

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016 OUR VISION

COTA Queensland advances the rights, needs and interest of older people in Queensland.

Our vision is to help shape a more just, equitable, and humane community in which Seniors, through interaction with other generations, grow to their fullest capacity, contribute to their community and have access, with dignity, to appropriate care and support.

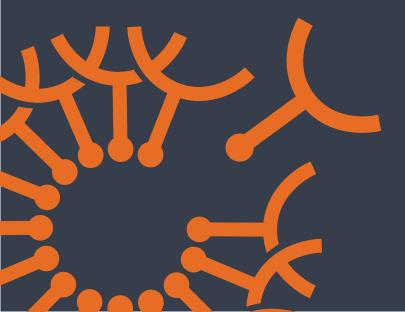
OUR MISSION

COTA Queensland's mission is to protect and promote the wellbeing of Seniors in Queensland. To this end, we aim to mobilise Seniors, those who work with them, Government and the community as a whole towards achieving wellbeing and social justice for Seniors.

OUR VALUES

The Board, Management and staff at COTA value:

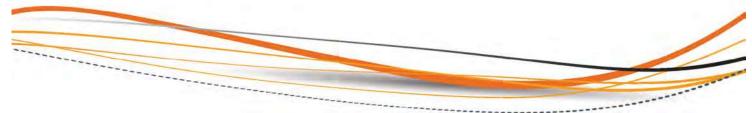
- Diversity and Human Rights
- Respect for the individual
- Learning and innovation
- Collaboration
- Being proactive and responsive.



HIGHLIGHTS







Chair's Report

Another year has gone by with incredible speed. I would like to highlight two events that bookended our year.

Seniors Week which COTA Queensland manages on behalf of the Queensland Government was held in August 2015 although planning and coordination of the many organisations involved starts many months before. The nine days deliberately focuses on activities at a local level to celebrate and talk about the rich experience of older people throughout Queensland. We again saw Seniors Week grow under COTA Queensland's professional management with 737 events held.

Between 21-23 June 2016 the IFA 13th Global Conference on Ageing was held in Brisbane and hosted by COTA Queensland. This event literally brought the world to our home state. We welcomed 683 delegates from 36 countries for three days of sharing and learning.

There was a lot to take in, but there were some important takeaways. The challenge of an ageing population remains but the World Health Organisation is taking the discussion away from the demographics and focussing on human rights. The message is simple, older people as much as anyone else deserve to live full and rewarding lives with respect and dignity. To achieve this we just need to eliminate ageism -easy!

Of course there is still a lot to be done but many of the speakers showed us the way in a number of areas. We heard about the benefits of adult vaccination, housing design that suits our needs and learning from and planning for disasters. We also learned about prevention of elder abuse and changing models of aged care and very importantly we heard about the latest work in developing Age Friendly Cities and Communities to enable practical application of the ideas offered by research. In between these wonderful presentations we saw customised cars to maintain mobility, robot seals to help people living with dementia and circus play to keep us all young in heart and body.

The range of these events highlights both our challenge and our opportunity. We need to ensure that the exciting work of researchers and practitioners around the world is turned into practical ideas that continue to improve our local communities. The Board and the staff at COTA Queensland continue to work hard to make this happen energised by the ideas gained and supported by the contacts made at the IFA Conference.



Pictured: Peter Howells, Chair COTA Queensland, Dr Jane Barrett, Secretary-General IFA and Mark Tucker-Evans, Chief Executive COTA Queensland.

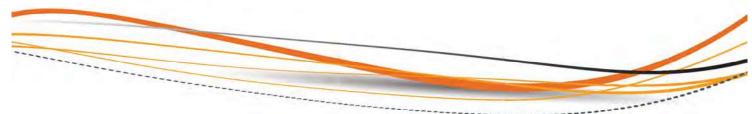
We are particularly excited by the opportunity provided by the launch by the Queensland Government of 'Queensland: an age-friendly community – strategic direction statement'. In our role as the Seniors Peak for Queensland we will be leveraging the outcomes of the conference to support this important initiative.

