

CARER NEWS

Freecall 1800 052 222



Barwon
Health

Carer Support

Summer Edition - 2020

In August 2019 we received the fantastic news that Barwon Health will be providing carer services for the next 5 years as part of the successful consortium chosen by the Australian Government to lead carer services across Victoria. Working in partnership together we will strive for consistency across the state, continue to assist carers to access local services and provide better outcomes for Victorian carers.



From April 2020, *Barwon Health Carer Support* will commence as a Carer Gateway service provider. We will continue to support carers in the Barwon South West and will ensure that the transition to the new model in April is as seamless as possible for all of our carers.

New early intervention supports have been launched on the national on-line carer hub, Carer Gateway www.carergateway.gov.au. These new services have been designed based on significant consultation and evidence that shows the best way to support carers is to assist them early in their caring role, improving their wellbeing and reducing the strain of caring.

At a national level, some services will be delivered centrally and managed by the Australian Government, such as the Carer Gateway website, phone counselling, peer support community forums and online skills courses. At a local level, the regional delivery partners will assist with individual carer support planning, managing a number of financial support packages, delivering carer education, in person support and counselling, and arranging emergency respite care.

In some further good news, we are pleased to offer the Carer Benefits Card and discounts program to our carers in the Barwon South West in 2020 (see page 2). All carers who have contacted us in 2019 will receive the program in January 2020. This will allow carers to access discounts through to end of January 2021.

OUR TEAM: Co-ordinator: Jennifer Polley Barwon Team: Aleisha; Cynthia; Danielle; Deb; Elizabeth; Gail; Jodi; Kristy; Linda
South West Team: Gail; Lyn; Robyn Customer Service: Susan; Tina

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CONTACT US
For carer support (24 hrs)
FreeCall 1800 052 222

EMAIL carersupport@barwonhealth.org.au

WEB www.carergateway.gov.au

Carer Benefits Card

The Carer Benefits Card and discounts program will be mailed to carers who are registered with Carer Support in January 2020. We provide this program exclusively to carers in the Barwon South West region. Your Program is valid for 12 months.

How does it work? Your program gives you discounts at restaurants, accommodation and shopping. You will receive an information pack containing a handbook and personalised card, which will be attached to a letter. Take care not to throw the card away as we can't offer replacement cards. The handbook explains how the program works and lists the restaurants where you can use your card and save 20% off the bill. At the back of the handbook you will find special one-off discount vouchers. If you go online to bhcarers.frequentvalues.com.au you can access more benefits such as discounted accommodation and online shopping. It is up to you which benefits you choose to use.

Why do we provide this discounts program? The Program is a great way for carers to save money on takeaway and restaurant meals, shopping vouchers and for discounted accommodation across Australia and even overseas. The discounts are the same that are offered to people who purchase the *Entertainment Book*. We hope that carers will benefit from the program by saving money on social and recreational activities while getting out into the community.

What if I don't have a computer? The online discounts can also be accessed on the mobile site from a smart phone. If you need help logging into the mobile site, make a time to drop into one of our two locations. If you do not wish to use the online benefits you can still use your card to save 20% off the bill at participating restaurants as well as the one-off vouchers in the booklet.

Is this a concession card? No, it is a discount card and is recognised at *participating businesses only*. It can't be used to identify you as a carer or for concessions on transport or utility bills. The card should not be confused with the Victorian Carers Card which is issued by the Victorian Government (see below).

If you have any questions or comments about the program you can contact Entertainment Publications Customer Service on **1800 008 553**.

Victorian Carers Card

This card is issued by the State Government and provides discounts and benefits to carers. It's easy and free to apply for the Carer Card. Applications can be made online or you can request an application form by phoning the Carer Card team on **1800 901 958**. We also have application forms at our two office locations.

To be eligible you must be a resident of Victoria and the primary carer of a person with a disability, severe medical condition, mental illness or someone who is frail aged or in need of palliative care. The card is also available to foster and kinship carers.

The card gives you 50% discount on trams, trains and buses, including V/Line trains and buses; free weekend travel; free travel during Carers Week and two free travel vouchers each year. With this card you can also apply for a Carer myki card to access travel benefits in myki areas.

Delivery of newsletter



You may be aware that Barwon Health recently experienced a cyber security incident which affected a number of our internal systems. Please be assured that no client data was compromised during this incident. However as a result **we are temporarily unable to send this newsletter through our email distribution network**.

If you normally receive this newsletter by email, we expect this issue to be resolved soon and you will receive future newsletters by email. If you are currently receiving the newsletter by post and would prefer to receive it by email, please let us know. This will greatly reduce our postage and printing costs.

