THE ADVOCATE

Your aged care and disability advocacy news, 14 October 2026 Contact us: 1800 700 600

Message from the CEO

Queensland Seniors Month: Ageing, Connection and Community



October is Seniors Month in Queensland, an important and busy month for us here at ADA Australia, and for those who support older people. As advocates for older Queenslanders, October is not only a celebration of the important contributions older people make to our society, but also a chance to reflect on how we value ageing and older people in our communities.

Seniors Month gives us a powerful reminder that growing older is not something that happens to “other people”. It is a journey shared by all of us.

An inclusive community recognises that people do not lose their worth as they age. Every stage of life brings new perspectives and opportunities to contribute.

As the number of Australians aged over 85 will triple by 2066, respect of older people and recognition of individual rights is more than good manners, it is the foundation of a functional and inclusive society.

This is reflected in this year’s theme for the International Day of Older Persons which kicked off Seniors Month on 1 October: *The Age of Longevity: Rethinking Systems for Longer Lives*. As people around the world live longer than ever before, societies are facing one of the most significant demographic transformations of our time. Longer lives present opportunities but also require rethinking how systems will support people throughout the course of their lives.

Unfortunately, at the moment our aged care system is not meeting the needs of increasing numbers of older people. Our team have been out talking to seniors at a number of expos and events and continue to hear the same concerning issues: long waits for assessments, long waits for a Support at Home package and long waitlists for CHSP services…across the board.

Despite persistent systemic advocacy urging government to relook at aged care investment to increase Support at Home packages, and funding for CHSP services, I recognise it is little comfort to the older person standing in front of you asking for help now.

As a member of OPAN, we are part of the CHSP Alliance who are calling for a funding adjustment for CHSP, to move towards $5.5-$6 billion a year. Currently CHSP receives around 8% of total Commonwealth aged care funding while supporting approximately 65% of all aged care clients – the numbers don't stack up.

However, what we do remind older people is that old adage of sometimes 'the squeaky wheel gets the oil'. Advocates can help people follow up with My Aged Care (MAC) and assessors to at least check where things are at for individuals - advocates as MAC agents means they are able to access the MAC system, with the older person's permission, to check on their status.

Of course, this doesn't solve the waiting problem but at least it can pick up if there is an error, or something has stalled in the system, and keep the older person informed. No news is not always good news.

We also ask older people to make sure they have the full list of all the services that can provide the CHSP supports they need in their location and to contact them all to check for availability. Again, our advocates can help older people by providing information about their options, however, we do not recommend which services they choose.

We did however welcome the good news, and a win for all older people, starting from 1 October 2026, the Australian Government will pay the full cost of approved personal care services. Older people will not pay a personal care contribution for services accessed from this date. It can include:

- showering
- dressing

- eating
- personal hygiene
- help to manage continence that does not need a health professional
- help to take medicine.

2027 Seniors Calendar

We are pleased to release the 6th edition of our Seniors Calendar for 2027. Copies are now available for seniors to collect across most Queensland libraries. If you would like copies for yourself or your organisation please contact us at admin@adaaustralia.com.au.

Celebrating Grandparents

Closing out Seniors Month, is Grandparents Day on Sunday 25 October. It's a day for people to say 'thank you' to their grandparents for their care and support, for sharing their knowledge, experience and traditions… and for access to the lollies! As a grandparent myself, I know how important this is 😊. We know grandparents have many different roles from parenting, to babysitting, to teacher, to best friend. Wishing all grandparents and their families a happy day.

I'll leave you with my favourite quote about ageing in this year's calendar: "Ageing is an extraordinary process whereby you become the person you always should have been." – David Bowie

Until next time.
Geoff Rowe

Thinking differently about aged care

Australia has an aged care conundrum. Demand for aged care services is outstripping supply. Too many older people in hospital who are ready to leave but can't. Long waits to receive supports at home, contributing to the hospital cycle. We already spend around $40 billion a year on aged care, and we are unlikely to get much more. So where does this leave us?

The logical conclusion is that we need to think about aged care differently. Aged care thinking is now so deeply rooted in more aged care beds, and support at home packages it has become short-sighted. We don't hear older people asking for more aged care beds, we hear them asking how can I stay in my home?