Of course this is not all we did during the year and the Chief Executive's Report on the following pages captures some of the outcomes from our ongoing programs.

Thank you for your support. I hope you will continue to work with us to apply world's best practice to ensuring all older Queenslanders age well.

Peter Howells Chair





Chief Executive's Report

COTA Queensland contributes to an understanding of ageing, enabling all sectors of the community to plan for healthy ageing through education, advice and activities

COTA Queensland hosted the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) 13th Global Conference at the Brisbane Conference & Exhibition Centre 21-23 June 2016. The conference which was supported by the Australian and Queensland Governments, World Health Organisation, Brisbane Marketing, and Tourism and Events Queensland, attracted 683 delegates from 36 countries.

Each day commenced with a Keynote Address and Plenary Session setting the tone for the nine concurrent sessions offered every day.

Dr John Beard, Director of Ageing and Life Course, World Health Organisation highlighted three key areas of action which will require a fundamental shift in the way society thinks about ageing and older people. These actions can provide older people of today and the future the ability to create new ways of living.

The first is to make the places we live in much more friendly to older people – WHO's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities that currently comprises over 280 members in 33 countries.

The Realignment of health systems to provide ongoing care for chronic conditions that are more prevalent in older age.

The development of long-term care systems that can reduce inappropriate use of acute health services and ensure people live their last years with dignity.

Dr Beard called upon all governments to develop their own Healthy Ageing Action Plans based on their demographic data and to reflect their specific needs and circumstances. Action Plans need to consider the following:

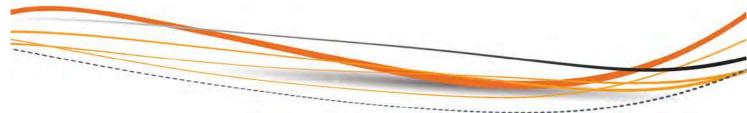


- Ageing is a lifelong process countries need to develop policies that cover the entire lifecycle of their populations
- Recognition that there are differences between functional abilities of 60, 70, 80 and 90+ years olds and that appropriate policies informed by research need to be developed and put in place
- Develop an understanding that ageing is a long-term investment rather than short-term expenditure
- Advance research and establish reliable data that can guide evidence based action in many different sectors of government
- Removal of age as a barrier to employment

Professor Raina Macintyre, Head of School of Public Health and Community Medicine, UNSW noted that in Australia and in other parts of the world vaccination is predominantly an activity focused on young children made the case for vaccination in older adults. Based on her paper *Elderly vaccination – the glass is half full* she said a new approach to elderly vaccination is required. Key points included:

- Older age of retirement and greater reliance on older adults for economic sustainability will drive incentives for healthy ageing





- Immune systems decline as people age and a number of safe and effective vaccines exist to protect them from preventable illnesses.
- Whilst the number of vaccines for the elderly and the need for these vaccines has increased health provider attitudes to elderly vaccination remain negative.
- GPs need to be proactive and recommend vaccines for their older patients
- Intradermal technology is now being used in older patients and is well received and tolerated

She talked about vaccines for Shingles and Flu, supported by statistics which dismissed value judgements based on ageing stereotypes.



Professor Bradley Wilcox, Director of Research, Department of Geriatric Medicine, University of Hawaii said that possible reasons for the longevity of people living in Okinawa were genes, environment and behavioural traits. Good genes are known to be a nutrient activator. FOXO 3 gene has been identified as a longevity gene because it controls and monitors all processes in the body.

In Okinawa social support is built into all systems

- They tend to build age-friendly housing
- They combine childcare facilities with aged care facilities
- Rich and appropriate social programs exist for older people
- Employment for older people who want to work is created and there is no age limit for retirement
- There is a national insurance scheme for long term care that starts as soon as the person is employed
- Okinawans do not smoke, they drink moderately and are physically active every day
- Okinawan's diet consists of large volumes of legumes, fish and sweet potatoes which are high in antiinflammatory substances
- Okinawans have low blood pressure, low cholesterol, normal weight and low BMI
- When a person reaches their 97th birthday there are big celebration and all young and old participate
- The motto of Okinawans, the longest living people on Earth is "Staying Engaged".

