a sector that COTA NT is very active in. Access to and receipt of appropriate and quality aged care - at home, in residential homes and in respite centres - is essential in enabling older Territorians to live not just healthy lives, but happy lives too.

COTA Australia and its federation members, including COTA NT, have long advocated for an overhaul of the aged care system to provide better quality, more affordable and accessible aged care for all seniors. *The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety of 2018* made 148 wide-ranging

Staff 11 part-time, 1 full-time staff



Sue Shearer
CEO



Stephanie Kendall
Marketing and Communications



Cecilia Chiolero
PICAC NT and Office Manager



Lorna McLaughlin
Events and Activities



Christina Wiggett
Reception / Administration



Olywn Noble
Reception / Administration

COTA NT FY 2022-23 Snapshot

- 15 608 contacts (phone and face-to-face).
- 44 882 user sessions on the COTA NT website.
4 websites published for programs and projects.
- 3 337 people following COTA NT on Facebook. 8 social media pages generated a combined reach of 116 294.
- Programs delivered for NT Seniors Card, Events, PICAC NT, Aged Care Navigation, Membership and Volunteering.
 - 2 721 Volunteering hours given to COTA valued over \$114 500.
- Increase across COTA NT membership categories. *Home Maintenance Service* team completed 106 jobs for Members.
- Tenders secured for NT Seniors Card and PICAC for 1 year. NTG Peak funding to 2024. Major sponsorship/ funding secured from Community Benefit Major Events Grant, Marshall and Cherry Perron, Netball NT, Territory 104.1 FM, nbn™, YMCA.
- 3 458 attendances at COTA events and activities including 4 Seniors Expos, 4 Grandparents Day events, International Women's Day, Harmony Day and Movie Fundraiser: The Duke.
- Weekly and annual programs delivered including Fit for Life, Knowledge for Life, Social Life and Seniors Month.
- Observances: Harmony Day, ANZAC Day, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Ageism Awareness Day, Int'l Day of Older Persons.
- 24 community consultations and surveys promoted on safety, aged care quality and pricing, ageism, elder abuse, dementia services, sports, voluntary assisted dying and more.
 - 25 media interviews, 74 newposts, 6 editions of Seniors Voice newspaper, 15 newsletters for Members and community, 19 media releases, 920 social media posts.



**Ken
Glover**

Membership
(May 2023)



**Janet
Brown**

Aged Care
Navigation



**Debbie
Pepper**

Aged Care
Navigation



**Kim
Farrar**

Seniors Card



**Fran
Kilgariff**

Seniors Card &
Central Aus Rep



**Lisa
Hambour**

Bookkeeping

Senior Territorians are able to live a healthy, happy life.

recommendations for the fundamental reform of the aged care system.

In August 2022, COTA NT held two public forums on **Aged Care Reforms** to inform people as to what these proposed reforms to home care, residential aged care services and sustainability, aged care quality and safety, workforce and governance would mean for them.

Through our **Aged Care Navigators** and **PICAC NT** programs, we ensured that information about aged care options in the NT was delivered to seniors in a highly inclusive way: using a range of communication channels, in language and appropriately to meet individual and group needs.

Despite losing Federal-government funding for our Aged Care Navigators program in January 2023, we continued to finance two staff to provide support to seniors, their family, carers and networks to access aged care. This included ensuring people received information about aged care options and the system; information that was up to date, appropriate

and relevant to an individual's circumstances (and changing circumstances). An insight into this work is provided on page 27.

Social inclusion

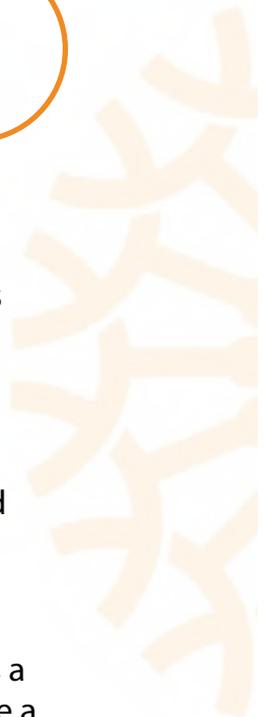
Several of our programs work hand in hand to provide as many senior Territorians as possible with the opportunity to attend activities of interest to them, to get involved as a participant and/or host and to have a voice in our policy making decisions and advocacy.

Our events and activities, volunteer, membership, aged care navigation and NT Seniors Card programs are also underpinned by PICAC NT. This program helps ensure that seniors and community members, whose first language is not English, understand what information is being delivered and helps them to feel included in our community.

Events and activities

Our events and activities during this 12-month period have included major one-off events and regular, ongoing activities. Most events were provided in-person, but Teams, Zoom and webinar platforms have enabled us to extend our reach to those unable to attend activities face to face.

Major events included two Seniors Expos in Darwin, one in Katherine and one in Alice Springs. Four Grandparents Day events in Darwin,



*Congratulations on your decision to continue with ACN in the face of losing the tender for 'care finder'... Keep up with the good work and the turn-around that you and your team have achieved in recent years.
Richard L. January 2023*

Senior Territorians access, receive and impart information.

Palmerston, Alice Springs and Katherine.

Seniors in the rural areas of Coomalie and Berry Springs have also been able to attend regular meetings organised by our Branches. I would like to acknowledge Jan Jewell and Kerry Steward for their volunteer work in these regions. Their effort and dedication has kept local seniors in touch with each other throughout the year, and provided them with opportunities to socialise, engage and learn; and also, to provide the organisation with very authentic insight and a better appreciation of the issues faced by seniors living rurally.

Volunteers

The contribution of Volunteers to COTA NT during this period is more than 2 720 hours. To replace this huge volunteer contribution, COTA NT would have to spend \$1 14 593.60.

Our Board Members support the organisation as Volunteers with over 74 hours given to us. Board Members also organised outings and activities and delivered popular Members' Services such as the *Home Maintenance Scheme*. This scheme received 106 requests for help from our Members and the team drove over 1 200km to deliver help hands-on support.

Congratulations on a fantastic event, it was a great effort by all concerned. The program was well put together & I can imagine the work that went on behind the scenes to deliver it.
C Allan Alice Springs

A team of Volunteers drove over our regular Multicultural Service Program, (MSP) which enables seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to stay socially active and informed on a regular basis.

And Volunteers in Darwin and Alice Springs helped us to run our major Seniors Expo events, which continue to grow exponentially.