Carers Week

In October we celebrated **National Carers Week** with some fantastic activities for carers across the Barwon South West region. All activities were well attended and Carer Support staff really enjoyed the opportunity to get out and meet so many of you during this time.

In Barwon one of our activities was a trip on the historic steam train from Drysdale to Queenscliff. At Queenscliff there was time to have a wander in the shops and lunch in a café before making our way back for a relaxing journey home. One of our carers even got to drive the train! It was the first time we've run an activity like this and we've had a lot of very positive feedback - look out for this activity again in 2020.



Combined Carer Support Group Christmas Event

On December 4, members of our Carer Support Groups met at the picturesque Mt Duneed Estate for a combined Christmas celebration. The dress code for the day was *Tackiest Christmas Attire* with prizes for the best (worst!). As you can see, our Carer Support staff and carers really got into the spirit of the occasion!

This elegant afternoon tea was held exclusively for carers who attend one of our carer support groups in Belmont, Corio, Ocean Grove, Newcomb, Men's Group and Book Club. These groups meet once a month for mutual support and feature interesting guest speakers and conversation topics. If you would like to attend one of these groups call us on **1800 052 222** for a 2020 calendar of dates. Also see page 6 for information on some of our other groups.





iPad Basics Class

Do you own an iPad but are struggling with the technology? Do you have an issue or question that you would love to ask but afraid it's too silly? There is no such thing as a silly question! Come along and learn about the basic functions of the Apple iPad and how it can be used. Bring along your own iPad or use one provided by the library. The session will be run by an IT expert from Geelong Regional Library. Bring along your library card or you can join on the day. It's also a great opportunity to find out about all the other great things you can access through your local library.

Date: Thursday, January 30

Time: 1pm to 3pm **Venue:** Newcomb Library

Bookings: Call Carer Support on **1800 052 222**

Dementia Program: Carers, Families & the System

Commencing in March at Newcomb Community Health Centre, Carer Support and Carers Victoria are running a *free* program for carers who care for someone with a diagnosis of dementia. It is also open to people who have a family member with dementia in long term residential care. This interactive program will provide information and practical strategies to assist you in your caring role.

The program consists of 3 sessions of 3 hours each in duration. These sessions are for carers *only* and are held in a small group setting. Participants must attend the first session to continue in the program. In-home respite can be arranged for the person you care for so that you may attend. We can also provide assistance with transport to and from the venue if required.

Session 1: Dementia realities and myths. **Session 2:** Communication techniques and strategies for managing behaviours of concern. **Session 3:** Caring for yourself, problem solving and activities.

Dates: Friday, March 6, 13 & 20

Time: 10am to 1pm

Venue: Newcomb Community Health Centre **Bookings:** Call Carer Support on FreeCall **1800 052 222**

GenU Bus Tour

Would you like to find out about the supports offered by GenU? Our bus tour will visit the Eric Hart Day Centre, Costa House, GenU Lodge Ocean Grove and GenU House Newtown. These facilities offer day respite and overnight respite for people living with dementia and their carers. This is a great opportunity to view the facilities, meet the staff and find out what services are available and how you can access them.

Morning tea and lunch will be provided along the way. Numbers are limited so please call to book your place.

Date: Thursday, February 13

Time: 9.30am to 4pm

Meeting point: Bunnings Car Park North Geelong

Bookings: Call Carer Support on **1800 052 222**



Care Space – Do you care for a young person with mental illness?

Care Space is a new peer support group for those caring for a young person who experiences mental illness. This group is all about mutual support, learning strategies and sharing with others who ‘get it’. Sessions will also provide education around topics chosen by the group. Enjoy a cuppa and light supper afterward.

Date: 2nd Wednesday of every month **Time:** 6pm to 7.30pm

Venue: Headspace, 2nd floor, 105 Yarra St Geelong

Colac Carer Support Group

Are you a family carer in the Colac region looking to meet other people in a caring role? We have recently established a carer support group in Colac and would love for you to come along. The group will meet on the second Tuesday of each month commencing February 11, 2020. You are welcome to bring along the person you care for if you wish, or we can arrange respite at no cost to you.

Date: Tuesday, February 11 then 2nd Tuesday of each month **Time:** 10.30am to 12.30pm

Venue: Legacy House, 45 Gellibrand St, Colac

Colac Making Memories

Making Memories is time for family carers and people with memory loss or dementia to meet with others in a supported and friendly environment for a regular morning tea. The program is for both the person with memory loss / dementia and their carer. You will have an opportunity to meet with other people, enjoy relevant presentations, hear about medical updates and information about drug trials while you enjoy a delicious morning tea. This is a joint initiative between Carer Support and Dementia Australia. Sessions are held in Colac at the Baronga Motor Inn and Anam Cara Colac. New attendees are always welcome to come along. Phone Cynthia at Carer Support on **1800 052 222**.