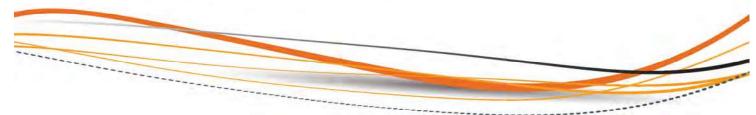
Concurrent themes were:

- Age-friendly cities and communities
- Care and support for older people (community and residential)
- Disasters and older people
- Income protection and security
- Elder abuse, law and rights

The Conference program provided over 280 sessions ranging from poster presentations to 90-minute symposiums.

It is impossible to cover the breadth of the program in this report but some snapshots:





Age-friendly Cities and Communities

The initial interest in and support for the WHO Age-friendly Cities and Communities initiative has generated vibrant networks of cities and communities, useful models of action, and a wide range of resources to advance regional and local age-friendly projects.

Creating truly great places to grow up and grow old, however requires a sustained investment on infrastructure, programs and services.

"The (WHO Age-friendly Cities and Communities Global) Network connects cities from around the world that are committed to becoming better places in which to grow older. This requires environments that both help people retain their physical and mental health and enable people who have experienced losses of capacity to adapt to and compensate for these" Dr John Beard, Director, Ageing and Life Course, WHO

"Age-friendly environments hold the key to enabling older people to do what they value. Our global conference is an



Pictured Left to right: Mr Gertjan Barrs, Dr Suzanne Garon, Hon Minister Coralee O'Rourke, Dr Debra Whitman, Alana Officer.

important platform to learn and exchange good practices that build on the voices of older people" Dr Jane Barratt, Secretary-General, International Federation on Ageing

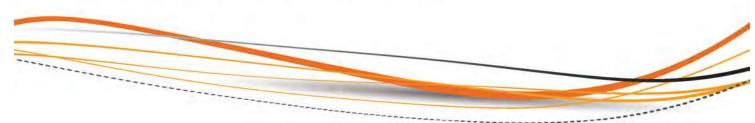
A plenary session *Creating Enabling Environments* facilitated by Senior Health Adviser Ageing and Life Course WHO Ms Alana Officer featured Dr Suzanne Garon, Universite de Sherbrooke, Mr Gertjan Barrs, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Dr Debra Whitman Executive Vice President and Chief Public Policy Officer, AARP and Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland Coralee O'Rourke MP highlighted that healthy ageing models need to be created and developed according to the needs of the community. To succeed these models need to be multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral.

More research is needed to establish evidence base which will guide the rest of the world in creating age-friendly cities and environments. To achieve this, political commitment is crucial.

In launching *Queensland: an age-friendly community Action plan* the Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland Coralee O'Rourke MP committed the Queensland Government to work with COTA Queensland to advocate for and support the development of an age-friendly Queensland through:

- Building a contemporary research and evidence base, including indicators performance measures and evaluation frameworks about age-friendly work programs and initiatives to better understand and influence policy and planning that supports older people





 Developing resources and tools about what an age-friendly community looks like to support local government, not-for-profit and for-profit sectors to be age-friendly.

Care and support for older people (community and residential)

"Regardless of their age or level of intrinsic capacity, older people have a right to a dignified and meaningful life. For people with significant losses of intrinsic capacity, this is often possible only with the care, support and assistance of others" – World Health Organisation (WHO) Report on Ageing and Health 2015.



A radical shift in thought, innovation and action is required in the development of models and modes of care to meet the expectations and needs of future generations of older people.

Healthy ageing is more than just the absence of disease but the maintenance of functional ability. Gathering further evidence and innovations in care is not just an option but a responsibility for practitioners and researchers.