Their commitments to COTA NT line-up are hugely valued and appreciated.

Communications and information

During this timeframe, COTA NT remained very mindful that whilst digital communication is a convenient and relatively low-cost tool, a wide range of avenues needed to be used to keep seniors informed. Smartphones, tablets, iPads, desktops and Internet access are not yet affordable and accessible to all.

As an organisation, we are very grateful to Marshall and Cherry Perron for sponsoring *Seniors Voice* for a second year. Every issue of *Seniors Voice* is published in print and digital editions and reaches over 45,000 readers. It remains

Your journal [Seniors Voice] is a quality product. It's a valuable voice and a useful tool in matters like fighting for affordable accommodation.
H. Rajala January 2023

Senior Territorians' rights are recognised and upheld in all aspects of life.

the only newspaper-style publication in the NT written expressly for an older demographic.

Phone calls, emails, face-to-face conversations at meetings, workshops, forums and events, social media and website messaging, newsletters, advertising, radio and TV - this year, the organisation has used all means in its power to reach Territory seniors.

Digital inclusion

Digital citizenry is a major Federal government goal and COTA again assisted all seniors with digital literacy and education.

Collaborations with nbn™ and local and Territory government agencies enabled us to deliver education sessions in all major urban centres, Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs and Katherine, as well as the rural areas outside of Darwin.

Human rights

Adhering to universal standards of human rights is an essential part of ensuring seniors are able to live a healthy life and we have done much to advocate for seniors' human rights specifically.

COTA NT has run numerous information sessions, workshops and forums to ensure seniors' rights in aged care, financial, legal and end of life matters are being met. We supported our Club and Associate Members, service providers and government

departments with specific knowledge and expertise to conduct workshops and information sessions.

COTA NT has undertaken a number of projects to raise awareness of the negative social impact of ageism, elder abuse and domestic family violence in the Territory. Working in partnership with other organisations, COTA NT worked to gain greater understanding of these issues and to reduce their prevalence in Territory communities.

Combatting ageism

In the run up to **Ageism Awareness Day** on the 7 October 2022, COTA released a survey to find out if, or how, older Territorians have been affected by ageism. Our survey into ageism in the Territory aimed to answer the question, *"Is the Territory of 2022 a place where every person is valued, connected and respected regardless of their age and health?"*

The findings are online, [here](#).

Combatting elder abuse

The second-year of the **Grandparents Day** project was celebrated on the last Sunday of October in 2022 with a new competition encouraging NT communities to host a Grandparents Day event or to attend one of COTA NT's.

The project continued to raise awareness of the observance, and promoted recognition of the important roles that older members of NT

Senior Territorians are financially secure and have material basics.

communities undertake as carers, educators, mentors and guidance counsellors. By promoting and encourage respect across generations and within communities, the hope is that social and domestic violence rates diminish.

To this end, we also partnered with Charlie King to promote and raise awareness of the **No More Campaign** against domestic and family violence at our Darwin Seniors Expo, May 2023.

In June 2023 for **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**, COTA in Alice Springs partnered with local council and service providers to raise awareness of elder abuse and the services available for those at risk.

Economic security

During this financial year period, Australia's consumer price index (CPI) rose over 7.0% with notable rises across housing, power, health and medical services, food and more. Electricity costs rose by over 15%, the largest annual rise since 2013.

Against the tide of inflation, COTA NT did what it could within its power; to found out how the rising costs of living were impacting Territory Seniors and mitigated where possible through lobbying government and helping seniors reduce the cost of living by promoting services and supports.

NT Seniors Card

COTA NT managed the **NT Seniors**

Good financial help with discounts in rates, PAWA, telephone and some retail shops.

A. T. Respondent to NT Seniors Card Survey, January 2023

Card program throughout the FY significantly increasing the number of NT seniors aged over 60+ in the program through its outreach and promotion; and establishing over 480 partnerships with NT businesses who offer discounts on services and products. Within the **NT Seniors Card** program, government policy and initiatives affecting seniors are also communicated. For example, awareness and understanding of Federal and Territory concession schemes.

As the costs of living continued to increase in the Northern Territory, COTA NT followed up with seniors in a **Cost of Living Survey** to find out how they were faring. More than 80% of survey respondents had lived in the Territory for over 15 years and most believed that they would still be living in the NT in 2027. If they were to leave, the main reasons cited included the cost of living, being closer to family and friends and climate. The top 3 issues that may change minds remain the same as in 2019: reducing cost of living, less crime, more services and

Senior Territorians have appropriate, adequate and secure housing.

support.

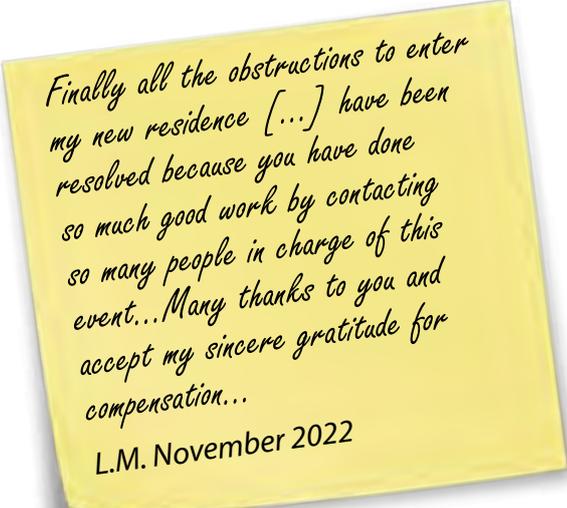
We published a summary of changes people wanted government to make for better financial security outcomes for older Territorians in our *Seniors Voice* (Nov 2022- January 2023). Many of these comments focused on receiving more concessions.

COTA NT continued the call for more concessions for seniors in articles, media releases, letters and face-to-face meetings. This augmented the work done by COTA NT in the *Bidding for Senior Territorians* election submission of 2020 and the *Agenda for Government from Older Australians Policy Recommendations 2022*.

We used *Seniors Voice* to promote the use of concession cards (NT Seniors Recognition Scheme and NT Concession Card) and provide information about them to NT seniors.

