



# News for You

Aged Care Advocacy Newsletter | January 2022 | Issue 2

Welcome to our second issue of News for You, a newsletter for people receiving residential aged care services.

The past year has flown by and we're looking forward to welcoming 2022. Thankfully, COVID-19 restrictions are easing around the country and this issue focuses on how to get back to doing what you enjoy with the people you care about.

News for You is full of tips on how you can improve your physical, social and emotional wellbeing to be ready for catching up with friends and family over the holiday season. Plus advice on how to get the best out of your aged care services.

Enjoy the second issue of News for You!



## Tips for living life well

### A conversation with author Patricia Barton

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us how social connection and staying active supports our health and wellbeing. Author Patricia Barton has some great tips on how to activate mind and body as we look to re-engage with the world.

#### How important is exercise to you?

"I believe the mind controls the body. And if we exercise, we are sending oxygen to the brain and that makes us feel happier, stronger and more able to live our lives fully. If we keep on exercising and make it a daily part of our lives we will be stronger and happier and will find life easier."

#### How do you stay active?

"I look back on the experiences I've had and I say to myself 'Well I did

that before, I can do it again'. So I just try again and keep going.

I have written and published one book and I'm working on two other books. I recently started learning to play the piano and I have lots of social engagements. During COVID-19 I did what's called "teledrink" where you pour yourself a drink and talk to a friend on the phone while you're doing it."

#### How do you combat frailty?

"Frailty is increased by fear, so if someone is frail it is important to build their confidence. Often you're frightened if you don't have a social network and appropriate physical supports. Work on your confidence, try things that are safe, and you will succeed."



**Seniors Rights Service**



[seniorsrightsservice.org.au](http://seniorsrightsservice.org.au)



Free advocacy line  
**1800 700 600**

8am - 8pm, Mon-Fri  
10am - 4pm, Sat

We welcome your feedback.  
Email: [enquiries@opan.com.au](mailto:enquiries@opan.com.au)



**OPAN** Older Persons Advocacy Network

## LET'S GET PHYSICAL!

### Being active supports your independence and improves your wellbeing

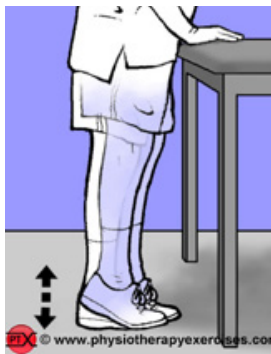
Australian guidelines recommend people exercise 30 minutes every day. However, with so much change over the past year start any new physical activity slowly.

**Tip 1:** It's useful to meet people with a purpose. For instance arrange to have a walk in the garden together.

**Tip 2:** Start slowly to build up your fitness and confidence. Set a goal of 5 or 10 minutes activity and add extra time to your activity each week.

**Tip 3:** Chat with a health professional before starting any new activities.

For more on safe exercise visit the website: [safeexerciseathome.org.au](http://safeexerciseathome.org.au)



### Strengthen your calf muscles.

Stand with your feet together holding onto something steady like your kitchen bench. With your heels on the ground, rise up onto your toes. Lower your heels back to the ground.

Repeat 5-10 times.



### Improve sit to stand ability.

Sit on a chair or bed with your feet underneath your knees. Practice standing up and sitting down. Use your hands to assist you to stand up. Spread your weight equally through both legs.

Repeat 5-10 times.



### Improve standing balance.

Have a stable support close, so you can use your hands if you need to. Stand with your feet together. Try holding the position for up to 30 seconds. If this is too difficult stand with your feet further apart.

## TIPS FOR SUPPORTING YOUR WELLBEING

Here are some easy ways to have fun, be creative and develop stronger social connections



**Music:** Ask someone to help you set up a playlist of your favourite music and sing and dance to the music you know.

**Memories:** With a group, draw a floor plan of the first house you lived in and then tell each other about it. You'll be amazed by the conversations and connections this easy task will generate.

