



Do you have concerns about your aged care?

Do you need assistance

- ensuring your right to have visitors is upheld
- understanding aged care provider services or fees
- accessing, or getting the most from, your services
- having a say in your care and the things that impact you.

If your answer is yes, or you simply want advice about your aged care services

**Chat with us
1800 700 600**

We will talk through the issue with you to get a full understanding of the situation and your wishes.

We are guided by you.

Our services are free and confidential.



**Free advocacy line
1800 700 600**



Find out more visit:
open.org.au
or scan the QR code



News for You

Aged Care Advocacy Newsletter | December 2023 | Issue 8



Friends Lorraine and Simone even share a dog.

Crafty friends: two of a kind

Lorraine Etherton and Simone Nannetti were introduced through the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS), but they quickly became firm friends.

'We just clicked,' Simone says. A former businesswoman and carer, she had become socially isolated after separating from her partner of 30 years.

A local ACVVS coordinator put her in touch with Lorraine, who has been a volunteer for 30 years.

'We love exactly the same things: craft, cooking, talking about old times,' Lorraine says.

'We got on so well, I said to the coordinator, maybe you could get me someone else to volunteer with and I can just have Simone as a friend.'

The strength of the bond the two women have forged

doesn't surprise ACVVS State Network Member Esis Tawfik.

'We match people carefully to encourage exactly this sort of organic friendship,' she says.

According to Simone, Lorraine has made a big difference to her life simply by 'being there'.

'I get to share her dog and her family - there is always someone coming or going at her house. And Lorraine has asked me to her place for Christmas. That's a big thing.'

Lorraine says she gets as much as she gives.

'I love people. If they have a problem, I seem to like to help them with it'.

For more information about the Aged Care Volunteer

Visitors Scheme, scan the QR code on the right.



ANDRE AND SEAN'S STORY*

You have the right to feel safe

Andre's* partner, Sean*, moved to residential aged care because he needed intensive palliative care and Andre was no longer able to support him.

Previous experience with institutions had taught the two men to be extremely cautious about public displays of affection. If a staff member or fellow resident entered the room, the two men would quickly separate.

The manager of the aged care home had organised a regular information and education session with an OPAN advocate.

Along with the other residents, Andre and Sean were invited to attend. At the end of the session, which addressed the Charter of Aged Care Rights, they spoke to the advocate at some length about their right to have their identity, culture and diversity valued and respected.

The advocate reassured Andre and Sean that they could contact OPAN for support to talk to their provider if they ever felt unsafe. In an informal, follow-up conversation, the manager affirmed their organisation's support for the values outlined in the charter.



Supported by their rights, and the manager's commitment to diversity and inclusion, Andre and Sean became more confident about openly acknowledging their love for each other.

This meant Andre could curl up beside Sean in bed comforting his long-life partner as he passed away.

Contact Darwin Community Legal Service on 1800 700 600

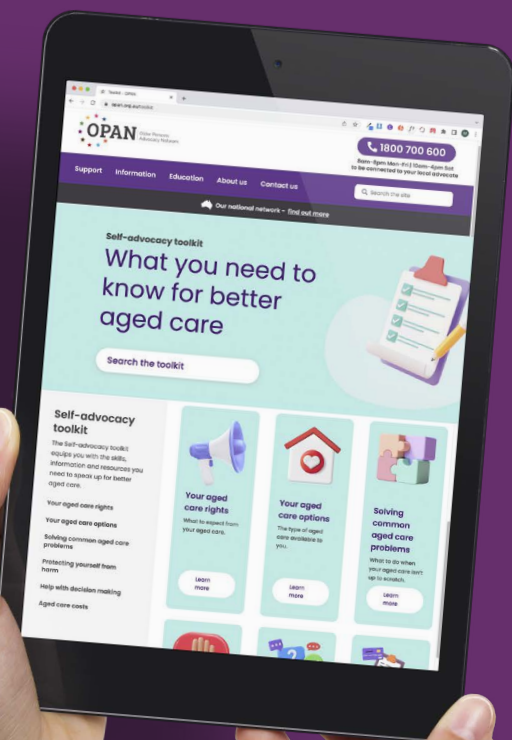
*Names have been changed for privacy reasons.

