

seniorsvoice

NORTHERN TERRITORY

KEEPING NT SENIORS INFORMED

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Published by



The peak body
for NT Seniors
since 1969



KEEPING IT REEL

News, events, information and looking ahead to good times for Territorians

AGE POSITIVITY P. 4 | VAD UPDATE PP. 6-8 | VOLUNTEERING PP. 12, 17 & 23 | WAYS TO SAVE \$\$ P. 21

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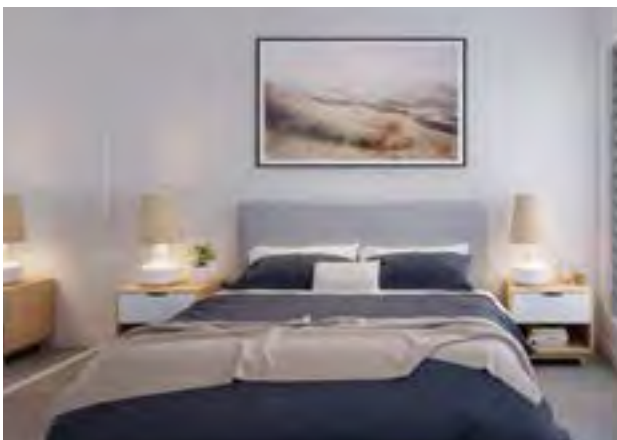
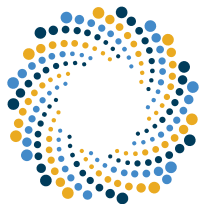
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Cover: COTA NT Members, Craig and Sharon on an April Fishing Trip. Photographed at [Barramundi Adventures Darwin](#). Fishing trips supported by COTA volunteers and the NT Recreational Fishing Grants Scheme (NTRFGS).

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BACK ISSUES Available on [TROVE](#), the National Library of Australia and the [COTA NT website](#).

Useful numbers

- COTA NT** 08 8941 1004
- Membership, events & activities
 - Help accessing aged care
 - Multicultural support
 - **NT Seniors Card** 1800 441 489



**Northern Territory Government
Switchboard** 08 8999 5511

NT Concession & Recognition Unit
1800 777 704 (free call)

Services Australia: Centrelink, Age Pension, Health Cards, Financial Information, Concessions, Loans, Retirement 132 300

Medicare 132 011

Disability, Sickness, Carers 132 717

National Elder Abuse 1800 353 374

Older Persons Abuse Information Line 1800 037 072

My Aged Care 1800 200 422

Aged Care Complaints
1800 951 822

Food for the soul

When we promote our Expo events, we choose photographs of real Territorians — not staged images from photo libraries. Looking back at our 2025 Darwin Expo, we were struck by how many moments captured this event's unique capacity for bringing people together.

These images lift our spirits — and we hope they lift yours too. In a world that can sometimes feel uncertain, it's important to remember the good moments and the strong sense of community we have here in the Territory. Care is all around — across communities, organisations and individuals — for me, for you, for all of us.

At COTA NT, we're proud to create opportunities for meaningful connection, joyful experiences and active living. Whether it's an Expo, a workshop, or a fishing trip, the

smiles on faces say it all.

On behalf of the entire COTA NT team, thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Katherine Expo possible. After the postponement, it was fantastic to see it come together so successfully. Photos will be shared soon on our website and social media.

We now look forward to welcoming you to the **Darwin Expo on 27 June**. Exhibitor registrations are open. Event registrations are also open for this year's **Seniors Month** calendar — a celebration including events, activities, outings and people. Everything that makes life richer. Everything that brings connection, comfort and joy. Because these moments — these connections — are truly our soul food.



Sue Shearer,
CEO, COTA NT

Register now

If you want to have a stall register [here](#). If you want to lead an activity or be involved with entertainment, contact Anna at Head Office on 8941 1004 or [email her](#).

Registrations open [here](#) until 13 June 2026 www.cotant.org.au/darwin-seniors-expo-2026.



COTA NT acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, learn and work. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Disclaimer COTA NT provides this publication as a service to its members and the general public and disclaims all liability for, damages of any kind arising out of use, reference to, or reliance on any information published herein.

AI tools have been used to summarise some referred reports and articles. You are advised to refer to the original source material.

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COTA NT SUPPORTS THE PHOTOGRAPHIC TALENTS OF SENIORS AND ENCOURAGES POSITIVE DEPICTIONS OF AGEING.

Christina took this portrait shot of COTA NT Member Malcolm Richardson picking up his free tickets for *The Sheep Detectives* in the latest Members@theMovies prize draw. Christina is very modest about her photographic skills, but we think this shot fit the brief beautifully.

Photo: Christina Wiggett



See page 15 for news of how your photographic skills can also help millions of Australians experiencing incontinence in THE GREAT DUNNY HUNT

Positive pictures

Seeing age-positive pictures of seniors in media and across our communities is more crucial than you may think. Images often communicate more effectively than words — processed by the brain up to 60,000 times.

So what should *positive depictions of older people* be? There is definitely a trend to focus on upbeat, joyful images featuring active and energetic

activity, social groups and productive tasks but the best depictions, the best portraits of people, no matter their age, is of people as they are.

Age portraits ranging from baby cheeks to wrinkles capture real life — its beauty, character and evolution. We love images that celebrate real people. The [Selfie with a Senior competition](#) sponsored by COTA NT celebrates Territorians — we urge you to enter. (No models are required).

Do you want your photo published? Just [contact us](#).

Photos should be hi-res. You must have appropriate permissions before sending.

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Rachel Jericho with Gary Prior



Bethany Earnshaw with Margaret Earnshaw



Nicola Pitt with Betty Davies

Aged Care Reform Explained – webinars

COTA Australia and OPAN (Older Persons Advocacy Network) are hosting 3 webinar sessions to provide another opportunity to have your questions answered.

- How does the announcement to include showering, dressing and continence management in the fully funded by government clinical care category affect me?
- Receiving fewer services under Support at Home following significant price increases by providers.
- The aged care Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) algorithm is leading to poor service allocation outcomes.
- Higher Everyday Living charges in residential aged care for basic services such as in-room TV, choice of meals and Wi-Fi.

WEBINAR: 1 Friday 8 May 2pm – 4pm AEST Register [HERE](#)

WEBINAR: 2 Monday 1 June 2pm – 4pm AEST Register [HERE](#)

WEBINAR: 3 Tuesday 30 June 2pm – 4pm AEST Register [HERE](#)



Still a lot more to do in aged care

The Federal Government's decision to expand clinical care supports to include showering, dressing and continence management, corrects a problem that should never have existed, says COTA Australia.

COTA Australia Acting CEO, Corey Irlam, welcomed the decision saying it reflects what COTA Australia, and older people have been calling for since before the program started.

"This announcement is a welcome step. Basic care like showering should never have been treated as an optional extra in aged care," Mr Irlam said. "Returning crucial supports like showering and dressing into clinical care, where they are fully Government funded, is a welcome 'win' for older people."

"It removes the price tag anxiety many older people have raised with their MPs and puts the focus back on the person and the care they need."

Mr Irlam said COTA Australia was disappointed older people would still be footing the bill until October but was pleased that Ministers Rae and Butler listened to the concerns of older people and their families.

"As a member of the Aged Care Taskforce and at every opportunity since, we've called for showering to be recognised as part of clinical support, just like in hospital," Mr Irlam said.

"We thank Ministers Butler and Rae for acting on what they've heard from older people. This will make a real

difference to older Australians who've had to choose whether they could afford a shower."

Mr Irlam said the announcement doesn't solve all the problems facing aged care. COTA Australia will be watching for further decisions by Minister Butler and in the 12 May budget. COTA wants to understand how consumer protections such as price caps would be strengthened to ensure a fair go for older people.

"While today's reported \$1 billion budget commitment on showering, dressing and continence management is a very important change that will make a real difference to the lives of older people, there's still more to do in aged care."

"We look forward to further details on how the government will address the growing pressures in aged care, including capping price increases, reducing administrative costs such as the requirement to bill all services through a single provider, and strengthening consumer protections so older Australians are treated fairly."

