

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**30 July 2024**

### **Seniors across Territory receive support for end-of-life care plans**

**The Advance Personal Plan (APP) introduced in the Territory in March 2014 replaced the NT’s enduring ‘powers of attorney.’ Over the last 10 years, COTA NT has worked to inform people about advance care planning and the importance of making an Advance Personal Plan.**

As part of its work, COTA helped seniors and their families consider and understand their future health care needs, what care they would prefer to have and to make a record (an APP) of their wishes whilst they are still able to do so. COTA has helped hundreds of people start and normalise conversations around end-of-life planning, that for some can be challenging and difficult.

As part of the ***Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care Program***, COTA will partner with other service providers in an *Advance Personal Planning Project* which aims to increase seniors’ awareness and understanding of Advance Personal Plans and, possibly most crucially, helps people to make a written record of their wishes. This service is supported by funding from Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NT PHN) through the Australian Government’s PHN Program. The funding enables COTA NT to reach seniors and their *hierarchies* of family and friends (chosen or potential future healthcare decision-makers) living in Darwin, Palmerston, Howard Springs, Humpty Doo, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs.

“Using our experienced staff to provide support to seniors, in groups and individually, in areas outside of our main urban centres is almost a natural development of our work in raising awareness of the importance of advance personal planning,” said Sue Shearer, Chief Executive Officer, COTA NT. “This additional funding means COTA can engage its experienced staff to provide specific – and much-needed support - to seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those with limited access to technology, those living with mild cognitive impairments or early onset dementia and those who may be economically disadvantaged.”

“We strongly believe that all Territorians, regardless of age, background or circumstance should have access to information delivered in a way that enables them to make their own choices and decisions about their future health care. If an individual’s wishes are clearly expressed and recorded in an Advance Personal Plan, their rights to choose and determine the way they are treated can be legally upheld until the day they die.”

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**Media contact: Sue Shearer, CEO COTA NT 08 8941 1004**

Enduring powers of attorney made before 17 March 2014 are still valid.

The **Advance Personal Plan (APP)** is a legal document that Territorians (of any age) can use to plan for what happens to them if they cannot make decisions for themselves in the future.

More information,

**Dying to Know Day 8 August** - <https://www.cotant.org.au/territory-seniors-calendar/dying-to-know-day-8-august/>

**Seniors Month August 2024** - Information and conversations about end of life planning, including legal documents including wills and advance personal plans

**Dying to Know Workshop 6 August**, 10am to 2pm, CDU Marrara Stadium, Darwin

Details here, <https://www.cotant.org.au/event/dying-to-know-2/>

**Dying to Know Workshop 8 August**, 10am to 2pm, Alice Springs

Details here, <https://www.cotant.org.au/event/dying-to-know/>

- <https://nt.gov.au/law/rights/advance-personal-plan>
- <https://www.advancecareplanning.org.au/>