Housing

The issue of seniors' housing has over the years presented itself as



Finally all the obstructions to enter my new residence [...] have been resolved because you have done so much good work by contacting so many people in charge of this event... Many thanks to you and accept my sincere gratitude for compensation...
L.M. November 2022

an ongoing problem *without* a quick-fix solution. COTA NT believes that by being a persistent voice around the topic, the conversation around the need for appropriate housing does not go away. And by appropriate, we mean affordable, accessible and safe.

During the last FY, some gains have been forthcoming with investment made in community housing projects especially. We continued nonetheless to urge government and stakeholders to invest in seniors' housing.

In addition to our advocacy for new housing, we published information on housing and homelessness supports and services, dementia villages, chotels and continued to work on the re-development of Spillett House (as seniors' housing).

We continued to raise awareness about the increasing risk and rise of homelessness amongst NT seniors, specifically in our *Seniors Voice* May-July 2022 edition. This also featured Opinion from Katherine Town Council CEO, Ingrid Stonhill. She had met with local Katherine women who felt increasingly vulnerable as the housing shortage in Katherine became "catastrophic."

On occasion, COTA NT advocated on behalf of individuals who have found themselves unable to meet rising rental costs and at risk of losing their homes or who are already experiencing homelessness.

Senior Territorians are safe.

Safety

Safety at home

In the *Seniors Voice* April-June 2023 edition COTA NT worked with Club and Associates, Victims of Crime NT and Neighbourhood Watch NT, to produce information focussed on safety. This included tips, free home security assessment advice and personal safety workshop promotion. The COTA NT *Home Maintenance Service* also assisted seniors through installation of safety rails, ramps and repairs.

Personal safety

In June, COTA NT again partnered with Victims of Crime NT to make personal alarms freely available to COTA NT Members with a specific focus on helping more vulnerable seniors (e.g. those living alone).

Safety in the community

COTA NT delivered safety messaging and information to seniors through events and publications throughout the FY.

We worked in partnership with our Club and Associate Members to deliver safety messaging and community workshops in Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs.

We continued to publish and distribute information on topics such as: Emergency Help, *Cyclone Planning for Seniors*, personal and home safety,

community safety, safety online, elder abuse and consumer protection.

We have used *Seniors Voice* to highlight safety in a variety of areas including financial safety, scam avoidance, advance personal plans and home medicine.

Voluntary assisted dying

At the beginning of this FY year, on 1 August 2022, a bill to overturn a federal ban on the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory passing voluntary assisted dying laws was introduced to parliament.

The *Restoring Territory Rights Bill* was finally passed in the Senate 1 December 2022. COTA NT lobbied hard for this result with online petitions, Parliamentary petitions and Letters to all Senators requesting that they support the Territory Rights Legislation.

COTA NT continued to push government to start discussions about how NT legislation around voluntary assisted dying would work for Territorians to start.

We are hearing increasingly confronting and saddening accounts of seniors suffering and falling through the cracks in care...

Sue Shearer, COTA NT
Seniors Voice April - June 2023

Marketing & Communications



During the FY 2022-2023, marketing and communications once again supported the organisation's activities across all its programs including advocacy, events and activities, membership, volunteering, aged care navigators, Seniors Card and PICAC NT.

To fulfil the organisation's strategic mission of providing a voice, knowledge and strong communications for people over 50 in the Northern Territory in a manner that is appropriate and culturally and socially inclusive, we used a wide range of media and communication channels.

In this financial year, these included:

- Face-to-face / in-person interactions including walk-ins, events and outreach activities, networking and representation on committees, advisory councils and policy forums
- Telephone conversations
- ZOOM and Teams meetings
- Emails (Staff Outlook and Group Mailing)
- Newsprint (print and digital) - newsletters, newspaper and magazines
- Interviews (radio and TV)
- Websites including social media
- Survey platforms including Engagement Hub and Google Forms

- Advertising (across media platforms).

Notable successes have been:

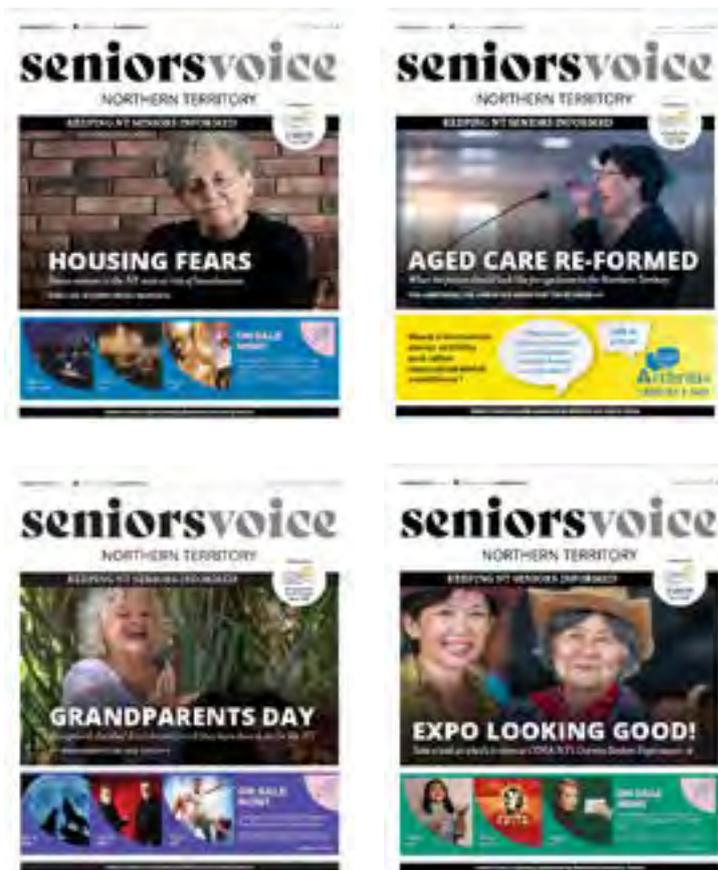
- publication and distribution of Seniors Voice with each issue reaching up to 45 000 senior readers
- event marketing for Seniors Expos resulting in record attendances
- completion of the 2nd year Grandparents Day project which generated interest from hundreds of people in COTA events and GPD event and media resources
- generating record ticket sales and attendance at movie fundraiser
- ensuring our publications are accessible in terms of their medium and content (e.g. use of print, PDF, flipbook readers and translators)
- increasing and sustaining the high brand reputation of COTA NT to ensure COTA NT is the peak body for all seniors and media "go-to"
- strategic use of financial budget and human resources to achieve the best outcomes
- development of Support options for Club and Associate Members, Sponsors, Supporters and stakeholders to assist growth of new income streams
- listening to seniors via our surveys and feedback opportunities.