"COTA is ready to continue working constructively with the Government to improve the lives of older Australians accessing aged care services."

Minister Butler speech at Press Club 22 April

Read the full speech online [here](#)

The aged care component is about fixing quality and dignity failures, paying and growing the workforce and shifting more care into the home. Read the summary notes below:

Reform

- Continued implementation of reforms to fix systemic neglect, poor quality, and workforce shortages.

Key investments

- **Workforce wage increases** Significant federal funding to support Fair Work Commission decisions delivering pay rises for aged care workers — aimed at improving retention and attracting new staff.
- **Increased funding for care delivery** More resources directed to providers to lift care minutes, quality standards and accountability.
- **Support for home care expansion** Ongoing investment to help older Australians remain at home longer, reducing pressure on residential care.

Service & care Improvements

- **Expansion of "clinical care" supports** Inclusion of everyday supports — like

showering, dressing and continence management — under clinical care funding.

- **Higher care standards and transparency** Stronger regulation and oversight to ensure providers meet quality and safety expectations.
- **Improved access and navigation** Efforts to simplify how older people enter and move through the aged care system.

Workforce strategy

- **Build and stabilise the aged care workforce** Focus on better pay, training pathways, and career structures.
- **Address shortages, especially in regional areas** Targeted initiatives to improve workforce distribution and service availability outside metropolitan centres.

Home care & community

- **Rebalance toward care at home** Policy emphasis on enabling ageing in place with more flexible and responsive in-home supports.
- **Reduce waiting times** Continued commitment to improving access to Home Care Packages.

What's planned for the Northern Territory?

New 120-Bed Facility The federal government is investing \$70 million to build a new residential aged care facility in Darwin to address the critical shortage of beds. COTA has met with the provider regarding wants (e.g. secure dementia unit, couples' accommodation).

NT Government is providing land for this development next to Palmerston Regional Hospital.

Have your say

COTA NT is continuing to urge all Territorians who support VAD legislation for the NT to write to their MLA, meet them in person and to sign campaign support cards (which will be displayed for Parliament). MLAs should not be left in any doubt about the widespread support for VAD, but they need to hear from you.

MLAs will be voting mid-year (possibly on 18 June, 21-23 July or 25-27 August during house sittings) on whether the NT should draft voluntary assisted dying legislation.

COTA NT was asked recently when it was going to give 'all this VAD stuff' up. We do not intend to. Advocacy needs to be persistent and resilient, and needs to keep issues in the public gaze. When legislation is proposed and changes or reform occur, advocates examine and watch — they consider how effective, how humanitarian, how fair laws and reforms are. They recommend amendments and improvements to government based on evidence, on data-driven research and lived-experiences.

Go Gentle Australia (GGA) is currently urging people to write to the Attorney-General of Australia, Michelle Rowland to change the *Criminal Code Act 1995* so that electronic communications can be used for VAD. At the moment,



Andrew Denton at the launch of the State of VAD Report 2026. Photo: Paul Chapman, GGA



regional Australians do not have the same access to VAD as people in the city because of one line in federal law which bans the use of telehealth for VAD — and any other electronic communication (such as phone calls and email).

This may be devastating for people in regional areas, who live thousands of kilometres from VAD doctors. Some die waiting. Find out more [here](#).

State of VAD Report 2026

GGA has also released a new national report, compiled using publicly available data from each state's VAD oversight body.

It finds Australia's VAD laws fulfil their promise to relieve suffering and provide terminally ill people with greater choice at the end of life. The increase in public demands for VAD services has raised concerns, however, about workforce capacity and long-term sustainability.

Read the full report [here](#).

A chance for NT to lead

In this letter to the Hon. Marie-Clare Boothby, Attorney-General of the NT and Members of the Legislative Assembly (sent 17 February), Marshall Perron urges acceptance of the LCAC Committee's conclusion that an individual's eligibility to access voluntary assisted dying should be based on intolerable and hopeless suffering, not an arbitrary [prognostic] timeframe.

Marshall Perron is a former Northern Territory Chief Minister and pioneer of Australia's first voluntary assisted dying law. He is a longtime advocate for compassionate end-of-life choice and a respected voice in VAD reform. His letter is published with his permission.

The Hon. Marie-Clare Boothby,
Attorney-General, NT

Dear Ms Boothby

Although no longer a resident of the Northern Territory, I have long campaigned for the restoration of the Legislative Assembly's capacity to legislate on Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD). On this basis, and as someone who has been closely involved in every State VAD campaign — both successful and unsuccessful — I write to you regarding the development of the Northern Territory's proposed VAD Bill.

Purpose of Letter Given the gravity and ethical depth of VAD legislation, there are numerous complex decisions to be made. The specific issue I wish to address is whether a prognostic timeframe to death should form part of the eligibility criteria.

Recent media reports (3 January) quoted you as noting there would be "consideration of a clear timeframe linked to the

end of life." I respectfully urge you to accept the recommendation of the Northern Territory L&CA Committee on VAD, which concluded that no prognostic timeframe should be included — for the same reasons clearly articulated in its report.

The Context — The Evolution of Australian VAD Laws

Each Australian state has enacted VAD legislation, usually after long and cautious debate. In most cases, support among parliamentarians was hard-won and, as a result, the early state schemes were overly restrictive.

Victoria's law, the first, was framed around the rhetoric of having "the most safeguards in the world." While the intent to ensure safety was laudable, in practice this meant that dignity, compassion, and individual choice were compromised in favour of measures designed to strictly limit access.

Subsequent states largely followed Victoria's model, replicating the inclusion of a prognostic timeframe — commonly six or twelve months — as an eligibility condition. However, the ACT Parliament, after thoroughly reviewing evidence and experiences from both Australian and international jurisdictions, made the informed and appropriate decision not to include a fixed timeframe in its law. This key choice makes the ACT's approach the most compassionate and evidence-based VAD framework in the country.

The Evidence Against Prognostic Timeframes

Prognostic timeframes are not safeguards in the true sense. They do not protect the so-called "vulnerable" — other provisions

in the legislation already do that. Their sole practical effect is to exclude eligible and suffering individuals from accessing VAD.

Medical professionals consistently testify that predicting life expectancy is notoriously unreliable. Even experienced clinicians have described prognosis as “an educated guess.” Studies show doctors frequently overestimate life left, countering claims from opponents that “patients live longer than predicted.”

In short, using a timeframe as a gatekeeping mechanism is neither fair nor clinically sound. The NT Parliamentary Committee evaluated this evidence and concluded that eligibility should be based on intolerable and hopeless suffering, not an arbitrary timeframe.

The Human Impact

Submission-No.-321 to the NT Parliamentary Committee, from Dying with Dignity NSW captured moving examples of the suffering caused by this restriction. It highlighted the plight of people living for years with progressive, neurodegenerative diseases — unable to move, breathe unaided, or communicate effectively — yet denied access to VAD because they are not deemed “close enough” to death, or if they are, they are likely deemed incompetent.

Such cases strike at the heart of why VAD exists: to alleviate intolerable mental and physical suffering when no other pathway remains. Conditioning eligibility on arbitrary prognostic estimates undermines the very compassion these laws are meant to serve.

It should also be remembered that the majority who benefit from VAD laws will never use them. The mere knowledge that such an option exists — that control rests with them if

NT urged to heed lessons



Photos supplied: Peter Warren right and Sue Shearer above, address the audience at the recent Audience with Peter Warren event.

Have you...

- Revised the [latest report from Go Gentle Australia](#)
- Read the [community information brochure](#)
- **Told your MLA how you want them to vote.**



The event was supported by NT advocates, Advocating for Choice and Dying with Dignity Victoria.

COTA NT hosted an open community event, *An Audience with Peter Warren, Executive Director of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies* on 20 April attended by community members in-person and online including Leader of the Opposition Selena Uibo and MLAs, Justine Davis, Laurie Zio and Tanzil Rahman.

