

## WELCOME

We hope you are continuing to keep safe and active and are enjoying some more freedoms now that restrictions are easing further. A reminder to everyone to maintain their own social distancing and hygiene rules even if those you may encounter aren't. We still seem to be a little way off from being able to meet in person yet, so please continue to keep in touch with your fellow members.

## DIAGNOSTIC TESTS STILL IMPORTANT FOR GENERAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

During a press conference on 28 May Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt, advised that Australia has marked its 40<sup>th</sup> day of less than .5% growth in COVID-19 infections. "We have flattened the curve. We're managing coronavirus" he said. "We have to be able to manage coronavirus and we have to be able to manage our general health." He reminded Australians not to allow the coronavirus distraction take their eyes off their general health and wellbeing. In April, pathology tests dropped by 40% he said, and for May the figure is still 3% below normal.

"That emphasises that we also should feel confident in seeing our doctors and our pathology services, getting our screenings, getting our blood tests, getting our X-rays and our diagnostic tests," he said. "Those tests can also help save your life. And they're equally important."

## STAYING ACTIVE WHILE STAYING AT HOME: 5 TIPS FOR OLDER QUEENSLANDERS

If you've been missing your normal activities recently while you've had to stay home, you're not alone. But you don't have to just stay on the couch while we wait for the COVID-19 pandemic to pass. Queensland Health has provided five ideas to get active from the safety of your own home (remember, if you're going to start a new exercise routine, it's always a good idea to check in with your doctor first):

1. Gardening for good health – a good dose of physical activity as it makes you move in ways you normally wouldn't – think stretching, reaching and lifting and is great for your flexibility and strength.

2. Yoga for flexibility and falls prevention – a type of exercise where you move your body through different postures that promotes strength, stability and flexibility and can be great for preventing falls.
3. Swap lawn bowls for at-home sports – sports like tennis, lawn bowls and golf require agility and improve hand eye coordination. Try getting some boules or bocce for the backyard, or have an indoor bowling night in the hallway.
4. Work on weight training – weight or resistance training uses hand weights or your body weight to strengthen your muscles.
5. Boogie on down – whether you work on a waltz with your partner or you shake it solo, dancing is a fun, easy way to move your body and there's no right or wrong way to dance, just feel the beat and enjoy yourself!
6. Bonus: don't forget to keep your mind active too with a variety of activities.

## COVID-19 OLDER PERSONS SUPPORT LINE

Don't forget, if you need information and/or support as it relates to the current COVID-19 pandemic, there is a National Seniors Australia support team dedicated to members, so please call **1300 877 626** to speak directly to the team about your concerns.

## WHO CARES? OLDER AUSTRALIANS DO

The National Seniors Australia research team has released a new research report titled "**Who Cares? Older Australians do**" which is available on their website.

The report outlines a major investigation into the care that older Australians provide at home and has found that unpaid carers are facing challenges looking after their loved ones whilst being poorly supported, and almost unrecognised. These people are now providing care through the COVID-19 crisis.

The key findings of the report were:

- Of 4,139 participants aged 50+ in the survey, 22% were providing care to partners, parents and adult children
- They did this, unpaid, out of love
- They spent an average of 26 hours a week caring and some were full-time, 7-days a week
- Over half of these unpaid carers provided high to medium levels of care
- Most did not have care plans nor had they accessed government support

National Seniors Australia CEO, Professor John McCallum says: *"We've found that older carers provide care to loved ones at no expense to the economy, but it's at the expense of their own health, wellbeing and finances... This care work is continuing on through the pandemic but without the recognition that volunteer firefighters received during the bushfires. They are truly unsung heroes when you look at the statistics..."*

*As we accumulate debt stopping the spread of COVID-19, this volunteer care workforce will become even more important, so it makes sense to support and recognise their service. They are the care workers who we haven't yet applauded."*

## AUSTRALIAN GRANDPARENTS CARE

This is a companion report to the **"Who Cares? Older Australians do"** report mentioned above and is in relation to research on how **"Australian Grandparents Care"**.