Key issues:

- New ways of thinking about long-term care is required to shift the focus to optimising functional ability
- Older people and their families want greater choice in care options at the same time that governments worldwide are seeking to reduce spending
- The demand for intensive rehabilitation and therapy based services to improving functioning of older people rather than just maintaining the status quo means increased costs
- With high rates of immigration and internal migration to urban areas many countries are now experiencing rapidly ageing ethno-cultural populations
- Creating and sustaining a workforce prepared to provide long-term care.

COTA Australia's Chief Executive Ian Yates AM, Ronda Held, Judy Gregurke and Professor Hal Kendig presented *The Power of the Consumer Voice in Aged Care Reform in Australia*. The presentation mapped the journey to increase the level of consumer direction and choice of in-home care services in Australia and the role that consumers through COTA and the consumer movement has played in helping to bring this about.

Disasters and older people

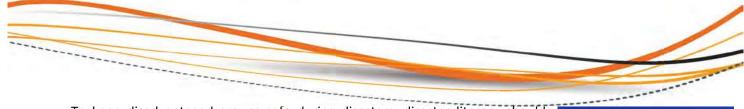
Historically a disproportionate number of older adults die during disasters. This international trend is unlikely to change without the introduction of novel approaches with demonstrated effectiveness. Disaster risk management, policy and practice must protect older people in crisis.

In addition to bringing together international research on this issue IFA 2016 also looked at how the skills, knowledge and wisdom of older adults can be harnessed to reduce disaster risk.

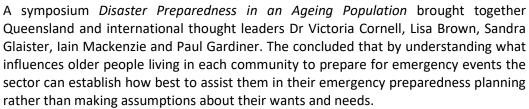
A number of recommendations were put forward:

- Resources should go toward enhancing communities' social networks, connectedness and integration of assets long before disaster strikes





- To keep disadvantaged groups safe during disasters, disaster literacy should become a public health priority and social marketing campaigns developed for specific target audiences
- Preparedness and planning for later life, i.e. housing, economic security and health maintenance may also need to be broadened to include disaster preparedness
- Cross-national research and dialogue that results in the development, implementation and evaluation of targeted strategies and programs for older adults need to occur





Income protection and security

Senior entrepreneurship is unfortunately not on the national or state innovation agenda.

Peter Balan, University of South Australia and Bambi Price, SeniorPreneurs Australia presented *Building the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem to Support Senior Entrepreneurship* to stimulate and support entrepreneurship and personal enterprise activities in people over 55. Not only is this important for economic reasons, in terms of helping people in this group to create value-generating social and for-profit new ventures, but it is also important for quality-of-life reasons. There is an untapped pool of people over 55 who wish to start a new enterprise to generate revenue for themselves, perhaps for the first time, or to address social issues. Many of these people may never have been self-employed, but their lifetime of experience that they can bring to their ventures and to each other is often underestimated and undervalued. These people need support.

Elder abuse, law and rights

The issue of elder abuse has recently gained greater prominence with the World Health Organisation and International Network of the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) recognising the abuse of older people as a significant global problem.

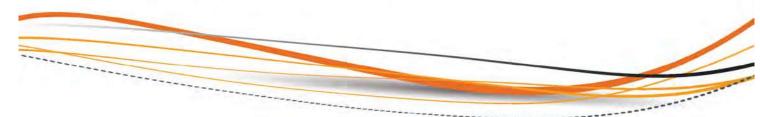


Key questions:

- Is legislation the panacea against elder abuse?
- What are the most effective evidence based elder abuse programs?
- Are legislative and administrative frameworks adequate?
- Can a rights based approach make a difference?
- Should legal safeguards be mandated?

The Taking Action Towards a Convention to Protect and Promote the Rights of Older Persons interactive workshop looked at the efforts being made at the United Nations to draft a multilateral instrument (a convention) to protect the rights of older persons. Participants were briefed on the work of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG);





the work of the United Nations Independent Expert to review the rights of older persons; the United Nations Group of Friends comprising twenty-one Member States whose primary goal is to ensure the establishment of a convention; efforts of National Institutes of Human Rights and the work of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older Persons (GAROP).



It is crucial that older persons get a convention to protect and promote their rights. The goal for 2016 is to increase the number of countries as well as civil society organisations supporting the establishment of a convention.