Ensuring your diverse life experience is respected

When accessing aged care services, you can reasonably expect to:

- communicate in your own language
- practice your culture and lifestyle
- eat the sort of food you are accustomed to/or that meets your religious requirements
- be able to fully express yourself without fear of judgement or reprisal.

Visit opan.org.au/toolkit for to explore the online version of OPAN's Self-advocacy toolkit or call 1800 700 600 to order a free print booklet.



ANNE'S STORY*

Understanding aged care costs

Anne*, 89, had been living at home with the support of her eldest son, Patrick*, for more than 10 years.

Recently, Patrick, who lives with disability, had been struggling to cope.

After talking it over with her four children, Anne decided to move into residential aged care. Her sole income was the Age Pension.

Anne and her family assumed she would be paying the basic daily fee (equivalent to 85% of her pension). When Anne signed the residential agreement to become a permanent resident, there was no discussion of any other costs.

She was shocked when her first monthly statement included a daily accommodation payment and a means-tested fee.

She called OPAN. On reviewing Anne's fees and charges, a financial advocacy officer



noticed that Patrick, who lives on a disability pension, had not been identified as a 'protected person'.

(An older person's home only counts as an asset if a protected person, such as a partner or dependent child, isn't living there.)

With the advocate's support, Anne called Services Australia to correct the mistake.

Services Australia advised that the updated assessment would be backdated to the day Anne first entered permanent care.

The aged care home agreed to apply the new rates upon receiving a letter from Services Australia.

*Names have been changed for privacy reasons.

Staying on top of aged care costs

OPAN's advocates and specialist financial advocacy officers offer information and support on a range of different issues around aged care, including:

- rights in aged care
- raising concerns or complaints
- statements
- fees and charges
- hardship applications
- moving into residential care, and
- transitioning between packages or services.

Our advocates can provide free and confidential information or support in relation to your aged care costs.

**Call Darwin Community Legal Service today
1800 700 600**

'The Charter of Aged Care Rights outlines what older people can expect from their aged care provider.'

Advocate Barry Fewquandie



Free education sessions for residents on:

- your rights
- how advocates can assist you
- abuse of older people.

Call 1800 700 600 for more information on our free education sessions.



Keep these numbers handy

Darwin Community Legal Service (DCLS)
1800 700 600

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
1800 951 822

My Aged Care
1800 200 422

National Dementia Helpline
1800 100 500

National Seniors Australia
1300 765 050

Lifeline
13 11 14

National Coronavirus Helpline
1800 020 080

PUZZLE TIME

WORD FINDER

S	T	S	O	C	T	S	H
Z	P	S	E	W	K	E	A
I	R	F	B	H	R	G	R
E	F	L	E	B	I	A	D
Q	R	W	V	J	G	U	S
B	A	U	F	K	H	G	H
I	T	E	T	W	T	N	I
F	E	Q	U	L	S	A	P
S	Z	I	A	R	U	L	E
Q	P	M	J	Q	O	C	O
P	A	C	K	A	G	E	S
E	S	R	E	V	I	D	D
G	L	A	R	Y	C	X	S
P	F	Q	W	J	H	I	I

COSTS

FEES

PACKAGES

CULTURE

HARDSHIP

RIGHTS

DIVERSE

LANGUAGES

SUDOKU

Fill the grid with the numbers 1 to 4 so each number is only used once in each row and column.

1		4	3
			1
3		2	

1			
2	3		1
		1	3
3		2	

	3	1	
	2		
	1	4	
3		2	

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 and present.



Darwin Community LEGAL SERVICE

dcls.org.au

Darwin Community Legal Service is a proud member of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), offering free, confidential and independent aged care advocacy. There is a member organisation in each state and territory.



OPAN | Older Persons Advocacy Network

opan.org.au

Advocacy line 1800 700 600
We welcome your feedback.
Email: enquiries@opan.org.au