

WELCOME – It was wonderful to welcome several new guests to our April branch meeting and look forward to seeing them at future meetings or activities. Our guest speakers, Patrick and Helen from *Drawing Your Optimal* provided an enlightening presentation on how to proactively approach your health issues and ageing and their current services including Ageing Well, Occupational Therapy and Disability, Diffability and NDIS services. Our thanks also to member Stephen for sharing the very interesting information on African animals as part of our Member Memories. As several members participated in the Easter theme, we congratulate Robyn “W” on being judged winner by our guest speakers for her glamorous outfit. Our thanks as always to everyone who contributed to our donations to Care Kits For Kids and the community pantry which are always greatly appreciated by those in need.

We would also like to wish all our mothers, carers and “aunties” a very happy Mother’s Day on Sunday 10 May.

BRANCH MEETINGS

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday 14 May at the Parkside Community & Services Club**. Arrival will be at 9:30am for a 9:45am start with guest speakers, updates on branch and national activities, raffles and refreshments. The cost will be \$10.00 per person payable in cash at the door.

We will have two guest speakers:

- Nicole Goulding from the Commonwealth Bank to provide information on how to recognise and avoid scams online; and
- David Hallesy from National Seniors Australia to explain the member benefits of the NSA Eat, Play & Save App

Extensive facilities are available for members to stay for a light lunch after the meeting (at your own cost).

Remaining meeting dates for 2026 are:

11 June	9 July
13 August (& AGM)	10 September
8 October	12 November

MORNING TEA CATCH-UP

Our next morning tea catch will be on **Monday 18 May from 10am at Easts Leagues Club**. This is always a great informal way to get to know fellow members outside the confines of a branch meeting.

The remaining dates for 2026 are:

15 June	20 July
17 August	21 September
19 October	16 November

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Best wishes to *Sandra Ager, Margaret Kidd, Elsa Green and Rose Smith* who celebrate birthdays in May. We hope you enjoy your special day with family and friends.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK 2026

National Volunteer Week is Australia’s largest annual celebration of volunteering and will be held from 18-24 May. The theme this year is “Your Year to Volunteer”

which honours the contributions of volunteers and encourages people across Australia to make 2026 the year they get involved and make a difference.

Our thanks go to all our Coorparoo branch members who already volunteer their time in the local community, but especially to our branch committee who volunteer their time to organise and support all the activities of the branch for the enjoyment of all members. Your committee is:

President	Freya Tienan (& Newsletters & Public Transport outings)
Vice-President	Jan Jackson (& Wellbeing Officer)
Treasurer	Lyn Potter
Secretary	Graham Tienan (& Guest Speakers)
Committee	Lorraine Field, Joan Jell, Joy Scott, Pat Will

EXPLORE BRISBANE...VISIT THE COMMISSARIAT STORE MUSEUM & QUEEN’S WHARF PRECINCT – Thursday 28 May at 10:00am

This is a new date as we’ve been unable to secure the original date of Wednesday 27 May previously advised.

Learn about Brisbane’s beginnings from the indigenous groups, arrival of explorers, penal settlements, free settlers and traders and the subsequent development of our city through an interesting presentation by a member of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland. This will be followed by free time to view the many artifacts and stories on display. Entry is \$8.00 per person payable at the museum which helps fund this non-profit organisation dedicated to the mission of preserving Queensland history through conservation and education.

Take the opportunity afterwards to spend time in the Queen’s Wharf Precinct and Star Casino with a visit to the 23rd floor observation deck overlooking the Brisbane River, and views towards Southbank and West End. You can enjoy morning tea or a light lunch at one of the available restaurants.

As bookings are necessary for the museum, please advise Freya Tienan on 0409 397 330 or E: nsacoorparoopres@gmail.com by Wednesday 20 May.

How to get there:

- From the Cultural Centre bus or train stations you can walk across the Neville Bonner Bridge to the casino, then left along William Street to the Commissariat Store Museum at 115 William St
- From the city there is a loop bus Route 50 from Adelaide Street opposite King George Square (City Hall) to William Street bus stop 105 which runs every 15 mins.