Older lesbian, gay bi-sexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) Australians have been relatively invisible until fairly recent times. Their needs have not been well understood, nor addressed in policy, legislation or service provision until recently.

The Older LGBTI People's Rights – Then and Now symposium:

- Outlined recent legislative and policy reform,
- Provided an overview of the evidence relating to older LGBTI people's health and wellbeing
- Shared individual's stories
- Provided a framework for the development of LGBTI age-friendly cities

IFA 2016 was also an opportunity for the staff of COTA Queensland and other COTAs to present to a wider audience.

I take this opportunity to thank COTA Queensland's Board, staff especially John Stalker who along with IFA's Izabella Kaczmarek worked tirelessly over many months to pull the extensive program together advised by the Program Committee – Professor Linda Rosenman (COTA Queensland), Greg Shaw (IFA), Alex Ross (WHO) and Brooke Winters (Department of Communities). I also thank our sponsors and the team from our Professional Conference Organisers Arinex for supporting the Organising Committee chaired by Peter Howells and comprising Dr Jane Barratt and Greg Shaw (IFA) and Professor Linda Rosenman and Mark Tucker-Evans (COTA Queensland).

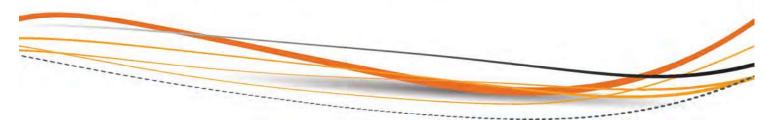
Promotes and engages in research which is of interest and concern to older people

COTA Queensland worked with Wesley Mission Brisbane and social research firm Urbis to examine older women's experience of living in poverty and disadvantage across Queensland. Drawing upon published research discussions with stakeholders and conversations with older women in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas the report *Doing It Tough: Queensland Older Women's Experience of Poverty* provides insights into the current experiences and future of older women across Queensland. The Report was launched in Anti-Poverty Week 2015.

Provides older people with information which enables them to make informed choices and take action on their own behalf

COTA Queensland's Community Education program aims to provide information to older Queenslanders that enhances their ability to age well within their own communities. The program is delivered by trained Peer Educators who volunteer their time and skills to deliver interactive and informative sessions with fellow seniors. Throughout this year 40 people have volunteered as Peer Educators delivering a total of 114 information sessions on two topics across the state. Our Peer Educators are located from Bundaberg to the southern end of the Gold Coast, out to





Toowoomba and Yarraman, and many places in between.

The primary focus of this year was to provide seniors with information about reforms to the provision of in-home aged cared services with a foundational shift to a consumer directed care model. This session *Controlling My Own Life: Making the most of Consumer Directed Care* has been delivered by 34 Peer Educators to 104 seniors groups reaching more than 2,000 seniors. Over 50% of participants were aged 75 years and older with 30% of participants aged between 65 and 74 years old. Over 80% of participants reported the session increased their understanding of changes in how home care packages are delivered. The reach of our Peer Educator program is shared wider than those who participate in an information session with 75% of session participants reporting after the session they will share the information they learnt with others.

The Suicide Awareness project delivered by Peer Educators provided information sessions with seniors to increase awareness of high risk factors contributing to suicide in older Queenslanders in the Sunshine Coast region. The project commenced in October 2014 and concluded at the end of September 2015. Over the course of this project seven Peer Educators delivered 32 sessions attended by 554 participants. Following the sessions, 84% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more equipped to talk to someone about suicide and 89% agreed or strongly agreed that they would share what they have learned about suicide awareness with others.

Thank you to all our Peer Educators and our Project Support volunteer for your commitment to the program.