Marketing & Communications Snapshot

- 15 608 contacts (including in-person and phone, excludes email)
 - 4 252 contacts at reception (in-person and over the phone)
 - 33 253 users on the COTA NT website
 - 1 163 contacts via the COTA NT website including 971 subscribes to COTA's digital news
 - 44 882 user sessions (period of time users are active) on the COTA NT website
 - 94 704 page views (the total number of pages viewed) on the COTA NT website
- Online Territory Seniors Calendar hosted and updated regularly on the COTA NT website. Each community event submission was revised prior to its publication - also hosted online Seniors Month events.
 - 4 websites hosted, maintained and developed including
 - www.cotant.org.au,
 - ntseniorscard.org.au
 - ntseniorsvoice.org.au
 - ntgrandparentsday.org.au
- 24 community consultations and surveys promoted on: safety, aged care quality and pricing, ageism, elder abuse, dementia services, sports, voluntary assisted dying and more.
- 25 media interviews (TV and Radio) following 19 media releases and direct to COTA NT media-approaches
 - 74 newposts on the COTA NT website
 - 4 editions of Seniors Voice newspaper - 40 000 printed copies (2 more editions fell within the FY period)
 - 15 newsletters for Members and community
- 3 337 people following COTA NT across 8 social media pages which generated a combined reach of 116 294
 - 920 social media posts
 - 1 new social media account, (www.instagram.com/cotanorthernterritory)
- Seniors Month calendar (August 2022) produced in print and online.

Seniors Voice quarterly newsprint

- free to NT readership
- only newsprint in the Northern Territory curated for seniors in design, accessibility, appeal and content
- print and digital distribution of approx. 45 000 of each issue
- 40 000 copies printed per year
- available in 3 formats, print, digital PDF and flipbook reader
- published to COTA NT website
- funded through Marshall and Cherry Perron sponsorship and advertising
- regularly features news, health, finance, fitness, retirement, legal, lifestyle, Central Australia, travel, entertainment, Letter, surveys and Opinion.



ONE COTA quarterly national magazine

- National readership approx. 63 000
- Delivered to COTA members' doors
- Accessible online via COTA NT website (Members only section).



COTA NT News for Members

- for COTA NT financial members
- print, digital and postal distribution
- quarterly
- library of newsletters stored to Members only website
- regularly features advocacy, policy and organisational news and reports, Members only events and activities, competitions.



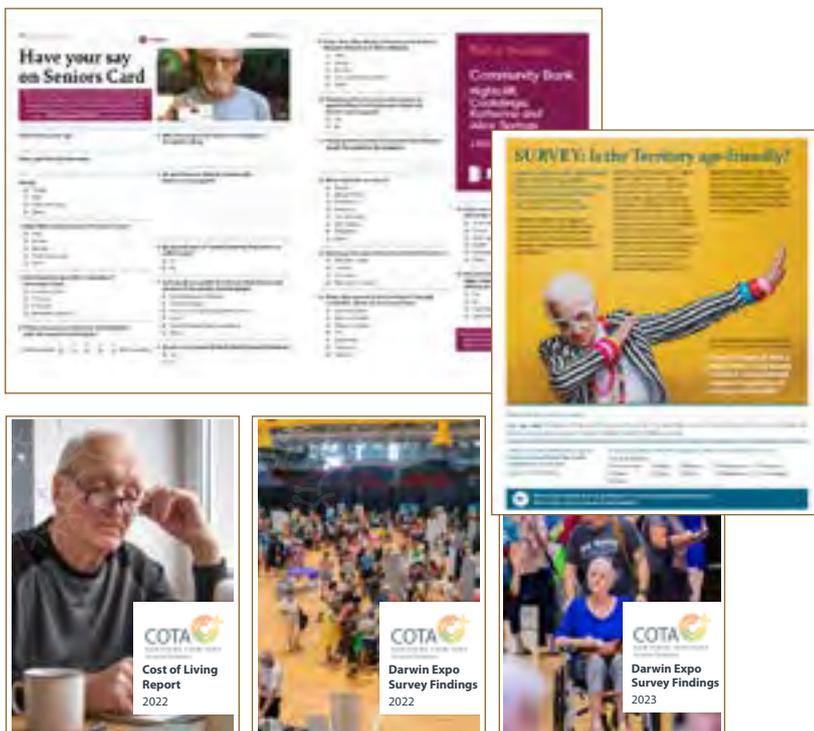
COTA NT Coomalie newsletter

- monthly newsletter written by volunteers
- regional focus for local readership
- distributed by email and social media
- published to COTA NT website
- features regular events, transport information, local service providers and council news.



COTA NT surveys

- distributed at events, via Seniors Voice, website, social media, email and meetings
- across programs including advocacy, membership, events and NT Seniors Card
- research and findings published to COTA NT website
- 11 surveys distributed in FY 2022-23 (including 2 major surveys for Seniors Card).



Events and Activities

During the FY 2022 - 23, COTA NT managed a huge events and activities calendar which included 11 major events, Seniors Month and regular programs of activities.

One part-time staffer (Sue Kendrick followed by Lorna McLaughlin) worked in the key Activities and Events Coordinator role throughout this year, supported by colleagues and volunteers outside of the Darwin region to ensure events and activities in Alice Springs and rural areas were also organised.

Events and activities were run in accordance with the World Health Organisation's guidelines on age friendly cities in terms of access, inclusivity, costs and timing and met the organisation's strategic goals of:

- providing knowledge and a sense of worth to our Members (and members of the community)
- providing networks and connections between people thus creating a happier and healthier community
- being inclusive and aware of all cultures
- being positive, innovative and age-friendly.

The events and activities program overcame some health and safety issues associated with COVID-19, particularly in regard to the re-scheduling of the Darwin Seniors



Lorna McLaughlin
Activities Coordinator
(from January 2023)



Sue Kendrick
Activities Coordinator
(July - Dec 2022)

Expo from May 2022 to July 2022 (this resulted in the organisation hosting two major Expos in Darwin within the same financial year).

Lingering effects of social distancing affected Seniors Month events in August 2022 to a small degree but no event postponements were necessary. In fact, the opportunity was taken to trial a virtual tour style event. Our nbn™ Ambassador showcased some of the benefits of digital connectivity and literacy with a tour of world museums and art galleries.

