

Autumn Newsletter

With the relaxation of restrictions on gatherings, we are excited to be able to resume our carer support groups and social activities with our carers across the Barwon South West region.

We have carer support groups operating in Belmont, Corio, Newcomb, Ocean Grove, Colac and Torquay as well as a Men's Group. We also have a walking group that meets in central Geelong and a peer support group for carers of a child with mental illness.

Since we began operating as an outlet for Carer Gateway in April last year, we've seen a huge increase in new referrals to our service so many of you will be receiving this newsletter for the very first time. We aim to send our newsletter out each quarter. If you are receiving this newsletter by post and would prefer delivery by email, please get in touch by emailing carersupport@barwonhealth.org.au This will help to reduce printing and postage costs.

For those of you who use Facebook, we've created a Facebook page just for carers. Be the first to hear about news, activities and events for carers in the Barwon South West region of Victoria. This page will provide us with another way to keep you updated about our carer support group meetings, in person peer support, carer education, training sessions and other events of interest.

Search for **Barwon Health Carer Support & Carer Gateway Events** on Facebook and like our page to stay up to date with all the latest news from our service.



Visiting our Locations. A reminder as part of the new 'covid normal' we now ask you to contact us by phone and make an appointment if you would like to speak to a staff member in person. Thank you for your understanding with this matter. Our Barwon office is located at Barwon Health Community Health Centre, 104-108 Bellarine Hwy, Newcomb. Our South West office is located at 64B Banyan St, Warrnambool (behind Ray White Real Estate).

A reminder that we have a new worker, *Julie* who works in the **National Community Connectors Program**. Julie's role is to help carers over 65 years of age and their loved ones with a disability to link into the NDIS. Julie can provide hands on support to simplify the NDIS process and assist with completing an Access Request form. She can also support you in appealing an NDIS decision or support with any issues with an existing plan. Julie works Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and can be contacted on **4215 7600**.

Do you need emergency respite? Call 1800 422 737

This number operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please do not call the landline number after hours as it is not attended.

Emergency respite may be required where the carer needs to take a break urgently due to stress or illness, or when the carer is admitted to hospital at short notice. It may be due to a family emergency or death in the immediate family.

If not already registered with Carer Gateway, an emergency registration and home risk assessment will be conducted with the carer or carer's representative. In-home respite may then be put in place overnight or for a few hours as required. There is no cost to carers to access emergency respite through Carer Gateway.

Mental Health First Aid

Would you like to become more aware of mental health problems in our community? Can you recognise the signs that someone needs help or know how to help someone in a crisis?

Mental Health First Aid is a 2 day course which teaches first aid skills for mental health crisis situations and the early stages of mental health problems.

The course provides information and resources about depression, suicidal behaviours, post traumatic stress disorder, panic attacks, psychotic disorders, substance use disorder and other types of mental illness.

Carer Support is giving carers the opportunity to take part in this course **at no cost** on the following dates (normal cost \$260 per person).

August 12 & 19

Youth Mental Health First Aid

November 4 & 5

Older Persons Mental Health First Aid

Each session will run from 9.30am to 5pm and will be held in central Geelong. Carer Support can assist you with respite and transport assistance should this be required. Places are limited so call us on **4215 7600** during business hours to secure your place.

Carer Directed Support

The Carer Directed Support service is aimed at supporting carers in their caring role.

This support can be offered in one of two ways:

One off practical support: assistance to purchase small items to assist carers in their continuing education or payment for training courses to help you get back into work or improve your job skills. This support can be accessed once per 12 months.

Carer Directed Packages: funding for practical supports to assist carers with planned respite in the home or community, cleaning services, assistance with shopping/cooking or assistance with transport to medical appointments or shopping. These supports will be put in place for up to 12 months.

Carer support planning is the first step to accessing a carer directed package. A carer support worker will spend about one hour chatting to you about different areas of your life to help identify where your needs are greatest. You will then develop some goals that can assist your wellbeing with the help of your carer support worker.

When you are supported through a carer directed package, your support worker will check in with you regularly to see how things are going. At the conclusion of the plan we will conduct a short survey with you to provide feedback on the support provided by our service.