Volunteers are an integral part of COTA Queensland's team contributing greatly to our efforts working with staff members to achieve our organisational objectives. The organisation is very thankful for the growing number of people throughout this year that have donated their time and a great diversity of skills. Volunteers undertake a variety of roles within COTA Queensland. This ranges from Peer Educators who deliver community education sessions to groups of seniors around Queensland, to Community Ambassador who research and share information about issues

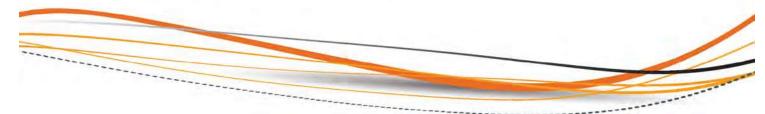


facing seniors in their communities, to our resident historian and the volunteers who provide administrative and project support in our Brisbane office. The contribution of volunteers through all of our work enriches our programs and strengthens our connections to many communities around Queensland. We thank all of our volunteers for their time, skill and commitment to improving the lives of older people across Queensland.

Queensland Seniors Week 2015 was celebrated with 737 events hosted by 283 organisations throughout the state with the theme *It's on for young and old*.

Seniors rode free on all Translink and quonnect services across Queensland from the first service Saturday 22 August until the last service on Sunday 23 August enabling them to participate in events and activities.





Works in partnership with older Queenslanders and their organisations to inform COTA's policy and advocacy work

COTA Queensland launched a new community engagement project in June 2016 recruiting and training eight volunteers as COTA Community Ambassadors. Eight volunteers were appointed as Community Ambassadors after attending a three-day training workshop. The Community Ambassadors are a key focal point for COTA Queensland

for their community. They collect and share information about the issues that affect seniors, including conducting surveys and collecting stories that inform COTA's advocacy and policy work as well as sharing information with their community.

We thank all our Community Ambassadors for their time and commitment to this pilot project as it develops.

COTA Queensland provides the Seniors Peak service to the Queensland Government working with fifty organisations throughout the state providing programs to older people.

Advocates on behalf of older people, giving priority to those suffering injustice, discrimination, disadvantage or disability

COTA Queensland co-chairs the 500 Lives 500 Homes Aged Care Working Group

Provides advice to governments, corporate and community organisations

Through participation and contribution at forums, collaboratives, networks and planning groups, local and state government meetings, etc. COTA Queensland continues to contribute to Policy and Planning development.

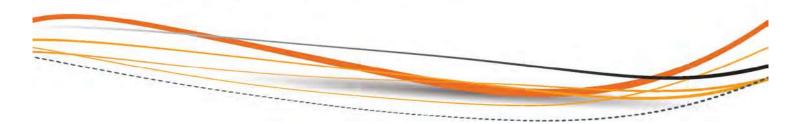
Robyn Robinson represents COTA Queensland on a wide range of energy industry and customer advisory and working groups and authors submissions including to the AER in response to both Ergon and Energex's revenue proposals for the 2015-2020 regulatory period.

COTA Queensland's Policy Committee Chair Margaret Sugden and Chief Executive Mark Tucker-Evans participated in the Statewide Older Person's Health Clinical Network Planning and Review Day and provides consumer representation to a number of SOPHCN working groups including Medication Use in Older People and Acute Care (Age friendly hospitals).

Mark presented at Queensland's Health's 10-year Vision, Purpose and Priorities for Health System workshop. He has also been appointed by the Queensland Health Minister to take part on a review of the Brighton Community Health Facility to determine how it can best be developed to support the health needs of the community. The centre was traditionally an aged care facility situated on a large and currently underutilised site.

COTA participated in the Advisory Taskforce on the Residential Transition for Ageing Queenslanders; Ministerial Working Party on the Review of Manufactured Homes Act.





COTA Queensland was a member of the SEQ Fare Review Taskforce of public transport experts and customer advocates which presented 17 recommendations on fare reform. Following consideration of the Taskforce's recommendations the Queensland Government adopted key aspects such as zone simplification and promoting local travel while improving fare affordability.

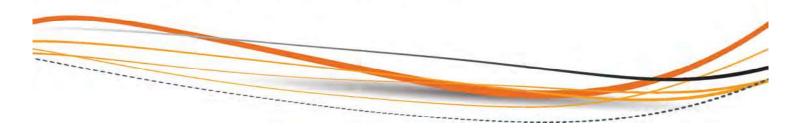
We also provided comment to the Queensland Opportunities for Personalised Transport (OPT) on the future of the taxi, limousine and rideshare industry; the Queensland Rail Accessibility Reference Group.