The *World Federation Right to Die Societies* (WF) supports the NT in the fight to regain its rights to VAD and wants the NT to know there is strong support for them outside of the Territory. In his address, Peter paid tribute to NT advocates, Marshall Perron and Judy Dent in particular. He brought focus on the opposition tactics that go on around the world and which he believes we will see in the Northern Territory.

These extracts from his presentation are published with permission:

“ I can tell you, worldwide, some things never change. Opponents to Assisted Dying are still using the same arguments that Marshall Perron faced back in 1995. Be ready for them. As much as you think that it is almost inevitable that you will pass the law here, it isn’t. ”

continued on next page

unbearable suffering arises — provides immense comfort, especially to elderly Australians witnessing the decline of their own bodies.

A Chance for the Territory to Lead The Northern Territory has a historic opportunity, once again, to lead Australia in humane lawmaking. In 1995, the NT pioneered end-of-life choice through the Rights of the

Terminally Ill Act — the first in the world.

By following the ACT’s example and rejecting rigid prognostic criteria, the Territory can again set a compassionate and principled standard that upholds autonomy, dignity, and mercy.

To include a timeframe in eligibility would be to perpetuate a major flaw in the existing Australian State model. To omit

one, as the ACT has done, would affirm that the object of VAD is not to limit numbers, but to relieve suffering consistent with respect for individual choice.

In doing so, the Northern Territory can again demonstrate leadership, wisdom, and humanity in end-of-life law reform.

Yours sincerely,
Marshall Perron

“ The arguments you hear and will hear against AD in NT are the same that were used in Scotland — when it failed to pass its law. They are being used in the UK Westminster Parliament right now. They are being used elsewhere — Canada — Slovenia — France — USA. ”

Fear of coercion

An ever-present argument. Used by opponents to suggest that someone, often that an older person may be persuaded or coerced, into an assisted death.

Arguments such as carer fatigue or loss of family inheritance through extended health care costs for example, means someone could face subtle or not-so-subtle suggestions that it is time for them to ‘do the right thing.’

Except...Extensive experience across jurisdictions clearly point to the opposite being the case.

Families and loved ones don’t want to see the person dying, Coercion is most likely going to be for them to ‘soldier on’ rather than ‘pull the plug’.

Should a loved one take a medication or undergo an operation, stop or start a new medical regime.

Fear for the vulnerable

Linked to coercion — the mantra is that those who are ill, or live with a disability, or elderly are, by the very nature of their condition, vulnerable.

People can also become ‘vulnerable’ at many other points in their lives. The loss of a job, unstable housing situations, and illness can often make life difficult.

To protect people, some jurisdictions, including here in the NT have suggested or have included a *gag clause* in assisted dying legislation.

Except...With the strongest voice possible the WF says don’t do this.

Evidence from elsewhere is that it stops the medical teams from doing their jobs

VAD legislation always includes strong guidelines about what is legal and ethical — why would a medic step outside these boundaries and jeopardise not only their career but possibly their freedom as well?

Repealed in Victoria — NZ also want to repeal.

Fear for the disabled

Time and again, opponents of assisted dying claim that people living with a disability live in fear of being persuaded into an assisted death. Some jurisdictions have included prognosis periods as a ‘protection of the disabled’.

Except...There is no evidence from any jurisdiction anywhere that people living with a disability disproportionately access assisted dying.

Given the work that has gone on for decades around disability rights, and returning agency to those living with disability, the Federation is disappointed that such arguments are offered. We suggest that it would be cruel in the extreme to exclude someone from an assisted death if they qualified under a jurisdiction’s law but were excluded by dint of some prior part of the law excluding them on the basis of their disability.

To be clear... Structural inequality is often part of living with disability. However, many people who live with a disability want to know that if a time came when they might need to access an assisted death, they should have the same right that any other person has.

For these reasons, the Federation strongly pushes back on prognosis periods — ACT has got it right — the NT has the chance to do the same.



The Opposition Playbook: Tactics, tone and international cohesion. A gentle heads up!

In both the Scottish and UK Bill, we have seen the emergence of a much more cohesive coordinated attack on Assisted Dying.

Beyond the UK, we see conservative faith organisations working together to either undermine or overturn VAD legislation. These organisations are well-funded and are willing to intervene directly into national conversations on VAD. In the UK, this was evidenced, for example, by ‘volunteer’ researchers being brought into Parliaments to bolster opposition activity — funded by faith organisations. Other examples: Slovenia — referendum, European Centre for Law and Justice — Christian NGO based in Strasbourg with international connections, protecting the disabled, endless warnings about coercion and protecting the vulnerable, removing ‘faith’ from frontline arguments, honing the language they are willing to use to disrupt the conversations around VAD (poison not medication, suicide not assisted dying, killing not relief of suffering).

...the clear message is one that can be taken to the heart of any government contemplating assisted dying -legislation — including right here in NT — AD laws are safe, they are well regulated and they work.

Aged care consultations

Janet Brown, COTA NT

Recently multiple media sources have been discussing the failures of the new Support at Home system. Do be assured that many sections of the aged care community are pressuring the Commonwealth Government to listen to the concerns and complaints voiced.

OPAN (Older Persons Advocacy Network) and COTA Australia have both expressed concern that the implementation of the new Aged Care Act has failed to ensure older people are no worse off.

There are also issues relating to continuing long waiting

times for assessment and package availability, increased hourly service provider costs, interim packages that only offer 60% of the assessed services needed and problems with transparency.

There have also been reports of providers pressuring older people to sign contracts immediately; despite having 90 days from the time they receive their determination letter from Services Australia and of older people having to apply and join a long waitlist for reassessment just to cover the number of services per month their former package delivered.

If you are feeling anxious about your current aged care services or planning to apply for future care for yourself or a family member, you can book a free consultation with COTA's Aged Care Navigators.

They will be able to give you up-to-date and relevant information about aged care provision in the Northern Territory. They can explain the complexities of the aged care system in jargon-free, easy to understand language. They will ensure you understand what to do next and how to do it.

- Call COTA NT on 8941 1004 to book a consultation.
- Consultations can be in-person, phone or via video call.
- As this service is not funded by grants or any 3rd party, [donations](#) are welcome but not obligatory.
- Priority bookings are given to COTA NT Members.

See page 4 to register for Aged Care Reform webinars.

In case of emergency

Pick up a free In Case of Emergency (ICE) card from COTA NT head office or at events whilst stocks last.

These cards are designed to help emergency responders quickly and easily find important information about you, should you have an accident.

- Space for details of 2 emergency contacts, conditions, medication and allergies
 - Designed to be carried in wallet or purse
 - More discreet than medical bracelets
 - Perfect for when smartphones are flat
 - Provide peace of mind.
- It is also recommended to



Thanks to COTA NT members (above), ZipPrint Darwin NT and Carly Cord-Udy.

have *In Case of Emergency* information stored on your smartphone.

How to information is available on the [Be Connected website](#).

Pick up in person

- Seniors Card 18 May Coolalinga Shopping Centre
- COTA NT 27 June Seniors Expo, Netball Stadium, Marrara



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Every dollar helps us look out for senior Territorians



All donations are spent in the Territory on programs designed to improve seniors' health and wellbeing.



together we make change happen

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www.cofant.org.au/donate



Morning tea + speaker series
Open to all members of the community

 **Monday 15 June 2026**
10AM to 12PM

 **Livingstone Recreation Reserve**
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Bookings are required
RSVP 10 June



THE HON. MARION SCRYMGOUR MP
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ENVOY FOR REMOTE COMMUNITIES

COTA NT Berry Springs Branch invites you to join them at this free morning tea. Call Kerryn to book on 0409 694 075 or call Head Office on 8941 1004 during office hours (M to F, 9am-3pm)

When information speaks your language

Cecilia Chiolero, PICAC NT

Making information accessible and removing barriers to services has always been a priority of the Australian Government.

Information is power. Receiving information in a preferred language helps people to be part of the conversation and the decision making process. Whether through an interpreter during a conversation, or by receiving translated flyers, information and contracts, it gives people the confidence to make informed choices.

Language services are available for anyone who needs them, including older people, their families and aged care providers.

Interpreting through [TIS National](#) and translations through the [Different languages, same aged care](#) initiative are available at no cost for older people and aged care providers. They simply require a little lead time.