ADA Australia was asked to comment recently on an ABC Story about a local Kilkivan community initiative to keep older people at home in the community longer. Innovative and community thinking like this is what is needed - read the article here.

How can we use what we have more effectively? What can we learn from other models and countries? That is what we will be discussing in a series of OPAN Forums currently in planning for November and next year.

If you are part of the health and aged care sectors and would like to contribute to this conversation please email CEO Geoff Rowe.

Your Life, Your Rights

How do you balance protection with autonomy in a changing aged care landscape? As aged care reforms gather pace, lawyers are being challenged to rethink how to best support older people without diminishing their autonomy.

ADA Law
Community Legal Service

Principal and Senior Solicitors' of ADA Law, Karen Williams and Rebecca Anderson, addressed this question at the recent Queensland Law Society Specialist Practice Conference 2026.

They discussed the delicate balance between protection and autonomy. The starting point must be presumption of capacity. "Protection should support agency, not automatically replace it."

Key points from the discussion have been published in the Queensland Law Society Proctor digital news publication. Essential reading for lawyers, providers and those supporting older people.

Balancing protection with autonomy in a changing aged care landscape, QLS Proctor, 14 October 2026.

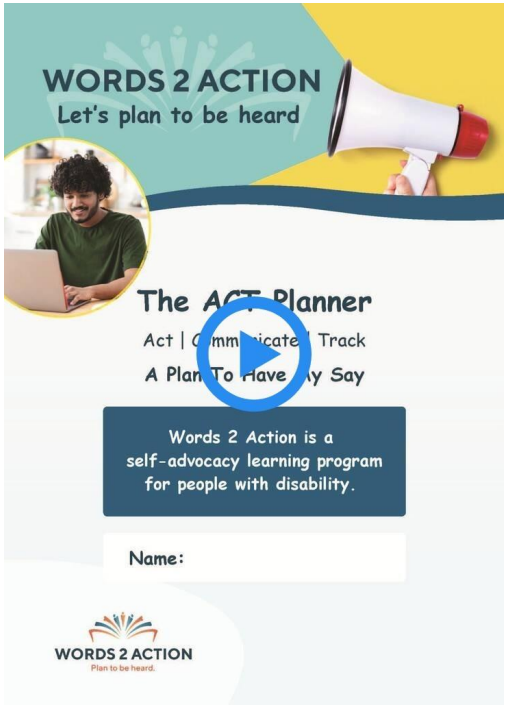
Putting Words 2 Action

Words 2 Action, building the confidence and skills of people with disability to speak up and advocate for themselves, has seen more than 200 people register for the program. The program's ACT Planner has been a popular tool to help people with disability to deal with system hoops and hurdles, by breaking problems down into small actionable steps.

ACT Planner = Act | Communicate | Track

Download a copy of the resource here.

There are also other useful quick guides about speaking up and understanding your rights on a range of topics, from Social Housing Applications to the Disability Support Pension.



You're Invited

Seniors living in Brisbane are invited to join us for the launch of the Queensland Seniors Calendar 2027. Places are limited. RSVP to events@adaaustralia.com.au by the 16th of October.



Out and About for Seniors Month

It's been a great start to seniors month. Great to meet you at:

- Churches of Christ Seniors Expo, Little Mountain
- Bisma Asif MP Seniors Morning Tea, Brackenridge
- Burnie Brae Seniors Expo, Chermside
- Forde Seniors Expo, Waterford
- Bribie Island Seniors Expo
- Terry Young MP Seniors Expo, Caboolture
- Terry Young MP Seniors Expo, Brackenridge

See you at:

- Beaucare Kooralbyn Seniors Expo - Oct 16
- Ipswich West Seniors Expo - Oct 19
- QLD Government Seniors Expo Bribie Island - Oct 22
- Caboolture Neighbourhood Centre Seniors Expo - Oct 22
- Bonner Seniors Expo, Mt Gravatt - Oct 23
- Gold Coast Community Aged Care Expo, Southport - Oct 23
- Blue Care Seniors Expo North Lakes - Oct 27

- CuppaPlus Seniors Expo Beaudesert - Oct 28
- Gympie Seniors Expo - Oct 29
- Broadbeach Seniors Expo - Oct 29
- Noosa Seniors Expo - Oct 30
- Burdekin Seniors Expo Home Hill - Oct 30















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