**Nature:** Take time outside. Notice the weather, plants and life around you. If you can't go outside, focus on a vase of flowers or look out the window. Reconnect with the world outside.

**Art:** With a group, choose an artwork to discuss. Describe what you see, what does the artwork remind you of? Copy the artwork with pen or pencil and paper. Do it a few times - you will be surprised how much you will improve over time.

## LUCY'S STORY\*

### Visitors stopped with COVID-19 outbreaks

Lucy had been diagnosed with advanced dementia, and her husband John could no longer care for her. Before the COVID-19 pandemic John visited Lucy daily at her aged care home. They spent time talking and sharing updates from their adult children. John also helped when Lucy went to the toilet and showered.

After a COVID-19 outbreak in their suburb, management at Lucy's aged care home told John he was not allowed to visit. Lucy became unsettled and distressed without visits from John. Staff found it difficult to support her as she was so agitated.

When John rang the home to check in on Lucy, staff told him she had become difficult, so they had

isolated her in her room, increasing her distress and agitation.

John called Seniors Rights Service to talk to an aged care advocate who supported him in raising concerns with the aged care home, who resisted changing their visitation policy. John was unhappy with the response and asked the advocate to help him negotiate to continue visiting Lucy, and eventually, the home agreed.

**If you or someone you know needs advocacy or information support, call Seniors Rights Service on 1800 700 600**

\*Circumstances and names have been changed for privacy reasons.



## Q Your questions answered

Here we provide practical advice and answer your questions. In this edition we talk physical and emotional wellbeing.

### How can I be more active?

**Start safely.** Do what you can, such as chair exercises. Always check with a health professional before starting any new activities.

### What supports are there if I feel lonely or sad?

**FriendLine** is for anyone who needs to reconnect or just wants a chat. It's a free and anonymous telephone service for senior Australians to talk with a volunteer. **Call 1800 424 287**

**If you need support call Seniors Rights Service on 1800 700 600**

**Send your questions to the next newsletter via email: [enquiries@opan.com.au](mailto:enquiries@opan.com.au)**

## Your Rights in Aged Care

**Australia's Charter of Aged Care Rights states what you can expect from aged care providers. It recognises your fundamental right to be treated with dignity and respect. Below is a selection from the 14 rights listed in the Charter.**

### You have the right to:

- ★ Safe and high quality care and services
- ★ Be treated with dignity and respect
- ★ Have your identity, culture and diversity valued and supported
- ★ Live without abuse and neglect
- ★ Have control over and make choices about your care, and personal and social life, including where the choices involve personal risk
- ★ Be listened to and understood
- ★ Have control over, and make decisions. about, the personal aspects of your daily life, financial affairs and possessions
- ★ Your independence
- ★ Have a person of your choice, including an aged care advocate, support you or speak on your behalf
- ★ Complain free from reprisal, and to have your complaints dealt with fairly and promptly



# Keep these numbers handy

**Seniors Rights Service - Free Advocacy & Legal**  
1800 700 600

**Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission**  
1800 951 822

**My Aged Care**  
1800 200 422

**Dementia Australia**  
1800 100 500

**National Seniors Australia**  
1300 765 050

**Lifeline**  
13 11 44

**NSW Health**  
1300 066 055

## PUZZLE TIME - FIND THE WORDS

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- ART
- BREATHE
- CALM
- CONNECT
- COPE
- EXERCISE
- FAMILY
- FRIEND
- HOPE
- KIND
- LAUGH
- MINDFUL
- MUSIC
- NATURE
- NEIGHBOUR
- RELAX
- RESILIENT
- SKILLS
- SMILE
- SOCIAL
- SUPPORT
- TALK
- WALK
- WELLBEING

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

# WIN A \$1000 HAMPER



Complete our survey by 31 January to go into the draw to win.

Visit: [opan.pub/nsurvey](https://opan.pub/nsurvey) or scan the QR code to complete our survey.

Seniors Rights Service is a proud member of the Older Persons Advocacy Network. Member organisations support you with free and independent aged care advocacy in each state or territory.



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