Contract checklists can be especially useful in helping providers be prepared to support older people and their families to reflect on important aspects that could otherwise be overlooked.

The checklists were already available in multiple languages but have been updated to align with the new Aged Care Act, which came into effect in November 2025. They are now available in **64 languages** and help older people, families



Vietnamese contract checklist shown — one of 64 available.

and carers better understand their rights and responsibilities when entering agreements for government subsidised home care services.

With so many changes taking place, it is no surprise that people can feel confused or overwhelmed. Entering the aged care system often happens at a difficult and stressful time. Helping people understand by removing the language barrier, is always seen as a sign that a provider is willing to go the extra mile and deliver services that are truly centred on the needs of each individual.

These resources are free to download at, www.cotant.org.au/picac/resources.

Want to learn more about language services? Join PICACs NT, QLD and TAS on 27 May for a webinar with practical tips, step by step instructions and case stories.

For translations and interpreting services contact PICAC NT or call 8941 1004.

Rising cost of keeping cool is making us sick

Sweltering Cities, a national community voice for heat safety, released its [key findings from its 2026 Summer Survey](#).

- 61% of respondents said cost-of-living pressures directly impacted how they managed the heat. Nearly two-thirds ration air conditioning due to concerns about cost.
- 24% reported being concerned about energy costs on a daily basis, adding a significant mental burden to heat health risks.
- 82% of people with disabilities said cost-of-living stress impacted their ability

to manage heatwaves, with 39% worrying about energy costs every single day.

- 43% of people are being impacted by heat at work or school, yet nearly 40% say their employers or institutions are failing to do enough to keep them safe.

Sweltering Cities is calling for:

- Mandatory heat safety and cooling standards for all rental properties.
- Access to clean, affordable energy for renters, low-income households, and people experiencing energy stress.
- Nationwide regulations for heat safety at workplaces and schools.



With over 28 years experience of helping families in their time of need.

- ✎ We offer free funeral advice
- ✎ Find out how funeral bonds can improve your centrelink payments
- ✎ Kind and compassionate staff understanding your needs
- ✎ Discuss pre-planning funerals

Caring for you and your family in your time of need

Our services are personalised and tailored for families to celebrate the life of their loved ones. We listen to what each family needs and wants are and ensure we carry out their wishes. We help guide families throughout each stage of the funeral process. We help take the stress away at this difficult time.

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19 McCourt Rd, Yarrowonga

08 8914 9555

Register your event



COTA NT is proud to produce the Northern Territory's Seniors Month Calendar — in both print and digital formats — on behalf of the Northern Territory Government.

The calendar showcases a wide range of activities designed to support older Territorians to stay active, try something new, and connect with their community.

Event registrations are now open. Events can be submitted online via form or by Word document, both available at: www.cotant.org.au/seniors-month-calendar.

If you need assistance accessing or completing the event registration form, please contact COTA NT on 8941 1004 during office hours, or [email the Project Manager](#).

While space in the printed calendar is prioritised for grant recipients, listings are open to all legitimate seniors' event organisers. Printed calendars will be available from community distribution points in mid-July.

To ensure fair access to popular events, most listings will go live on the online calendar at the same time.

Falls are no joke

More than 400 older Australians are hospitalised every day because of a fall and an average of 17 of those people will die as a result.*

A person's balance typically begins to decline around 45 years-old and data shows a significant jump in occurrence of fall injuries after 65. Australians over 65 years of age are almost 12 times more likely to get injured due to a fall when compared to 25 to 44 year-olds, with people above 85 the most likely to spend time in hospital. The most common type of fall that results in hospitalisation is a simple slip or trip at home. **CLICK TO READ > [Don't fall for it.](#)**

**Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare*

Renew your NT Seniors Recognition Scheme membership



The NT Seniors Recognition Scheme provides a **\$550 prepaid card** each financial year to eligible Northern Territory seniors.

To continue receiving a prepaid card, you must remain eligible and renew between 1 January and 30 June to ensure your card is ready to use from the start of the new financial year. If your details aren't updated during this time, or you no longer meet eligibility criteria, your membership may be placed on hold or cancelled.

Apply, renew or get assistance

- ntconcessions.nt.gov.au
- 1800 777 704
- in person at one of our service centres.

Using your card

Your card can be used at participating businesses to help with everyday expenses such as groceries, fuel, travel, and more.



Groceries



Travel



Clothing



Fuel



White goods



Power and water



Bills



Veterinary services



Driver licence



Postage



Car registration



Coffee

Use the card by 30 June each year, any remaining funds on the card will be cleared at the end of the financial year. Funds do not accrue.

The NT Seniors Recognition Scheme Prepaid Visa Card ('Card') is issued by Heritage Bank, a trading name of Heritage and People's Choice Ltd ABN 11 087 651 125, AFSL and Australian Credit Licence 244310. Visit ntconcessions.nt.gov.au/activate to check your card balance.



Department of
PEOPLE, SPORT
AND CULTURE



Ageing with Grace and friendship: free support that makes a real difference

Loneliness can quietly become part of everyday life for many older people in Darwin, particularly when distance, health changes or reduced mobility make it harder to stay socially connected.

"While services often focus on physical care, the need for genuine human connection is just as important," said Ageing with Grace CEO, Esis Tawfik.

Through the *Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme*, Ageing with Grace is providing completely free social support by connecting older people with friendly, carefully matched volunteers who offer regular visits. Importantly, this support is delivered by its dedicated team right here in the Northern Territory, so it's local, familiar and responsive.

"These visits are completely free. There is no co-contribution and it doesn't come out of a person's Support at Home package," said Ms Tawfik. "It's simply about making sure people have access to connection and companionship without any financial barrier."

Visits are simple but meaningful. A conversation over a cup of tea, sharing stories or simply having someone sit and listen.

"It's not about doing anything extraordinary," Ms Tawfik said. "It's about showing up, being present and building a genuine connection over time."

The service is available to people who are:

- Living in a residential aged

care home

- Receiving a Support at Home package
- Or approved and currently waitlisted for either.

Referrals are easy. Anyone can make a referral. A family member, friend, neighbour or service provider. As long as the person receiving the visits has given their consent.

For many participants, these visits become a highlight of their week.

One local participant Marjorie shared, "My visitor is wonderful, it has helped so much. We go for coffee or stay in and chat, we're a bit cheeky together. I feel like I have known her for years."

Volunteers also speak about the impact of the program.

"I first started because I had some free time while studying and wanted to do something meaningful. But once I started visiting, it became a lot more than that," Stephany said. "Over time, it's become more than just volunteering, it's a genuine friendship and relationship. Something I really value."

That sense of connection supports emotional wellbeing, reduces feelings of isolation and reminds people that they are seen and valued.

"We know there are still many people in our community who would benefit from this," said Ms Tawfik. "Sometimes they just don't realise it's available or that it's completely free."

Ageing with Grace is encouraging the community



Ageing with Grace volunteer, Stephany

to help spread the word and make referrals.

If you know someone who might benefit, or even if you're unsure, reaching out could make all the difference.

"Connection doesn't have to

be complicated," Ms Tawfik said. "Sometimes, it starts with a simple visit, and that can change everything."

Contact Ageing with Grace at acvvs.nt@ageingwithgrace.org.au or **call Helen 0448 440 331**.

Senior Territorians, we are here to help

Victims of Crime NT are a community organisation that provide:

- Information and referral to help you manage during a stressful time
- Emotional and wellbeing support strategies for your needs
- Support to navigate the justice system
- Financial assistance to resecure your home or vehicle **
- Preventative support to improve your home security

** eligibility applies

Improving your safety and security
FREE Home Security Assessments

We can visit your home, talk through your security concerns and provide some advice and tips to enhance your personal and home security. You may also qualify for some funding to help with your preferred security improvements.**

Personal Safety Workshops
Learn new strategies with others to improve your confidence and manage your safety in a range of situations. See our website for more information and upcoming workshop dates.