CARE KITS FOR KIDS

Coorparoo Branch would like to continue our relationship in 2026 with some suggestions of items listed below that can be brought to our monthly meetings and will be delivered to Care Kits For Kids. Most can be purchased at discount shops, and not everything needs to be provided each month. Every donation will help Queensland children in need.

May – Long pants, jackets, tops, beanies (sizes 0-16)

June – Underwear, socks (all sizes to 16)

July – Hairbrush, comb, bands, clips, baseball cap

August – roll-on deodorant (no glass or spray), shampoo, conditioner (travel or small size)

September – Summer pyjamas, girls crop tops (all sizes to 16)

October – Reading book (all genres & ages), small soft toy or doll (no beads or stick on eyes)

November – Backpack, small lunch box

COMMUNITY PANTRY DRIVE

If you would like to provide good quality non-perishable food items that can be passed on to a local community organisation to assist those in need in our area, please bring them along to each meeting where we will collect and distribute them. Please ensure that all items are well within use by date.

WELLBEING OFFICER

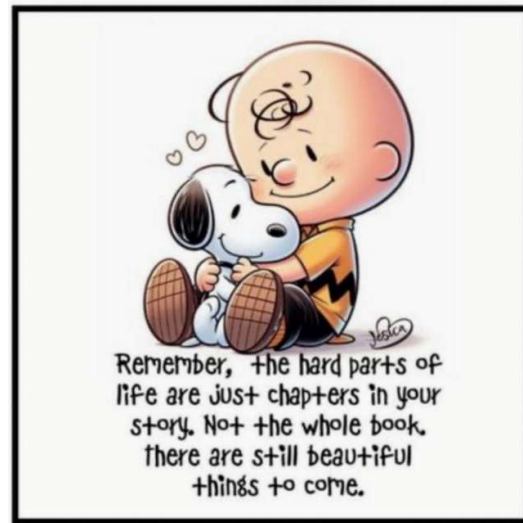
If you are, or know of any member who is ill, injured, or in need of help please notify Jan Jackson on 0411 987 174 so that we can give our support where needed.

BRANCH RECYCLING ITEMS

If you are interested in recycling any of the following items, please bring them along to any of our branch meetings where we will arrange recycling:

- Plastic bottle tops (ONLY coded 2, 4)
- Pens, highlighters, white outs
- Batteries
- Blister tablet packs
- PLASTIC bread tags (not cardboard tags)
- Corks
- Soaps
- Stamps

Please note we can no longer recycle empty toothpaste tubes or tooth brushes.



SUNCARE COMMUNITY SERVICES – HEARTBEAT LUNCH

Suncare Community Services is holding a free Heartbeat Lunch for seniors aged 65+ on **Thursday 18 June at the Carina Leagues Club, 1390 Creek Road, Carina**. Many older people can experience loneliness or uncertainty when it comes to aged care, and events like this can make a real difference – both socially and practically.

Arrival will be from 11:30am for lunch from 12:00-2:00pm and is open to all seniors aged 65+. There will also be an optional “Navigating Aged Care” session before lunch commencing at 11:00am which is a relaxed, supportive way for people to ask questions, better understand the system, and feel more confident about their options.

If you are interested, bookings are essential as seats are limited. Call 1800 786 227 to book directly with Suncare Community Services.

PREPARE NOW FOR FLU SEASON

Health authorities are urging older Australians to receive their influenza vaccination as early as possible this year because an unusually fast-moving strain of the virus has begun circulating well ahead of the traditional flu season. The new H3N2 variant, known as “Super-K”, is already spreading across Australia, contributing to heightened concern among public health experts.

ABC News reported that experts are “nervous” heading into the 2026 flu season because Super-K started circulating in summer and vaccination rates remain low. The call for early vaccination is crucial for

older Australians, who face the greatest risk of severe illness and death from influenza.