COTA NT's pop-up information stalls continued to exhibit in shopping centres across Darwin, Palmerston, Coolalinga and were re-branded COTA Community Outreach.

COTA Community Outreach

353 conversations with seniors

Attended by staff from Aged Care Navigators, NT Seniors Card and Membership programs

Face-to-face conversation

Distributed information

Listened to seniors' voicing their concerns and questions.

Events Snapshot

3 458* attendances at COTA events and activities

4 Seniors Expos - attendance 5 680

- Darwin Seniors Expos (July 2022 and May 2023) 5 000, Alice Springs Seniors Expo - August 2022 500, Katherine - March 2023 (180)

4 Grandparents Day 2022 Events - attendance 410

- Darwin 115, Palmerston 149, Alice Springs 69 Katherine 77

International Women's Day (Alice Springs) - attendance 78

Harmony Day (Darwin) with Melaleuca - attendance 36

Movie Fundraiser (Darwin): The Duke - attendance 169

Seniors Month August 2022

- Aged Care Forums (Darwin and Alice Springs)
- Are You Prepared? Advance personal care plans, wills & seniors services (Alice Springs)
- *Alice Springs Seniors Expo
- Berry Springs 5th Birthday Lunch
- Love Thy Body (with Healthy Living NT)
- Painting Watercolours (with Pam Watson)
- Tour of World Treasures

COTA NT Annual General Meeting 2022

Darwin Christmas Pageant 2022 COTA NT participated in the inaugural Darwin City Christmas Pageant parade with an array of flags representing 8 multicultural communities, balloons and seniors on board the organisation's shuttle bus.

Christmas / End of Year Celebrations 2022 Christmas Lunch in Darwin, Christmas Morning Tea in Alice Springs and Dinner Dance in Coomalie

** This figure is based on event registrations, ticketing and event recording data.*





Darwin Expo '22



Darwin Expo '22



MSP Italian Group (ongoing)



Tai Chi (ongoing)



Aged Care Forum Aug '22



Seniors Month Aug '22



Seniors Month Aug '22



Grandparents Day '22

Activities Snapshot

Our programs were run regularly on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

The attendance figures are approximate and relate to the 12-month FY 2022 to 2023.

Fit for Life (Aerobics, Pilates, Tai Chi with Super Ageing and Tom Rees) - attendance 1 636

Strong and Functional - Launched in March 2023

Zumba Gold - Ann McNamara also returned to run Zumba Gold, latin dance specifically for the over 50s.

MSSP (Italian, Portugese-Timorese) - 560 attendances

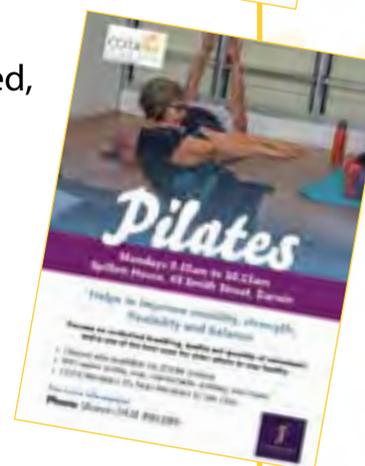
Social Life (Musical Jam, Common Threads Sewing Group, MSSP) - attendance 1 500

Rural Life (COTA Berry Springs and COTA Coomalie) - between 10 - 20 people at each meeting.

Knowledge for Life

Run regularly, COTA-run information sessions covered a wide array of topics such as digital literacy, retirement, pensions, finances, safety (personal, community and online), estate planning and seniors' rights. Attendance fluctuated throughout the year.

- **Digital Literacy** (with nbn™) - attendance 59
 - Workshops covered scam awareness, getting connected, internet basics and Ask Me Anything sessions
- **FIS 7** - Financial information (with Services Australia) - attendance 18
 - 7 workshops covered assets and estate planning, understanding retirement income streams and superannuation
- **No More Domestic Family Violence Forum** - 3
- **Personal Safety Workshop** - with Neighbourhood Watch NT, Victims of Crime NT and Personal Protection Strategies - attendance 17
- Additional outreach to over 200 people at Chief Minister's Morning Tea, Melaleuca Australia Morning Tea, Probus (Palmerston), Elder Abuse Awareness Day Darwin, Government House Open Day.





FIS Workshop (ongoing)



Katherine Expo '23



Harmony Day March '23



Fishing Trip April '22



Melaleuca Outreach '23



COTA Outreach (ongoing)



Darwin Expo '23



Darwin Expo '23

COTA NT Branches

COTA NT's two branches provide seniors in the rural areas of Coomalie and Berry Springs the opportunity to socialise, receive and offer information, air their concerns and through Board representation, COTA NT hears what they have to say.

Monthly meetings in Coomalie and fortnightly meetings in Berry Springs have been run by volunteer Board members and committees throughout the year. Outings and social meetings with speakers have been organised with special events for Seniors Month, Coomalie's Seniors' Picnic which brings together seniors from urban and rural areas, and the Berry Springs Birthday Lunch (5th) which was also attended and very much enjoyed by Head Office staff.

Social media pages for both branches were used to keep people in touch. In Coomalie, monthly e-newsletters were also published and distributed.



Jan Jewell
Chair
COTA Coomalie



Kerryn Steward
Chair
COTA Berry Springs



Seniors Month 2022



Central Australia

COTA NT maintained its presence in Alice Springs with its office in the 50+ Community Centre open every morning, staffed alternately by Central Australia Representative Fran Kilgariff and Aged Care Navigator Debbie Pepper.

Services and supports provided to people included access to aged care, NT Seniors Card, information relating to concession cards and seniors' policy amongst other topics.

Partnerships with local council, service providers and seniors' groups were cemented on a number of projects and events.

This included the largest seniors' event of the year, **Alice Springs Seniors Expo** which was run for the first time in conjunction with the Alice Springs Town Council. This took the form of *Seniors Expo and Seniors Still Got Rhythm*. It was held in the Convention Centre in order to increase the event's safety, security and comfort (with easy parking, access and air-conditioning) and also to accommodate the numbers attending. The new space proved a hit with over 400 attendees and 40 exhibitors.

In August, the Convention Centre was also used as the venue for the Aged Care Forum which was very well attended.