1800 672 242
www.victimsofcrime.org.au

Victims of
Crime NT



*A friendly face can make
all the difference*



Ageing with Grace provides
FREE social support
through friendly volunteer visitors 

Our service is available to older Australians who are:

- **Receiving a Support at Home package**
- **Living in Residential Aged Care**

Enjoy regular visits, meaningful conversation & companionship!

CONTACT US TO GET STARTED

Email: acvvs.nt@ageingwithgrace.org.au
Phone: **0491 272 417**
Website: www.ageingwithgrace.org.au

Have your say



Send your letters, questions or comments to the Editor.

By email
communications@cotant.org.au

By post
COTA NT, Seniors
Voice
GPO Box 852
Darwin NT 0800

Any discounts with Jacana for 61 year-olds?

Hi guys. I was just wondering if at age 61 and a member of COTA, am I eligible for any discount with Jacana Energy? I did try their website but it was hopelessly inadequate regarding my enquiries. Thank you for your time, it's greatly appreciated.

Regards. Jon. F.

Our reply:

Unfortunately Jacana do not offer any discount but if you are on a pension you can get a [discount](#). (You will need to be signed up to the [NT Concession scheme](#) and be the primary account holder, e.g. your name appears on the bill). Then let Jacana know if you are eligible and they will add your concession to your account.

Also [Rimfire Energy](#) offers a discount so maybe you could contact them.

Hi Sue Thank you so much for your help and quick reply, I really appreciate it. Yep, Rimfire might just be worth a look. Thanks again. Regards Jon

Does my ex have claim to my estate?

Ms Jane Smith is concerned about the distribution of her estate after she passes away. She separated from her husband many, many years ago, but never divorced. Neither does she have a Will.

Our response:

Response. As they are not divorced her husband would be entitled to make a claim on her estate. In this situation, it is very important that Jane seeks the advice of a solicitor as soon as possible.

In the Northern Territory (NT), if a person dies without a will (intestate), their estate is distributed according to the Administration and Probate

E-commentary

You can see COTA NT Facebook pages at a glance on the website [here](#). Not here, but up and running is the newly published COTA NT Palmerston and Rural page (www.facebook.com/COTANTPalmerstonRural). Feel free to follow and tag us with your news.

We will share when we can (priority is given to our Club and Associate and network due to traffic volume).

An Audience with Peter Warren

You [Anna, COTA Events Organiser] did a great job in bringing it all together. Sue as usual, shined on the day. Regards, Allan

Victoria has had VAD operating for 7 years but we, and no other jurisdictions where VAD has been legalised, can EVER afford to be complacent and must remain vigilant. The opposition are not going to disappear, as Peter has emphasised. *Jane Morris*

I met Peter in Brisbane last week at the ICEL5 Conference, and he is an unassuming, friendly man who is easy to talk to — and very knowledgeable. *Geoffrey Williams*

See page 23 for City of Darwin's statement on Disability Parking Arrangements for permit holders in Darwin CBD

Act 1969, prioritising spouses and children.

If the estate is worth \$350,000 or less, the spouse inherits the whole estate. If the estate is worth more than \$350,000, the spouse inherits \$350,000 and the children/grandchildren inherit the balance of the deceased estate.

Jane was advised to contact Darwin Community Legal Service; attend one of their free legal clinics, or a solicitor of her choice for further information and advice.

Hefty invoice for meals

Janice contacted COTA NT with a concern about an invoice from Meals on Wheels.

'Last year a family member received an invoice for Meals on Wheels in the amount of \$900. Fortunately, they were able to pay, however, if this

occurred to a pensioner it could be very distressing.

As of Dec 2025, they have still not received any invoices from the service provider and are wondering what they should do.'

Our advice:

In any case where a client of an aged care provider is dissatisfied regarding services, complaints should initially be sent directly to the service provider. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily or if the client does not feel confident to raise the issue, they should contact the advocates at the Seniors Rights Service (Darwin Community Legal Service in the Top End and Catholic Care in Central Australia) for assistance.

Advocacy is a right under the Aged Care Act. This is a free service which provides advice and support to Senior receiving aged care support at home or in nursing homes.

Free RSV vaccines

From May 15 Australians aged 75 and over and can receive free Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccination. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are eligible from the aged of 60.

Eligible Australians can receive the free RSV vaccine through their preferred local health service including GPs, immunisation clinics, community and Aboriginal health services and participating pharmacies.

The government has invested \$445.3 million, to give eligible Australians free access to the RSV vaccine Arexvy® through the National Immunisation Program (NIP). Without listing on the NIP, the RSV vaccination

would typically cost \$300.

RSV is a common respiratory virus that can lead to hospitalisation, intensive care and death. Aged care residents are particularly vulnerable due to shared living arrangements and frequent contact with staff and visitors.

The addition of the RSV vaccine on the NIP for older adults complements the free NIP influenza and COVID-19 vaccine programs.

People can access free NIP influenza vaccines through their GP, pharmacy, community health centre or Aboriginal health service. or more information about immunisation talk to your healthcare provider. View [National Immunisation Program](#).

The Great Dunny Hunt

The Great Dunny Hunt

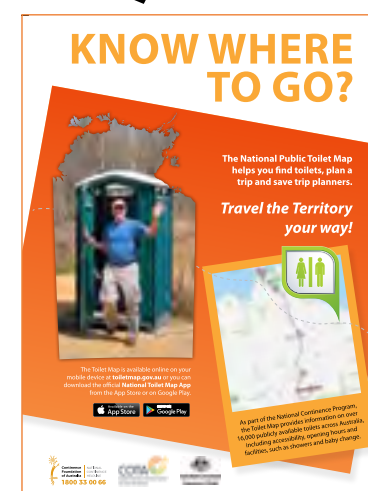
2026 runs to 15 June and is a campaign by Continence Health Australia encouraging the public to find, photograph and register/update "hidden" public toilets on the National Public Toilet Map.

This initiative improves planning, access, inclusion and confidence for people with continence issues.

Participants stand a chance to win a \$1,000 Discovery Holiday Parks voucher.

How to Participate

1. Find a Loo: Locate a public toilet not on the map or needing update.
2. Take a Photo: Snap a picture of the outside of the toilet and amenities.



COTA NT supported The Toilet Map project in 2018. This flyer is still available to download [here](#).

3. Submit: Upload the details through the National Public Toilet Map website or the official app.
4. Enter Competition: Select the option to join the Great Dunny Hunt for a chance to win prizes.

More info and T&Cs [here](#).



Boost your health with your community

Become a volunteer walk organiser and start a Heart Foundation Walking group

Looking for an easy way to enjoy fitness with friends in your community? Heart Foundation groups provide a free, safe and supportive environment to walk together for a healthy mind, body and heart.

Benefits

-  Improve your health, wellbeing and mood
-  Lead your own group at a day and time that suits you
-  Walk with like-minded people
-  Reduce loneliness and social isolation
-  Improve self confidence
-  Enjoy local walks

Want to start your own group?

Starting a Heart Foundation Walking group is a great way to connect with your community

- Free merchandise and resources
- Your NT based Heart Foundation team member will support you every step of the way
- Full training provided

☎ 13 11 12 ➡ walking.heartfoundation.org.au/start-group

Terms of use: This material has been developed by the National Heart Foundation of Australia (Heart Foundation) for general information and educational purposes only. It does not constitute medical advice. Please consult your healthcare provider if you have, or suspect you have, a health problem. The information provided is based on evidence available at the time of publication. Please refer to the Heart Foundation Walking website at <https://walking.heartfoundation.org.au/terms-and-conditions/walk-organiser> for Terms of Use.
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Australian Government

Geriatric ambulance service for NT?

Sue Shearer, COTA NT

Could a new initiative in Delhi, India — introducing a fleet of 20 dedicated geriatric ambulances for senior citizens — prompt a discussion about how emergency care is delivered to people aged 65+ living in the Northern Territory.

According to the *Times of India*, the geriatric ambulance program by the Delhi Government, will deploy 20 specially equipped ambulances designed to respond to the complex health needs of older patients. This is part of a broader effort to enhance healthcare accessibility, strengthen emergency response capacity and improve

outcomes for an ageing population.