According to the Immunisation Coalition, people aged 65 and older account for nearly half of flu-related hospitalisations in Australia, and most flu deaths occur in this age group. Older immune systems also respond less effectively to standard flu vaccines, which is why enhanced formulations and high-dose vaccinations are recommended. These enhanced vaccines offer stronger protection against severe flu, especially type A (H3N2) strains that disproportionately impact older people.

Government health agencies are also reinforcing the message. The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation advises that annual influenza vaccination should occur as soon as vaccines become available, typically from April, and that even those vaccinated late in 2025 should still receive the updated 2026 vaccine.

Queensland Health similarly emphasises that annual vaccination is the most effective way to prevent serious flu complications and notes that all adults aged 65 and older are eligible for the National Immunisation Program-funded enhanced vaccine.

The emergence of Super-K provides another compelling reason for early action. The strain has spread earlier and faster than typical influenza variants and has undergone mutations that reduce the ability of vaccine-derived antibodies to block infection, according to CSIRO researchers. However, the current vaccine still significantly reduces the severity of illness. With early circulation already documented and thousands of cases expected, delaying vaccination could leave you exposed before peak flu season.

Vaccination is available from your GP and some pharmacies. The 2026 flu vaccine is already available in Queensland and should be available across Australia from April. (Source: ABC, CSIRO, RACGP, Health Queensland)

CALL TO TAX JUNK FOOD

Health experts propose making processed foods more expensive, while lowering the price of fruit and vegetables.

Public health advocates are renewing calls for Australia to introduce a 20% tax on unhealthy foods, arguing that such a measure could save lives, reduce disease, and ease pressure on the nation's healthcare system. According to a recent Australian Associated Press report, health experts say the Federal Government should consider taxing items such as soft drinks, confectionery, pastries, and processed meats

to address rising rates of obesity and diet-related illness.

The article notes that early modelling suggests hundreds of thousands of lives could be saved over time if political leaders adopted the policy. Comprehensive new modelling from The George Institute for Global Health demonstrates that a 20% tax on unhealthy food categories could avert 212,000 premature deaths and save \$15 billion in healthcare costs over the lifetime of the current adult population. The modelling, which was described as the most extensive of its kind in Australia, shows such a tax would be seven times more effective at improving health outcomes than taxing sugary drinks alone. It also suggests the greatest benefits would be realised by low-income Australians, who face the highest burden of diet-related diseases.

The George Institute's analysis also explored the impact of using tax revenue to subsidise healthier options. Reducing the price of fruits and vegetables by 20% could prevent an additional 45,000 deaths and 191,000 cases of type 2 diabetes, making a combined tax-and-subsidy approach a powerful tool for addressing Australia's nutrition challenges. "Using a combined tax-subsidy package could tilt the playing field in terms of food prices and help improve our diets in Australia," lead researcher, Tazman Davies, told AAP.

The Institute's findings align with guidance from the Australian Government's HealthDirect service, which highlights the risks associated with high consumption of junk foods. HealthDirect notes that foods that are high in salt, sugar, unhealthy fats, and kilojoules but low in nutrients can lead to both short- and long-term health complications. These include cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers.

Australian Dietary Guidelines suggest that a small amount of ultra-processed foods can be included in a healthy, balanced diet. This means you should only have junk food occasionally and in small amounts. Nutrient-rich alternatives include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins.

Advocates of the tax say that with two-thirds of Australian adults overweight or obese and only 4% meeting the recommended fruit and vegetable intake, fiscal measures are urgently needed to shift national diets. (Source: Canberra Times, George Institute, HealthDirect)

MAIL SERVICE HIT AS DEMAND DRIES UP

A huge decline in snail mail has created challenges for Australia Post and its customers. Australia Post is

warning its customers to brace for higher stamp prices and the possibility of further cuts to letter delivery services as traditional mail volume continues its steep decline.

It has asked the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to approve an 8.8% increase in the basic postage rate, lifting the price of a standard stamp from \$1.70 to \$1.85 from mid-2026. If approved, this will be the latest in a string of rises that have pushed stamp prices up 68% since 2022.