Throughout the year, activities



Fran Kilgariff
Central Australia
COTA NT



Debbie Pepper
Aged Care Navigator
Alice Springs, COTA NT

offered included workshops on topics including advance personal planning, wills, guardianship, seniors' services, digital literacy, ageism awareness, grief, loss and dementia, scam prevention and cyber security. Notable events and observances included:

- **Grandparents Day 2022** - Movie morning with support of Alice Springs Cinema
- **End of Year Morning Tea** - with Olive Pink at the Botanic Gardens
- **International Women's Day 2023** - with Ooraminna Station. This event proved very popular and sold out.
- **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 15 June** - with Alice Springs Town Council, CAWLS, Relationships Australia and Catholic Care NT.





Christmas Morning Tea



Aged Care Forum



Seniors Expo 2022



Seniors Expo 2022



Seniors Expo 2022



Elder Abuse Awareness Day



Grandparents Day



International Women's Day

Aged Care Navigation



Following the decision of the Primary Health Network of the NT (PHN) in December 2022 not to award *Care Finder* to COTA NT, the decision was made by the Board to continue with the organisation's service helping seniors, their families and carers to access government-funded aged care support services (including services at home, residential aged care and respite).

Due to resources, the service was slimmed down to two part-time Aged Care Navigator (ACN) staff (each working 15 hours per week) in Darwin and Alice Springs.

From July to December 2022, under the federally-funded Age Care Navigators Trial program, the Darwin ACN worked 25 hours per week and helped over 155 clients. From the beginning January to end of June 2023, the Darwin ACN worked 15 hours per week and helped 140 clients. It is clear that the need for the service has barely declined and those who do not qualify for Care Finder's specific service delivery model, or who do not know about it perhaps, still need help accessing aged care.

COTA NT's ACN engaged with people at COTA and community events. In July to December 2022, these included:

- Darwin Seniors Expo (July) and Alice Springs Seniors Expo (August)

- Royal Darwin Show
- 1 Shopping centre outreach
- 5 Info sessions
- 4 NT Ministerial seniors events
- Aged Care Reform forum
- Interagency engagements
- Multiple Zoom meetings included Darwin Aged and Disability Meetings, Aged Care Assessment Team, Dementia Australia, Carers NT, Palmerston Regional Hospital, Multicultural Council of the NT, NT Health, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing Regional team, PRH Social Workers and Relationships Australia.

From January to end June 2023, community engagement continued:

- Katherine Seniors Expo (March) and Darwin Seniors Expo (May)
- 4 Shopping Centre Outreach
- 6 Info sessions
- Interagency Engagements: Darwin Aged and Disability Meetings, Aged Care Assessment Team, Dementia Australia, Carers NT, Melaleuca Australia, Palmerston Regional Hospital.

COTA NT consider this service to be of paramount importance to seniors, their families and carers. During the year, the organisation applied for new funding to ensure the service can remain in place for the foreseeable future.

What aged care navigation looks like

Clients Bill and Sue Smith were referred to COTA NT after visits from My Aged Care representatives had not resulted in them receiving the help they needed.

Bill and Sue Smith attended an information session provided at a local medical social support group. Following the session, Sue contacted the COTA Aged Care Navigator for help. She reported that although she and her husband, Bill, had received a couple of visits from My Aged Care representatives, they had not had any outcomes.

She was unsure what she should be doing to progress some support as Bill's condition had deteriorated. The changes that Bill were experiencing were discussed with the Aged Care Navigator - the main issue being an increase in falls risk in their bathroom. Sue was also finding cleaning the fans difficult and she worried about losing her balance and falling.

It was agreed that Sue would contact My Age Care using Bill's **Age Care Number** and request a **reassessment** regarding minor home modifications to include handrails in the bathroom and stairs into the back garden. Cleaning of fans could also be included in an assessment under the minor maintenance program.

A few weeks later, Sue again contacted COTA because although fan cleaning had been approved under the Commonwealth Home Support Program, none of the local service providers had availability to supply the service. As Sue is a COTA NT member, she was able to apply successfully to the organisation's Tradies Program (designed to connect seniors to reputable Territory businesses).

A follow-up courtesy call from the Aged Care Navigator confirmed that Bill had been reassessed and approved for increased services. However, although the home modifications had not yet happened, Sue felt confident that eventually it would happen.

Knowing *how* to apply for help, *what to ask for* and *where to go* when help is not forthcoming are all part of navigating the aged care system.

This this is where COTA NT's Aged Care Navigators in Darwin and Alice Springs help people. They have the knowledge, experience and persistence that is often needed to get a request made and in the system. They also know how to follow up on a service, when it fails to materialise.

Our Aged Care Navigators' advice is often published in the Letters section of Seniors Voice.

Membership Services

Following staff changes at the end of 2022, Membership Services had been covered by our Activities Coordinator, so the arrival of Ken Glover to the team in May was very welcome.

Membership Services supports:

- COTA NT's membership for individuals and couples
- Club and Associate Members
- NT Seniors Card.

The 'behind-the-scenes' work was vital to the successes of these membership programs and the year included:

- significant clean up of both COTA NT and Seniors Card database
- continual updates to databases
- review of all applications
- issue of membership cards, new and replacement
- all membership enquiries received via phone, email and in-person
- attendance at key events and outreach activities to assist people with membership services.

Membership services for COTA NT also included:

- inviting Members to Members only events
- giving Members access to the Members only website
- posting membership communications to Members



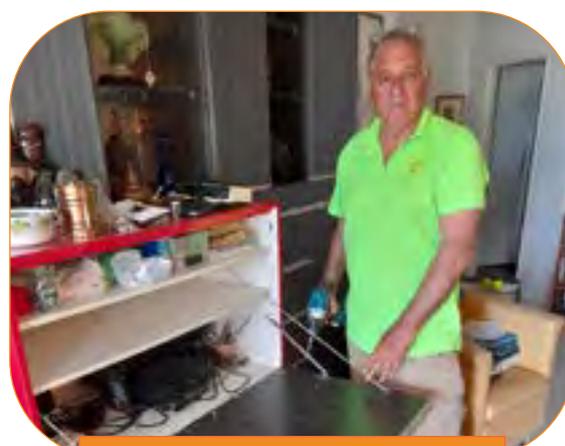
Ken Glover
Membership
COTA NT

Snapshot

- *Home Maintenance Service* completed 108 jobs (an increase of over 45% from last year's 74)
- 3 Members volunteered as *Home Maintenance Service* crew
- 620 new COTA NT membership applications
- 34 Club and Associates
- 2 329 new Seniors Card membership processed
- 1 315 replacement Seniors Cards issued

without email (approx. 40 people)

- helping Members access COTA's Home Maintenance Service, ONE COTA magazine and other privileges including giveaways, prize draws and discounted classes.