The introduction of dedicated geriatric ambulances in Delhi looks like a strategic and timely shift in thinking: designing emergency care systems for an ageing population rather than simply expanding existing services.

For the Northern Territory, perhaps we too should be asking whether different types of emergency response are required? With our own ageing population, increasing demand on emergency services and rising costs across the health system, the Delhi approach may have lessons for us.

Potentially, a (free) geriatric-focused ambulance model working alongside Front Door Frailty (FDF) programs

(providing rapid assessment and intervention when patients present to the emergency department) may reduce avoidable hospital presentations and improve comfort and dignity for older patients. It may also improve integration with aged care and community-based services.

This may be another opportunity for the Northern Territory to be at the forefront of geriatric emergency response. We will discuss this idea with NT Health in upcoming discussions.

St John Ambulance

On a side note, I was talking on 360 with Katie Woolf on Mix 104.9 recently about the difficulties faced by St John Ambulance when provided with short-term funding in regards to planning (services, staffing and training). COTA NT lobbied on their behalf for more sustainable funding.

So it was heartening to read the NT Minister for Health’s media release (23 April 2026) that the NT Government will be providing St John Ambulance with a \$10m support package in the 2026 budget to help meet increasing ambulance demand.

The \$10m is for an immediate boost in operations, while a five-year funding agreement is finalised. The deal providing certainty and security to both paramedics and Territorians.

Like the aerial ambulance service providers in the NT, St John Ambulance Australia is a not-for profit organisation. Its ambulance service are road based and are not a free emergency service, it is a “user pays” system.

Ambulance transport charges are based on a priority call out code, (determined at the time of the ‘000’ call) and patient kilometres travelled to hospital. Without subscription cover or private health insurance, you will be charged for emergency transport, which includes a call-out fee and per-kilometre charges.

St John Subscription Cover

	Single	Family
1 year	\$151	\$175
2 years	\$248	\$325
3 years	\$328	\$460
Holiday (up to 21 days)	\$35	\$55

Prices taken from the St John website at time of publication

To apply, download the application form on their website (www.stjohnnt.org.au/ambulance-services/emergency-ambulance-transport-cover) or (08) 8922 6200 for help or more information.

Private health

If you have ambulance cover with a Private Health Insurer you are required to lodge a claim with them in the first instance. If the claim is declined then it may be covered by your Centrelink Concession Card.

NT residents who are the holder of a current **NT** Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card, Health Care Card, or Veterans Affairs Card may be entitled to free ambulance transport in the Northern Territory.

St John NT requires your card details to verify that the card is valid at time of transport.

VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING

Now it's your turn

I SUPPORT VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING CHOICE FOR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Signature _____

Name _____

Suburb _____

Electorate / MLA (if known) _____

Go Gentle Australia

On completion, your card will become a public document used for showing your support of the campaign.

WRITE THE LAW NOW



Download a free pledge card. Sign it. Deliver it. Make sure your local Member sees it. GET HEARD

www.cotant.org.au/pledge

COTA NORTHERN TERRITORY

Go Gentle Australia

Note: Spouses/Partners listed on cards are not necessarily entitled to free ambulance transport.

If you hold a Commonwealth Seniors Health Care Card, NT Concession Scheme Card, or NT Seniors Card, you are **not** covered for ambulance transport in the Northern Territory.

NT Concession Card holders travelling interstate

Even if you are covered for free ambulance transport in the NT with your concession card, this may not be the case when travelling interstate. Read more on the [St John FAQ](#).

Air Ambulances

CareFlight — Operate aerial ambulance services in the Top End and offer emergency medical retrievals via plane and hospital. CareFlight services in the NT are heavily subsidised by the government

and donations, often making them free to patients for emergency, doctor-led aeromedical retrievals. The cost of non-emergency patient transport can vary depending on the type of service, the location, and the patient's individual circumstances. Read more about the service at [careflight.org](#).

In Central Australia, emergency aeromedical evacuations and clinical services are provided by **Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS)** with the Alice Springs Hospital and are free of charge to patients. The service is funded by government funding, donations and fundraising, ensuring no cost to patients for emergency, dental, or telehealth services in remote areas. Read more at [www.flyingdoctor.org.au](#).

Diary dates

May	18 – 24	National Volunteer Week
	10	Mother's Day
June	13	Last day to register for Darwin Seniors Expo
	15	Elder Abuse Awareness Day
	23	New Seniors Card Discount Directory
	27	Darwin Seniors Expo
	30	Last day to renew NT Seniors Recognition Scheme
July	1	Renew COTA NT memberships
	15	Seniors Month Calendar release due
	28	Last day to register for Alice Springs Seniors Expo
August	1 – 31	NT Seniors Month
	3	Picnic Day
	6 – 23	Darwin Festival
		Scams Awareness Week
	8	Dying to Know Day
	11	Alice Springs Seniors Expo
October	1	International Day of Older Persons
	23	COTA NT AGM
	25	NT Grandparents Day

“A lifetime of stories, experiences, and skills is worth sharing ”

National Volunteer Week is fast approaching — and it’s the perfect time to start thinking about how you’d like to be involved.

Volunteering is a wonderful way to stay active, connect with others, and share the skills and life experience you’ve gained over the years.

Whether it’s helping in your local community, supporting a cause close to your heart, or simply being there for someone who needs a friendly face, every contribution makes a difference.



Step into volunteering!

Volunteering NT is using ‘freddymatch’ to connect volunteers with opportunities online.

Scan the QR code below or visit:
freddymatch.org/agencies/AG-ZE04ZNO/volunteering-nt





 vnt@vsant.org.au

 <https://vsant.org.au/join-us-nt/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/volunteeringnt>

Join COTA NT today

Becoming a member of COTA NT is more than joining a community – it's gaining access to services, opportunities and support designed for senior Territorians

We give you

ACCESS AND SUPPORT

-  **Members' Website**
Resources, guides and updates
-  **Home Maintenance Service**
Available in serviced areas
-  **Priority Aged Care Support**
Help navigating services
-  **Free Online Will Writing**
Peace of mind for the future
-  **COTA Insurance Access**
Home, contents, travel, car and more

A VOICE

-  **Participate in consultations, campaigns and surveys**
-  **Go in the draw for giveaways and prizes**
-  **Vote at the Annual General Meeting**

CONNECTION AND BENEFITS

-  **Priority Event Invitations**
Be first to know
-  **Health and Wellness Discounts**
Online and in-person activities
-  **Members-Only Events**
Outings, lunches and social activities
-  **Dedicated Member Support**
Help from our Head Office team
-  **Seniors Voice Newsletter**
Quarterly updates to your inbox



Join online today

 **Visit** www.cotant.org.au/join
 **Call** 08 8941 1004
 **Email** membership@cotant.org.au

The perfect class combo

Super Ageing is not about being extraordinary, says trainer Sharon Kelly. It's about classes designed for ordinary individuals of every body type, shape and age, which combine to help people make real progress on their overall strength and mobility.

Super Ageing is not about pushing harder. It's about moving smarter, staying capable and building strength that supports your everyday life.

Every class I teach is built around one core idea: *helping you stay independent, confident and strong in your body as you age*. That means there is no one size fits all approach. Your body tells a story — past injuries, habits, lifestyle — and I work *with* that, not against it.

Across all classes, the focus stays consistent.

- Safety first — movements are controlled, joint friendly and pain-free.
- Feel the movement — you know where the work should be, not just going through the motions.
- Improve with purpose — small adjustments that make a big difference.

You won't hear complicated instructions or feel left behind. Cueing is clear, simple and designed to help you connect to what your body is doing. The goal is not perfection — it's progress you can feel.

Where Super Ageing stands apart is how each class targets a different piece of your overall strength and mobility.

Pilates This is your

foundation. I focus on posture, core strength and control. It's about supporting your spine, improving alignment and helping your body move efficiently. Many people notice less back discomfort, better balance and more confidence in getting up and down from the floor.

Strong & Functional This is where strength meets real life. We train movements you use every day — lifting, reaching, standing strong. It's done standing, building bone strength, muscle and stability. This is the class that helps you feel capable — whether it's carrying groceries or getting up and down from a chair with ease.