If you're a grandparent you know the value of your contribution both economically and socially, and the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the significant contribution grandparents make. *"It links the generations strongly and this was taken apart during the COVID-19 shutdown and is being put back together as social restrictions ease"* says Professor John McCallum.

The yawning gap in the demand for publicly funded care at home in Australia is being filled by informal, unpaid care. Amongst informal and unpaid carers, a special group of people provide childcare and support to facilitate a better future for the next generation, namely grandparents.

Grandparenting, whether done out of love, duty or necessity, is a critical part of care provision and family structure and cultures.

The report explores the unique and irreplaceable contribution of grandparents and seeks to better understand how grandparenting, from grandparents' points of view, should fit into the childcare provision in Australia.

## HOW MUCH VIRUS IS RELEASED INTO THE ENVIRONMENT?

Coming out of "lockdown" means mixing more with other people and potential COVID-19 carriers. How big is the risk?

Research shows that staying too long in enclosed indoor spaces with limited fresh air or with recycled air and lots of people should be avoided. That's the take home message of a very useful article written by Dr Erin Bromage, an Associate Professor of Biology at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

In his article *The Risks – Know them – Avoid them*, Dr Bromage details the rate of infection across a range of environments and gives sage advice what to avoid.

Social distancing rules are really to protect you with brief exposures or outdoor exposures. In these situations, there is not enough time to achieve the infectious viral load when you are standing 6 feet apart or where wind and the infinite outdoor space for viral dilution reduces viral load. The effects of sunlight, heat, and humidity on viral survival, all serve to minimize the risk to everyone when outside.

As we start to venture out more you need to look at your environment and make judgments. How many people are here, how much airflow is there around me, and how long will I be in this environment.

If outside, and walking past someone, you would have to be in their airstream for 5+ minutes for a chance of infection. While joggers may be releasing more virus due to deep breathing, remember the exposure time is also less due to their speed. Please do maintain physical distance, but the risk of infection in these scenarios are low.

Please don't forget surfaces. Those infected respiratory droplets land somewhere. Wash your hands often and stop touching your face!

## **Bathrooms**

Bathrooms have a lot of high touch surfaces, door handles, taps, doors. So the transfer risk in this environment can be high. We still do not know whether a person releases infectious material in faeces or just fragmented virus, but we do know that toilet flushing does aerosolize many droplets.

Treat public bathrooms with extra caution (surface and air), until we know more about the risk.

## **Cough and sneeze**

A single cough releases about 3,000 droplets and droplets travel at 50 miles per hour. Most droplets are large, and fall quickly (gravity), but many do stay in the air and can travel across a room in a few seconds.

A single sneeze releases about 30,000 droplets, with droplets traveling at up to 200 miles per hour. Most droplets are small and travel great distances (easily across a room). If a person is infected, the droplets in a single cough or sneeze may contain as many as 200,000,000 (two hundred million) virus particles which can all be dispersed into the environment around them.

## **Breath**

A single breath releases 50 - 5000 droplets. Most of these droplets are low velocity and fall to the ground quickly. There are even fewer droplets released through nose-breathing. Importantly, due to the lack of exhalation force with a breath, viral particles from the lower respiratory areas are not expelled. Unlike sneezing and coughing which release huge amounts of viral material, the respiratory droplets released from breathing only contain low levels of virus.

## **Speaking**

Speaking increases the release of respiratory droplets about 10-fold; about 200 virus particles per minute. Again, assuming every virus is inhaled, it would take about 5 minutes of speaking face-to-face to receive the required dose.

Anyone you spend greater than 10 minutes face-to-face is potentially infected. Anyone who shares a space with you for an extended period is potentially infected. This is also why it is critical for people who are symptomatic to stay home. Your sneezes and your coughs expel so much virus that you can infect a whole room of people.

Symptomatic people are not the only way the virus is shed. We know that at least 44% of all infections--

and the majority of community-acquired transmissions--occur from people without any symptoms (asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic people). You can be shedding the virus into the environment for up to 5 days before symptoms begin.

Infectious people come in all ages, and they all shed different amounts of virus. Keep washing your hands and don't touch your face.