Upcoming Events

To book in for any of these free activities please contact us on 4215 7600 during business hours. A reminder that we can provide respite so that you may attend and assist with transport to and from the venue, should this be required.

Bowling Competition

After a long year of not being able to get out and about, the Carer Support team is excited to invite all carers to join us for some friendly competition at Oz Tenpin Indoor Bowling. Lunch will be provided.

When: Thursday, June 24

Time: arrive by 10am for 10.30am start

Where: Oz Tenpin Bowling Geelong, 49 Reynolds Rd Belmont

RSVP: by Tuesday, June 15

South West Carers Lunch

Our carers in the South West region are invited to take some time out in peaceful Port Fairy and enjoy a relaxed lunch by the water.

When: Monday, June 21

Time: 12 noon

Where: The Wharf, Port Fairy

RSVP: by Friday, June 18

Apollo Bay Carers Lunch

When: Thursday, July 22

Time: 12 noon

Venue: Apollo Bay Hotel

RSVP: by Tuesday, July 20

Free Technical Help Sessions for Carers

Do you need some help with technology? Are you confused by your smartphone or iPad? Would you like to be able to video chat with friends and loved ones?



We have scheduled a number of free sessions for carers at the Belmont Library, 163 High St Belmont. These small group sessions are a great opportunity to learn in a fun and relaxed setting. Places are limited so call us on **4215 7600** to book your place.

MyGov Explained

Thursday June 10 from 2pm to 4pm

With MyGov you can access many government services such as Centrelink, Medicare and Australian Tax Office. Bring along some ID (eg. Driver's licence) and our MyGov expert will help you set up your MyGov account, if you don't already have one.

iPad Basics including QR codes

Thursday June 24 from 2.30pm to 4pm

Find out why ipads are so popular and learn some secrets to help you get the most out of your device. If you don't own an ipad but want to have a go, the library can provide one on the day. This session will also cover QR codes which are now part of everyday life when we dine out and shop.

Smartphone / Tablet Q&A

Thursday July 22 from 2.30pm to 3.30pm

Bring along your smartphone or tablet and discuss features, apps and library services available through your device, and discover some useful tips for trouble shooting. This session will also cover video chat apps.

Dementia Education Series

Do you care for someone with dementia? Are you interested in learning about practical strategies to help your loved one?

This is a three part program presented by Carers Victoria. Each 3 hour workshop will provide information and practical strategies to assist carers in their caring role. Each workshop builds on the content of the previous session. To make the most of the program, we ask that carers attend each of the three sessions. These will be held on **August 2, 9 & 16** from 10am to 1pm at Newcomb Community Health Centre. Lunch will be provided.

Session 1: Understanding dementia

Session 2: Build communication techniques and strategies for managing behaviours

Session 3: Explore how to care for yourself and problem solve

Respite is available for the person you care for and we can assist with transport if this is needed. To book your place in this small group program call us on **4215 7600**.

Care Space

This is a peer support group for those caring for a younger person who experiences mental illness. The peer support group looks at issues that carers would like information on, as well as looking after your own wellbeing while supporting the person you care for.

Meetings are held in Geelong on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 6pm to 8pm. If you would like to come along, call *Elizabeth* on **4215 7600** during business hours.

Walking Group

Our Carer Walking Group is back up and running for 2021. This group meets in Geelong at the entrance to the Geelong Botanic Gardens. After our walk we have a cuppa at a local café.

Upcoming dates are June 3 & 17. To find out more call *Mel* on **4215 7600**.



Disability Liaison

The Disability Liaison Unit is new program within Barwon Health that aims to connect people with disabilities and their carers to assist them in accessing Barwon Health services. The goal is to bridge the gap between health and disability to provide a smooth transition when entering or exiting the health service. This will ensure positive health outcomes and strong patient-centred care.

If you think you or someone you care for may benefit from this service please make contact via phone on **0434 856 014** or email

DisabilityLiaisonOffice@barwonhealth.org.au

Our Team

Co-ordinator Jennifer Polley **Customer Service** Susan; Tina
Our Team Aleisha; Cheryl, Danielle; Deb; Elizabeth; Gail; Julie, Jodi; Kristy; Linda; Laura; Lyn; Mel; Robyn

carergateway.gov.au
1800 422 737