Seated Aerobics Accessible, energising and far more effective than people expect. This class improves cardiovascular fitness, coordination and mobility — all while being kind to your joints. We also include standing balance work to keep your stability sharp. It's a great option if you're managing injuries, returning to exercise or simply prefer a supported approach.

Fitness 4 Independence This is the bigger picture. A combination of strength, balance and mobility designed specifically to help you maintain your independence. It brings together everything your body needs to keep doing the things you enjoy — confidently and safely.

What ties all of this combo of classes together is the way they're taught.

- You're encouraged to work at your level.

Sharon Kelly is a qualified Group Fitness instructor and has worked in the fitness industry for nearly 40 years.

In 2020 during the COVID pandemic, she extended the reach of her classes by creating a [Super Ageing YouTube](#) channel of online classes and invited people to attend her Darwin-based classes. Her channel now boasts over 350 class videos and has over 2.3K subscribers. Classes are free but donations can be made via Sharon's [Buy Me a Coffee](#) page.



Bookings are essential for all classes
Bookings via [superageing.com.au/bookings](#)

Pilates	Mondays 9.30 – 10.15am	Darwin and via Zoom \$10 per class, COTA Members \$8
Strong and Functional	Tuesdays 9 – 9.45am	Darwin and via Zoom \$10 per class, COTA Members \$8
Seated Aerobics	Wednesdays 9.30 – 10.15am	Darwin and via Zoom \$10 per class, COTA Members \$8
Fitness 4 Independence	Fridays 8 – 9.45am	Nightcliff Community Centre \$5 per class
Strength and Balance	Fridays 10.30 – 11.30am	Fitness Works, Darwin Membership or casual visit

- Options are always given.
- Rest is respected.
- Progress is built gradually, not rushed.

And most importantly — you're supported every step of the way. This isn't about keeping up with anyone else.

It's about showing up for yourself. Because the sooner you start, the sooner your body responds — and the longer you stay strong, capable and independent.

That's what Super Ageing is all about.

Masters Games 2026



Entry for the Alice Springs Masters Games 2026 is now open. Details and registrations, [alicespringsmastersgames.com.au](#).

Aqua HIIT

Aqua is indeed a hit and perfect for us as we grow older. Don't worry about baggy bathers — really no-one cares. Just give it go and see what you think.

Aqua HIIT at the Ski Club is part of Healthy Darwin's Dry Season subsidised classes. You can check out the full program at www.darwin.nt.gov.au/community/programs/healthy-darwin.

Healthy Darwin Aqua HIIT is on Saturdays, 8 – 8:45am, \$5 per session.

Over to Nikki Higgins, VET Lecturer / Workplace Assessor – Fitness

Aqua HIIT is perfect for seniors

- Low impact on joints — the water supports your body, reducing stress on knees, hips and back
- Improves strength & fitness in a safe environment
- Boosts balance & mobility, helping reduce risk of falls
- Great for heart health with gentle cardio intervals
- Fun, social atmosphere — meet others and enjoy moving together!

What to expect

First, pay your annual \$15 Aqua Ski Club Membership Fee, then you're ready to jump in!

Aqua HIIT (High-Intensity Interval Training) alternates short periods of more intense exercise with easier recovery periods — so you work at your own pace while still getting great results.



A safe, fun and effective way to stay active. Photo Nikki Higgins.

The buoyancy of the water allows you to exercise at a higher level with less impact, making it one of the safest and most effective ways to improve strength and fitness.

Classes include:

- Toning and cardio exercises to music
- Deep water workouts using a variety of equipment
- Buoyancy belts provided — no swimming ability required
- Suitable for all fitness levels and abilities.

What to bring

Bring along your:

- Hat
- Towel
- Water bottle

Take the plunge!

Whether you're just getting started or looking to maintain your fitness, Aqua HIIT is a fantastic way to stay strong, healthy, and connected.

We'd love to see you there!

Not just talking the talk...

Ed's notes

Stephanie Kendall, COTA NT

A few editions ago, we wrote about how in our 50s, we can prepare for the life we want in our 70s. This advice sat with me and I am now happily "eating my own dog food."

So now in my mid 50s, I am slowly and somewhat reluctantly accepting that I cannot move and exercise in the same way as I could in my teens (who'd have thought).

Three orthopaedic surgeons have told me that my dodgy (aka arthritic) knee is not going to improve with wishful thinking. That I should substitute my favourite activities of running and dancing, with swimming and cycling.

Well, I found numerous reasons not to heed their advice — I'm not going to be told what I can't do being one, swimming is boring, cycling is dangerous being others.

However, I have now embarked on *low-impact* dance classes, aquacise and cycling (wearing fluoro just about everywhere and aiming for safety, not speed).

And what do you know? I am enjoying myself heaps — keeping active and finding other ways to fit movement in around the working day.

I have new friends from my aquacise classes who, like me, love to chat and drink coffee. I am also learning life lessons, picking up plenty of advice and child-raising tips. (They may be currently hanging out with grandchildren whilst I am still

working with my teens, but their wisdom is sound, their experience priceless and their stories reassuring).

There are plenty of aquacise classes across the NT to try -including Nikki's Aqua HIIT at the Ski Club pool in Darwin on Saturdays and Wave Lagoon classes on Sundays. There are full timetables at Swell in Palmerston, the Aquatic Centre in Alice Springs and more besides. (Just search online). Hopefully you'll meet other aqua devotees all enjoying low impact, stress relieving water-based classes (and coffee).

Not sure I'm ready to 'sell' cycling just yet, but it has its funny moments. At the lights the other day, a small boy leaned out of his Dad's car window to ask, "How fast can you go then?" It was obvious that he and I both knew, fast wasn't my gear.

Finally in appreciation of **National Healthy Ageing Day (6 May)**, we in the office are trying on some new habits:

- Starting with small sustainable actions (drinking more water)
- Moving more in the day
- Strengthening social connections (talking more!)
- Giving our brains new challenges
- Protecting our well-being.



Smart ways to save money as fuel prices climb

Kim Farrar, NT Seniors Card

With the cost of living continuing to climb — particularly fuel — many of us are feeling the pressure on our household budgets. The good news is that small changes, combined with support programs like the NT Seniors Card, can make a meaningful difference.

Rising fuel prices are one of the biggest concerns, but a simple strategy like combining errands into one trip can significantly reduce fuel usage. Instead of making multiple short journeys throughout the week, planning and completing tasks in a single outing can lead to noticeable savings.

It also pays to **shop around for cheaper fuel**. Prices can vary widely between service stations, even within the same suburb. Keeping an eye on local trends or using fuel price apps can help ensure you're filling up at the best possible rate. Check out the My Fuel website, <https://myfuelnt.nt.gov.au/>

For shorter trips, consider leaving the car at home altogether. **Walking** not only saves fuel but also provides valuable physical activity. **Public transport** is another affordable option, with many seniors eligible for discounted fares. Members of the NT Seniors Card program are entitled to **free** bus travel on the public networks in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Maintaining your vehicle is another often overlooked way to save money. Ensuring

tyres are properly inflated and your car is regularly serviced, can improve fuel efficiency and prevent costly repairs down the track. Get tyre pressure checked at one of the NT Seniors card business partners such as [Tyreplus in Parap](#). They offer a 10% discount. More Business Partners offering discounts for car and boat repairs can be found [here](#) (on the online Discount Directory).

Beyond fuel, everyday savings can add up quickly — and this is where the NT Seniors Card plays an important role. The program provides access to a wide range of discounts across retail, dining, travel and services throughout the Northern Territory.

By simply **using their Seniors Card**, shoppers can reduce the cost of groceries, meals, household goods and even some essential services. These savings may seem small at first, but over time they can significantly ease financial pressure.

At home, **reducing electricity usage** by switching off appliances and using energy-efficient lighting can also help cut bills. Pairing these habits with Seniors Card discounts on goods and services can stretch the household budget even further.