## **CENTRELINK CHANGES FROM 1 JUNE 2020**

The Federal Government has finally listened and will revalue market-linked investments, shares and securities to ensure they are paying you the correct pension amount.

The value of your financial investments is included in the Age Pension assets test and deemed income from financial investments is included in the pension income test. Because the value of your investments changes as markets go up and down, it is important that the valuation of these assets is accurate, as this determines your pension.

Normally, Centrelink automatically revalue market-linked investments, shares and securities every March and September. However, because COVID-19 has caused the financial markets to go down significantly, these were revalued for all pensioners on 1 June 2020.

The good news is you don't need to do anything. This will be done automatically by Centrelink. After which, your payment rate may change. It is important to remember that you can always ask for a revaluation. If the market falls, or your circumstances change, you can ask for a revaluation through Centrelink at any time.

## **A LITTLE RAY OF SUNSHINE, BUT A BIG HEALTH BOOST**

There's clinical evidence SAD (seasonal affective disorder) is a type of depression. There's a season to be sad. It starts now and ends in spring every year.

The best way to beat it, to cure it even, is to light up your life. Our bodies rely on, and our brains need, solar power. UV therapy can help cure everything from insomnia to depression.

We need a dose of sunshine not just to feel happy but also to fight disease. Most Australians don't get enough vitamin D. It's made in our skin and is vital for human health. Getting too much sun can cause skin cancer. But getting too little weakens your immune system and puts you at risk of cancer.

Australian scientist Professor Rachel Neale, who did her PhD in skin cancer prevention, now says whenever she can do it safely, she exposes her body to sunlight. At this time of the year, 15 mins at midday on about 20% of your body does the trick.

Her research involved 78,000 participants and revealed those with low vitamin D were nearly twice as likely to get the type of lung infections now killing COVID-19 sufferers.

You can take vitamin D in a pill but it's best to get it the way nature intended, and that's synthesised in your skin. Scottish dermatologist Richard Weller has also discovered our skin produces nitric oxide when exposed to sunlight. This causes our blood vessels to widen and lowers blood pressure.

Nitric oxide has been used to help patients with lung infections breathe better, and there are even trials being conducted to see what effects UV radiation has on both the flu and COVID-19.

We've known since the 1960s that vitamin D helps the gut absorb calcium and is essential for healthy bones, but now there's evidence it also helps control cell growth, immune function and inflammation.

So, there you have it. The sun makes you feel happy, helps you stay healthy and may even fight off cancer and a range of other ills. Is it why the first religions were built around sun worship? As we head into winter do yourself a favour and have a sun bath when you can, but remember - Balance is key.

## JULY BIRTHDAY

Best wishes go to our branch member Kay Foster who celebrates her birthday in July.

## BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

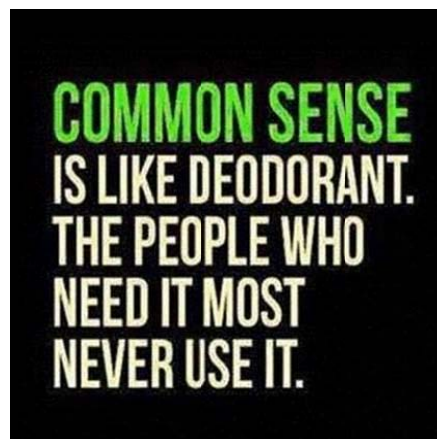
If you have any queries please contact our Secretary, **Graham Tienan**, on Mobile 0407 736 453 or email [nsacoorparoosec@gmail.com](mailto:nsacoorparoosec@gmail.com).

## PONDERISMS

- Why do doctors leave the room while you change? They're going to see you naked anyway.
- Why is "bra" singular and "panties" plural?
- Why is it that people say they "slept like a baby" when babies wake up every two hours?
- Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?
- If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, what is baby oil made from?
- If electricity comes from electrons, does morality come from morons?
- How did the man who made the first clock know what time it was?

## SMILE

A furniture store keeps calling me...  
*All I wanted was one night stand.*



My stomach is **FLAT**. The **L** is just silent.