Home Maintenance Service
for COTA Members

Seniors Card

COTA NT delivered management of the NT Seniors Card program on behalf of the Northern Territory Government throughout the FY to:

- **administer business partnerships**
- **administer membership.**

Business partnerships

The administration, ongoing management and development of business partnerships included:

- Awareness raising of the program to NT businesses and stakeholders
- Registration of new Business Partners, supply of program information and promotional materials.
- Creation of opportunities for Business Partners to connect with Members.
- Promotion of Business Partners.

Membership

Administration, ongoing management and promotion of membership to NT residents aged 60 to help reduce their cost of living has included, but not limited to:

- Ongoing communications (e.g. social media, emails, newsletters).
- Community outreach through events and collaborations.
- Membership management and client services (e.g. card applications, renewals, replacements, queries).



Kim Farrar
NT Seniors Card
Program Manager

Full reporting on Marketing and Community Engagement activities, plus Survey Reporting is available separately. All enquiries regarding this reporting should be directed to the NT Seniors Card Program Manager on seniorscard@cotant.org.au.

NT Seniors Card has had a busy 12-month period in FY 1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023.

The year included outreach to businesses across the NT, community engagement activities, networking, sponsorship, advertising and partnerships.

Some of the many highlights included:

- High traffic and usage of the ntseniorscard.org.au website.
- Publication of the new **Discount Directory for Seniors Card** holders in print and online.
- Promotion of the **Shop at the Store with a Door** policy.
- Website development including new plug-ins OptinMonster and MonsterInsight, news blog and library of e-News bulletins.
- New media kit and new channels for Business Partners to connect with Seniors Card holders.
- Huge increase in social media followers and likes and a reach that has grown over 240% compared to year end 2022.

Engagement Snapshot

- **Via the Website** - users 26,878 (estimated).
 - 2,006 online applications for Seniors Card Membership. An **increase of 12.4%** from last year's 1,784.
 - 475 Business Partners in the online Discount Directory. 22 new Business Partners registered online. 151 enquiries received via the website. 226 requests received online for replacement cards.
 - New website plugins, OptinMonster produced 261 new Facebook followers, analytics plug-in, MonsterInsights installed.
- **Via social media (Facebook)** - 42,986 reach on social media with 1,145 Page Followers (increase of 23.3% from last FY) and 962 Likes (increase of 20.5% from last FY).
- **Via email** - Over 14,500 recipients of email communications including 4 e-News bulletins.
- **Via post** - Over 3,744 mailouts including cards and birthday cards.
- **Via advertising** - Deckchair Cinema, Seniors Voice, Darwin Show

Community Outreach

- 7 Shopping Centre in Darwin, Palmerston and Rural Darwin.
- Exhibitor at 4 major Seniors Expos (Darwin July 2022, Alice Springs 2022, Katherine March 2023, Darwin June 2023), Royal Darwin Show 2022, World Elder Abuse Day Launch, Government House Open Day, Grandparents Day (Darwin and Alice Springs).
 - Award-winning Community Exhibitor at Royal Darwin Show.
- Invited speaker to Sanderson Electorate Christmas (July 2022), Palmerston Regional Business Association (July 2022, April 2023, June 2023), MLA Seniors Month Luncheon (October 2022), Minister for Seniors Christmas Luncheon (July 2022), COTA Coomalie Branch Speaker & Morning Tea, Chief Minister's Easter Tea (April 2023).
- Collaboration with MLA, business and professional associations, service providers, seniors' groups and NT businesses including COTA NT, Probus, Darwin Bowls and Melaleuca Australia.
- Networking and prospecting new businesses in Palmerston (PRBA July 2022), Alice Springs (August 2022), Adelaide River, Batchelor, Berry Springs (February 2023), Katherine (March 2023).



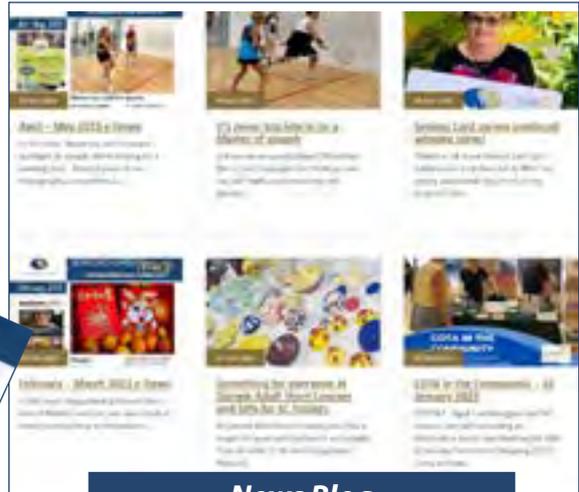
Outreach (Ongoing)



4 Expos



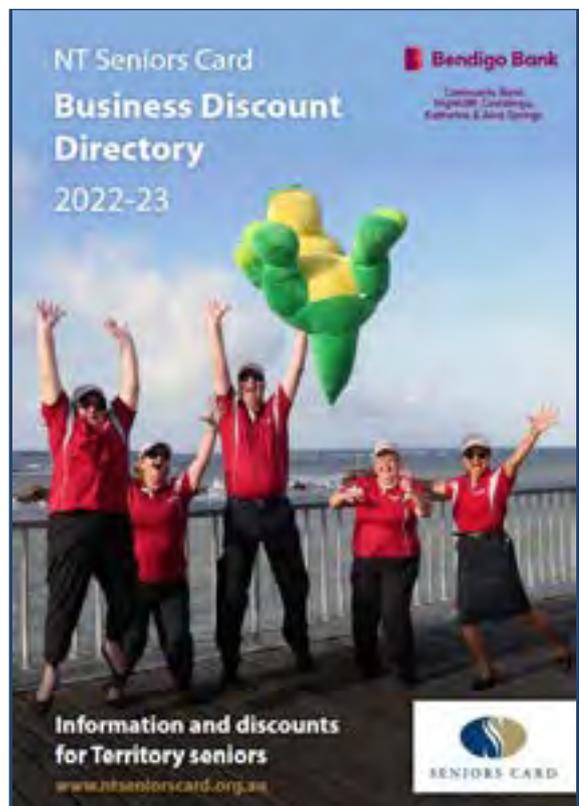
e-News



News Blog



Media Kit





Cecilia Chiolero
PICAC NT
Program Manager

PICAC

During 1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023, there were numerous changes in the Territory community that PICAC NT has worked to address including ongoing service providers' staff changes and the emergence of new CaLD communities from the Ukraine, Iran, Pakistan, the Congo and Kenya. Many of the seniors in these community groups have needed additional support including translators and in-language resources.