Food is another area where savings can be made. Cooking meals at home and preparing food in bulk is far more economical than eating out — but when you do choose to dine out, Seniors Card discounts at participating venues can help make it more



"Many seniors are missing out on valuable savings simply because they forget to ask. We encourage everyone to always present their Seniors Card and ask if a discount applies—it only takes a moment and can make a real difference over time." Kim Farrar

affordable. We have numerous business partners that offer 20% off meals — some of which may be lunches, so pick the times when you get the most bang for your buck.

The [Nightcliff Sport Club](#) is a new business partner offering 20% off meals, lunch and dinner, which is a great value.

[Casuarina All Sports Club](#) offer 10% off meals, [Breezes Bar and Bistro](#) offer 20% off meals at lunch time, and 10% off meals in the evening.

In Alice Springs, you have the [Club Eastside](#) offer \$12.00 seniors menu from 12 pm to 2 pm, plus a few more [The Gapview Hotel](#), [Lasseter's Hotel Casino](#), [Flavours of India](#) and [The Bean Tree Café](#). Find more on the website, ntseniorscard.org.au.*

Buying in bulk can also be beneficial, particularly for non-perishable items — but it's important to only purchase what you regularly use to avoid unnecessary spending.

Social connections can also

lead to savings. Sharing lifts with friends or neighbours not only reduces fuel costs but also helps maintain important social ties.

Finally, **reviewing regular expenses** such as subscriptions, insurance policies, phone and internet plans can uncover opportunities to save. Many businesses partnered with the NT Seniors Card program also offer exclusive deals, making it worthwhile to check what discounts are available.

While rising costs are a reality, using practical strategies alongside programs like the NT Seniors Card can help seniors stay in control of their finances and continue to enjoy an active, connected lifestyle.

*** DISCOUNT DIRECTORY**
For those not online, the new printed edition of the NT Seniors Card Discounted will be available from community distribution points across the Territory from 1 July 2026.

Which card can you get?

Below is a summary of the membership and concession cards available to you.

- COTA NT manages two programs, its own Membership program and the NT Seniors Card (savings) program on behalf of the Northern Territory Government.
- The Northern Territory Government manages two schemes, the Seniors Recognition Scheme and NT Concession Scheme.

Administered by COTA NT

When you turn 50

And are resident in the Northern Territory



Find out more on the COTA NT website,
www.cotant.org.au

Contact 8941 1004

COTA NT Membership

- Advocacy, exclusive access to resources and services (home maintenance, will making), discounts, events, giveaways, voting rights (see [page 18](#) for more)
- \$44 per individual
- \$56 for joint membership
- Annual membership, renews on 1 July
- Applications and renewals online or in-person.

When you turn 60

And are a permanent resident of the Northern Territory



Find out more on the NT Seniors Card website, ntseniorscard.org.au

Contact 8941 1004

NT Seniors Card

- Discounts from participating businesses
- Free bus travel in Darwin and Alice Springs
- \$55 off motor vehicle registration
- **Free** of charge; there is no payment or membership fee involved
- Contact us to update details apply for replacement card, move interstate
- In-person and online services available.

Administered by Northern Territory Government: People, Sports & Culture

When you turn 65

And are a permanent resident of the Northern Territory



Find out more on the NTG website,
nt.gov.au/community/concessions-and-payments/nt-seniors-recognition-scheme

Contact 1800 777 704

Seniors Recognition Scheme (NTSRS)

- \$550 prepaid card each financial year
- Free application (online, in-person, mail or email)
- Supporting documents required (proof of identity and residency)
- Apply by 1 May to receive card in financial year
- Cards issued after 1 July
- Must be renewed annually between 1 Jan and 30 June.

If you are on a pension

NT resident (6 months of FY) or Australian citizen or resident



Find out more on the NTG website,
nt.gov.au/community/concessions-and-payments/nt-concession-scheme

Contact 1800 777 704

NT Concession Scheme (NTCS)

- Concessions on rates, waste, electricity, water, sewerage, driver licence, vehicle registration, spectacles
- Eligibility around residency; and receiving specified Centrelink benefits or Veteran's benefits
- Supporting documents required (proof of identity and residency)
- Free application (online, in-person, mail or email).

Information on concession cards including those administered by the Commonwealth (Services Australia) can be found on the COTA NT website, www.cotant.org.au/information/nt-concession-cards-summary. It includes links to Services Australia information about cards. Services Australia helpline is 132 300.

Vale Dr Arun Mahajani

COTA NT acknowledges with sadness the passing of Dr Arun Mahajani, a respected surgeon who dedicated many years of service to the Northern Territory community.

Dr Mahajani played an important role in the development of surgical services in Darwin, serving for many years at Royal Darwin Hospital and continuing his work in private practice after retiring from the public sector.

He was also a constant and valued supporter of his wife, Dr Sadhana Mahajani during her time as a member of the COTA NT Board. Their shared commitment to improving health and wellbeing in the Northern Territory, particularly for older Territorians, has left a lasting legacy.

COTA NT extends its sincere condolences to Dr Mahajani's family, friends and colleagues and acknowledges with gratitude the contribution he and Dr Sadhana Mahajani made to the Territory community.

The heart of COTA

COTA NT volunteers are at the heart of everything we do, contributing in countless ways across the organisation.

They serve as Board members, Branch representatives and leaders, Expo stallholders, fashion parade participants (on many past occasions), bus drivers, handy people, crowd controllers, event managers, caterers, office support and program leaders. They can turn their hands to almost anything in fact.

In the lead-up to **National Volunteers Week (18-24 May)**, we take this opportunity to recognise, celebrate and



sincerely thank each of them for your extraordinary contribution.

We are deeply grateful for your time, energy and commitment — and for the care, positivity and spirit you bring to our programs and community every day.

Disability parking arrangements

Statement from City of Darwin

In March, Council endorsed changes to parking arrangements for disability parking permit holders in the Darwin CBD. The endorsed changes include free parking for permit holders within various on-street parking zones, along with amendments to broader parking conditions to improve access and usability.

Councillors discussed the importance of accessibility and inclusion, and the need to ensure the CBD continues to support residents and visitors who rely on disability parking provisions.

City of Darwin continues to work to its Access Strategy 2025-2030, which prioritises removing barriers and

improving accessibility across the municipality, ensuring Darwin evolves as a city that is inclusive by design, not by exception.

The free parking will start once signage upgrades are installed and the community is informed.

Disability parking permits

1 On-street designated disability parking bays

- All designated disability parking bays are free of charge.
- Time extensions that apply under the Australian Road Rules do not apply in designated disability parking bays.
- The time on the sign is the maximum time that a vehicle can remain in that bay.

2. Off-street designated disability parking bays

- Vehicles displaying a disability parking permit may park in

designated disability parking bays in City of Darwin off-street car parks all day free of charge, except for West Lane Car Park and Dragonfly Car Park.

Vehicles displaying a valid permit may park in an accessible parking bay in either West Lane Car Park or Dragonfly Car Park for twice the time paid for.

3. On-street other

- All designated disability parking bays are free of charge.
- A vehicle displaying an eligible disability parking permit may park in any Zone A and Zone B on-street parking bay, that would usually require payment, free of charge.
- Any extension of time that a disability permit holder is entitled to under the Australian Road Rules for Zone A and Zone B is also free of charge.

AUSTRALIAN EARS AND HEARING CARE Let's Hear, Let's Connect

Blocked ears? Trouble hearing loved ones? Visit Australian Ears and Hearing Care — your trusted local experts in ear health.

- We offer FREE ear wax removal for eligible pensioners and only \$88 for non-pensioners.
- Eligible clients may also receive fully subsidised hearing aids under the Government Hearing Services Program.
- Our experienced Audiologists provide professional, friendly care using the latest diagnostic and hearing technology.

Visit our Darwin Clinic today to check your eligibility.
Call us now **08 8945 2929**

Free
Entry

Free
Morning Tea

Fundraising
BBQ

Music &
Entertainment

Interactive
Information Stalls

Competitions
& Giveaways



SENIORS EXPO

DARWIN
2026



**SATURDAY
27 JUNE 2026**

Doors open at 10am – finish 2pm
Territory Netball Stadium,
235 Abala Road, Marrara