A full list of our representation on committees, advisory and working groups, etc. is available on our website www.cotaqld.org.au.

COTA Queensland will celebrate 60 years of service to older Queenslanders in October 2017. Our long-term volunteer Sue Bowles in currently collating material to prepare a history of COTA Queensland's achievements of this period.







Get involved

COTA Queensland relies on community representatives and volunteers to help us work towards an age-friendly Queensland. If you would like to be part of our team you can get involved by becoming a:



COTA Peer Educator

Volunteer to connect with the local community and conduct interactive learning sessions for older Queenslanders on a range of issues and help with our advocacy work by collecting information about issues faced by older people.

COTA Community Ambassador

Join our team as a COTA Community Ambassador to inform our policy and advocacy work by telling us what is happening and how it affects seniors in your community.

COTA Policy and Project Support Volunteer

Share your skills in research, policy, submission writing, data entry, grant writing, administration (and much more) to support, enhance and expand our programs.

COTA Consumer Reference Member

Join our Consumer Reference Network to help shape our understanding of older Queenslander's needs and priorities by regularly contributing to surveys and questionnaires.





BOARD

Peter Howells, Chair	Neale Condon, Deputy Chair
	Maree McMahon, Director and Chair Finance &
Warren Males – resigned 20 November 2015	Risk Committee
Stephen Ring, Director, Member of Finance &	Robyn Robinson, Director, Member Finance &
Risk Committee	Risk Committee and Member, Policy Committee
	Margaret Sugden, Director and Chair Policy
Professor Linda Rosenman, Director	Committee
Mark Tucker-Evans, Chief Executive and Company Secretary	

STAFF

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Sarah Baker, Program Coordinator (resigned 31 July 2015)	Bronwyn Bidstrup, Program Coordinator	
Kerryn Clarke, Program Coordinator	Denise De La Rue, Finance Officer	
Deidre Finter, Program Coordinator	Lisa Hodgkinson, Seniors Week Coordinator	
Angela Jarrett, Program Coordinator	Kara Jeffrey, Office Coordinator/ Executive Support (resigned 12 February 2016)	
Matilda Marsh, Consumer and Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator (resigned 29 January 2016)	Lucie Magill, Office Coordinator/ Executive Support	
Margaret Micale, Executive Support Officer (resigned 22 September 2015) John Stalker, Policy Officer	Julie Spaccatore, Executive Support Officer (resigned 3 July 2015) Karen Wilson, Project Officer	
Marianne Wright, Volunteer Coordinator (resigned 16 October 2015)		

VOLUNTEERS

VOLOTVILLITO	Peer Educators
Gordon Boyd	Judith Chapman
Mary Denver	Tahhniaa Dhavai
Margaret Donaldson	Sue Drennan
Vanessa Drewrey	Dale English
Steve English-Ellis	Errol Fenly
Lee Finlay	Clare Forrest
Peter Galbraith	Margaret Greig
Kerry Hamilton	Carol Hawkshaw
Graham Jackson	Marjorie Johnson
Frances Kay	Libby Knight
Heather Martens	Judy Mayfield
Lynn Moore	Robyn Moore
Lorraine Moyes	Kath Neilsen
Jenny Newman	Phil Page
David Peace	Annette Prentice
Martine Rimmer	Tania Rooney
Helen Schafer	Faye Sellars
Alison Taylor	Angela Tilbrook
Leonie Timmerman	Larissa Visco
Margaret White	Annette Whitmee

Office and Events

Sue Bowles	
Fred Cormack	
Jane Holloway	
Karla Thomassen	

COTA Community Ambassadors

COTA COMMUNICY AMBUSSUUOTS
David Bowden
John Green
Angela Greenwood
Danijela Hlis
Robert Hudson
Zelda Lawrie
Gabrielle Newport
Bryan Spiller