Some of the highlights of the year included:

- Exhibiting at the two major Seniors Expos in Darwin as they were the largest events for the aged care sector in the Northern Territory
- Creating a Harmony Day with a new cultural focus
- Launch of new resources.

One of the cornerstones of the program is to improve partnerships between providers, communities and the Department of Health and Ageing. With COVID-19 restrictions removed, PICAC reconnected with 16 service providers through one-to-one meetings; and represented the interests of CaLD seniors at 20 meetings and engagements with local and Federal government departments, CaLD agencies and aged care service providers.



Program Snapshot

Events

- Exhibitor at 2 Seniors Expos (Darwin July 2022 and June 2023).
- Collaboration with Melaleuca Australia:
 - on Harmony Day in March 2023 to celebrate Kenyan culture.
 - 2 Information Sessions for Ukrainian refugees focussing on Ageing in Australia, My Aged Care and support packages, Age pension - Understanding pension options under protection visas.
 - Multicultural Seniors' Lunches with 6 communities: Iran, Chinese Mandarin, Thailand, PNG, Pakistan, Congo/Kenya.
- Talking Memory Loss information session for Italian seniors by geriatrician and Top End memory service.
- Chinese Seniors morning tea – Focus on concessions and services.
- NT Electoral Officers Forum - Presentation about COTA NT, PICAC and multicultural initiatives to 20 NT electorate officers.

Resources

- Developed a new set of resources including: Cultural Religious Awareness, Food and Menu Design for CaLD Clients, Working with CaLD Clients, Working with Chinese/ Greek / Italian Clients.
 - Booklets included cultural resources, communication cards and training resources for aged care sector workers.
- Development of new, shorter cultural awareness training workshop.
- Inclusion of Cultural Background resources in OPAN webinar series.
- Advanced Personal Plan flyer translated into Thai, Indonesian and Swahili.
- Cultural Resources Booklet posted to service providers and MLA.

Promotion

- Interviewed with Radio Italiana 531 in collaboration with Dementia Australia speaking about the support available for Italian Seniors.
- Advertorials in *Seniors Voice* including: *Communication with CaLD seniors* and *Food Culture in Aged Care*, PICAC NT overview, Introduction to Cultural Awareness Training Workshops and Dept of Health and Aged Care Translation Service initiative.

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Thank you COTA. And Congratulations. COTA has done it again. Seniors 'expo is always a great success. The highlight of the year. Always enjoy it. And the venue is super with plenty of car parking. All the best. Regards,

May and John Hulme

I just wanted to say Thank You to you and staff and volunteers for organising such a brilliant EXPO. It seems to get better each year and this was no exception. As a representative of the four TOP END Probus Clubs we all enjoyed the EXPO ourselves but we also enjoyed the opportunity to share information about our clubs. Everything was provided for us and there was so much entertainment and food and drinks supplied in addition to the information and giveaways. You all did such a good job, it is a major event in the top end and it is not easy motivating seniors but you mastered it. Thank you again, well done. Regards

Marilyn Roberts, Palmerston Probus Secretary

I just wanted to reach out and congratulate you on an absolutely fantastic event yesterday. The turnout and vibe was great, and most importantly we got to connect with many potential clients and other stakeholders to let them know what we're all about and how we can help. Thank you so much for having us.

Services Australia

I want to acknowledge Sue Shearer, who is the CEO of COTA NT, Fran Kilgariff and all of the other directors of the COTA board in Alice Springs for the important work and advocacy that they provide for senior Territorians in Alice Springs, and certainly for the work and advocacy they do throughout the Northern Territory.

Marion Scrymgour MP, Lingiari

Dear Ian, As long-term COTA NT members we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the CEO, Ms. Sue Shearer, the Chair Ms. Jan Jewell and team for the very positive achievements in recent years. COTA NT has become the focal point for the Seniors. Kind regards

Franz and Vera Kratschmer

On behalf of my Family and others who attended Sunday's Grandparents Day at Casuarina Movies, I would like to say a HUGE Thank You to COTA NT & everyone who assisted to make it a memorable day for everyone. Everything was so well organised, the Movie was exciting, there was popcorn & drinks, tea & biscuits provided, so everyone felt included. We are very grateful to you. Kind Regards,"

Linda Jones & Alf Andreassen. (Happy Grandparents of Hamish & Idris).



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

to answer phones M AC = reduced wait time 30 mins

Keep private providers accountable
→ check providers without assessment

Lack of home care services
Strong waiting list

More staff to assist in getting elderly out of bed (in AC facilities)

to pay for home care work

Let's change aged care

More in home care packages in NT.

Too few staff can cause ~~major~~ major burnout.

Inaccurate information on website → provider list particular in rural/remote

Lack of website senior home care services
List of beds in AC centres

More information available non digital

What changes would you like to see in aged care?

What

To get help is too difficult

Having family caring for you

Older Australians not be able to

Took weeks to get assessment so long.

Spending time in my garden

Staff should speak the language of people living in aged care

COTA
NORTHERN TERRITORY
for senior Territorians

COTA NT – Council on the Ageing Northern Territory

- Spillett House, 65 Smith Street, Darwin NT 0800
- GPO Box 852, Darwin NT 0801
- 08 8941 1004
- ceo@cotant.org.au
- www.cotant.org.au
- facebook.com/COTANorthernTerritory

Has taken 10 months to see provider TOO LONG!!

Lack of funding for case manager

Don't stop & able to continue our life safety

more respite care in the NT

Less people more nfp and financial funding

Stay active as long as I can

If you have money in bank you are asked to pay daily fee even if you don't work

Those people who have been economic are often not rewarded.

CareEngagement.health.gov