Carer Book Club

For carers who love to read, we have started “Booking Out”. a book club for carers in the Barwon region. This group is all about your love of books and connecting with other carers who share your passion. So book yourself out from your caring role, enjoy a cuppa and meet with other carer bibliophiles.

To find out what we are currently reading or for further information contact Jenn or Linda at Carer Support on **1800 052 222**.



Date: 4th Monday of each month from January 27, 2020 **Time:** 10.30am to 12pm

Venue: The Seeker Café, 46B Roslyn Rd Belmont (can also enter via Thomson St)



Carers Walking Group

Would you like to combine healthy exercise and meeting other carers while admiring our beautiful Botanical Gardens? Walk your way to better health with our Carer Support Worker, Elizabeth. We will enjoy a cuppa at a nearby café after our walk. You are welcome to bring the person you care for if you wish.

Date: every Wednesday starting January 8, 2020 **Time:** 10am to 11am

Venue: Meet at the front steps of the Geelong Botanical Gardens.



CHSP Out of Home Respite Program

The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) supports eligible people 65 years and over. For a number of years we have been funded under the CHSP 'Care Relationships and Carer Support' program which supports the care relationship through planned respite services. This allows the carer to have a regular break from caring while providing the person cared for with a beneficial activity.



We run a social respite group in the Geelong region where we carefully match small groups of three similar people with early dementia. The participants are picked up from home and taken out for the morning every 2 weeks by a trained worker from a local care agency. Those who take part in the program form close relationships with each other and the social aspect of the group is invaluable. Participants can laugh if they forget each other's names and the group is a safe place where they can express some of the emotions they feel around their diagnosis. Those who take part in the group enjoy everyday activities like a visit to a garden, nursery or café. If you would like more information about the group contact *Cynthia* or *Linda* on **1800 052 222**.

Residential Respite Information Day

Short term stays in a residential aged care facility can be a great way for family carers to have a good break from the caring role. Sometimes this is vital for carers who are recovering from illness or surgery, or for carers who are going on holiday and need peace of mind that their loved one is safe and cared for while they are away. Sometimes this type of care is required in an emergency, when the usual carer is ill or admitted to hospital.

Many facilities require a minimum 2 week stay although some will accept a booking for one week. To access this type of care, the person you care for must have an aged care *assessment* and *approval* for respite. This is a free assessment done in the home. To get this started, contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422**. An approval for respite will specify either Low Level or High Level care. When you make an enquiry with a facility, the staff will talk to you about the needs of your loved one to make sure they can provide the care they need. It is a good idea to visit some facilities to see whether they feel right for your family member. If you would like the phone numbers for some facilities, you can call us on **1800 052 222**.



Residential respite is subsidised by the Australian Government for people who have an aged care assessment. Currently the cost is \$51.63 per day. This daily care fee covers all meals, accommodation, activities and nursing care.

It is important for carers to be aware that without an aged care assessment, respite in an aged care facility generally can't be arranged at short notice. There are alternatives such as in-home care or a private care facility, however the cost will be significantly higher as there is no government subsidy available for this type of care.

Barwon Health Carer Support runs residential respite information sessions for carers throughout the year. These sessions are very informative and are free for family carers. Our next information day will be...

Date: Monday, March 30

Time: 9am to 3pm

Venue: Newcomb Community Health Centre, Bellarine Hwy, Newcomb

Bookings: by Monday, March 23 on **1800 052 222**

Day Trip to Narrapumelap Homestead

Carers in the South West are invited to a great day out to the historic Narrapumelap Homestead at Wickliffe. The homestead was constructed in 1873 and is an expansive French mansion with an intricate gothic style. The bus will depart from Flagstaff Hill Car Park at 9.30am and return at 3.30pm. We will have a guided tour and enjoy a delicious lunch there.

Date: Tuesday, February 18 **Time:** 9.30am to 3.30pm
Bookings: by Tuesday, February 11 on **1800 052 222**



Introduction to Golf

Have you ever wanted to try golf? If you would like to find out more about the game of golf, join us for our free introductory golf day. You will have the opportunity to play a couple of holes of golf and enjoy morning tea in the club rooms afterward.

Date: Friday, February 21 **Time:** 10am to 1pm
Venue: Warrnambool Golf Club, Younger Street, Warrnambool
Bookings: to Carer Support on **1800 052 222**



Bowls Under the Dome

Have you ever wanted to try lawn bowls? If you would like to have a go, come and join us for this free activity! You will have the opportunity to play some bowls with tuition and equipment included. Afterwards we will enjoy lunch in the bistro.

Date: Friday, March 20 **Time:** 11am to 2pm
Venue: City Memorials Bowls Club, Cramer Street, Warrnambool
Bookings: to Carer Support on **1800 052 222**



Carers Who Read!

We are starting a book club for carers in the South West who love to read! This group is all about your love of books and connecting with other carers who share your passion. So take a break from your caring role, enjoy a cuppa and meet with other carer bibliophiles to discuss the books you are reading. Please call us if you are coming along so we have an idea of numbers - phone **1800 052 222**.

Upcoming Dates: Wednesday, January 22; February 26; March 25
Venue: Café Lava, 237 Lava St **Time:** 10am to 11.30am



Researching Your Family History

Members from the Warrnambool Family History Group will present a free session for carers about various fields of genealogy from the basics to what is available at Heritage Works, online information availability and computer programs for recording of research.

Date: Tuesday (date TBC) early March 2020 **Time:** 1.30pm
Venue: Heritage Works, 2 Gilles Street, Warrnambool
Bookings: to Carer Support on **1800 052 222**



How we support carers

Our service is currently in a transition period prior to commencement of the Carer Gateway from April 2020. Since 1997, Barwon Health has supported family carers. We are here to support you with;

- Information and assistance to access services like My Aged Care, National Disability Insurance Scheme, Centrelink and other local services;
- Referrals for yourself and the person you care for (for example to My Aged Care);
- Education to help you in your caring role;
- Carer support groups in the Barwon region and in the South West, contact details for other local groups;
- Referral to carer counselling;
- Social activities and events for carers;
- Short term in or out of home respite;
- Emergency respite, for when you are unwell and unable to perform your usual caring role.

We are not a case management service, therefore we rely on you to make contact with us when you are needing some extra support in your caring role. We are very responsive and endeavour to return all calls the same day or the following business day.

If you have an emergency and require respite after hours, call us on **1800 052 222**. The after hours staff will assess the situation and where this is the best option, try to arrange a worker to come into the home to provide respite in the short term. Remember if you have a medical emergency, always call 000.

Archie Graham Community Centre (Archie)

The Archie Graham Community Centre (Archie) in Timor Street, Warrnambool is a place for self-help and to mix with others. If you are new to Archie, the Tasty Plate Café is a good spot for a cuppa and to spend some time to see how the place 'ticks'. Grab a newsletter, check out the noticeboards, find out what's on, chat to people involved in activities that interest you and join as you wish. If the time is not right to chat, enquire at Reception about arranging a better time to meet with relevant group leaders. The start of the new year is the perfect time to try a new activity at Archie or to join the Senior Citizens Club. This club welcome new members and you don't need to be over 60 years to join.

Archie is a great place to escape the heat! Find a quiet place to read, have a cool drink in the café or courtyard garden. Free wifi is available. Netflix movies are scheduled fortnightly and the book and DVD swap is located in the dining room. Daily newspapers are available in the dining room too.

If you are keen to start an exercise class but not sure what would suit you, book in for a free exercise class assessment session with Archie's group fitness instructor, Michelle. These sessions are held on Mondays and Wednesdays. Exercise options include strength training, water exercise, stepping stones, chair-based yoga and more. You can also boost your fitness and join the walking groups, social cycling, tai chi or dancing groups. To book, see Archie Reception or call 5559 4920.

Here's just a few of the upcoming activities at Archie - call 5559 4920 to book

My Aged Care Information Session - January 8 from 12.30 to 1.30pm and January 9 from 10.30am to 11.30am

My Aged Care is the start point to access Australian Government funded services for older people. When you turn 65, register! In the session you will find out about the types of aged care services available including supports to stay in your own home. This free session will also cover your eligibility for services, service providers in your area and costs you may need to pay. Bookings are essential. Family groups welcome.

End of Life Preparations Workshop - January 16 from 10.30am to 12.30pm and February 13 from 7pm to 9pm

Dying well requires thought and planning. Over the course of 2 hours learn about advanced care planning, powers of attorney and wills. Be inspired to complete an end of care plan, a life review, a death plan and funeral plan in this free session.

Friday Movie Sessions - January 10 'Storks' and January 24 'Benji'

If you are looking after grandkids over the holidays, this is a great way to keep them entertained.