The request reflects the reality that Australians are sending fewer letters than at any time since the 1930s, with volumes dropping by more than 11% in the past financial year alone. This collapse in demand left Australia Post more than \$230 million out of pocket for its letter delivery service, even after a modest uptick from election-related mail this time last year.

The ACCC has acknowledged that the situation is now structurally unsustainable: fewer letters are being sent each year, yet the number of delivery points continues to grow, placing further financial pressure on a service required to reach every household and business in the country.

While these challenges affect all Australians, the consequences will be felt most acutely in regional, rural, and remote communities. In many of these areas, digital communication is still unreliable due to limited internet access, patchy mobile reception, and fewer alternative service providers.

The ACCC has acknowledged that Australia Post remains essential for vulnerable people and for those living in the vast parts of the country where mailed documents, printed bills, and physical forms remain the most practical – and sometimes the only – option. Residents in these areas already experience slower delivery times, and any move to further reduce delivery frequency could widen the service divide between urban and non-urban Australia.

While many seniors are eligible for discounted stamps, the greater concern is not the price of a stamp but the diminishing reliability of the service itself. With households now receiving only around two letters a week, the traditional business model of nationwide daily letter delivery is becoming harder to justify. The future of “snail mail” is therefore likely to look very different. As letter delivery becomes increasingly scarce, Australia Post’s network may shift further toward parcel-based logistics, while rural communities may find themselves relying more heavily on hybrid solutions that convert digital communication into printed mail.

At the same time, local councils, libraries, and post offices may play a greater role in helping residents navigate those digital services. What remains clear is that the age of the cheap, dependable letterbox delivery is fading. And this is not just an Australian phenomenon. Several countries have significantly cut back or even eliminated traditional letter delivery as mail volumes plunge worldwide. Denmark became the first nation to completely end national letter delivery in 2025 after a 90% decline in posted mail and soaring costs. It has shifted fully to digital communication and parcel services. More than 30 other countries – including France, Germany, India, Japan and Sweden have suspended portions of their postal service due to mounting operational pressure and regulatory changes. (Source: ACCC, ABC, Canberra Times, Hindustan Times)

NOTE: Many older Australians are eligible to pay just 60 cents per stamp, instead of the current price of \$1.70. With a free Australia Post Concession account, you can buy up to 75 stamps per year, in booklets of five for \$3. The price of concession stamps, or Christmas card stamps which cost 65 cents, will not be affected by the proposed change in the basic stamp price.

The following Federal Government concession cards are accepted as proof of eligibility for an Australia Post Concession account:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Health Care Card (all types)
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card
- Department of Veterans’ Affairs Card
- Veterans’ Repatriation Health Card

HEALTH BENEFITS OF MEDICATION REVIEWS

As we age, managing multiple medications becomes increasingly complex. Qualified pharmacists and doctors can review your medicines and examine how they work, or don’t work, together.

Many older adults live with chronic conditions that require several prescriptions, increasing the risk of side effects, drug interactions, and medication-related hospital admissions. Medication reviews conducted by qualified pharmacists and other health professionals can play a vital role in improving safety, health outcomes, and quality of life.

A recent ABC News report highlights how comprehensive reviews can transform patient wellbeing. In one example, a patient taking 32 medications experienced severe nausea and vomiting until a pharmacist-led home medicine review identified issues and worked with the man’s GP to reduce the

number of medicines by more than half. The improvement in his health was almost immediate.

The report notes that about 250,000 Australians are admitted to hospital each year due to medication-related problems, underscoring the importance of early intervention. Evidence from broader research confirms these benefits. A systematic review in the *Journal of Public Health* found that home medication reviews for community-dwelling older adults modestly improved healthcare use, reduced medication numbers in some cases, and improved adherence in select studies.

Importantly, polypharmacy – commonly defined as taking five or more medicines – is strongly associated with falls, hospitalisation, and increased mortality risk, which medication reviews aim to mitigate. Further findings from a 2024-2025 meta-analysis in *Frontiers in Public Health* show that professional interventions to support medication management significantly improved adherence and reduced medium-term hospital readmissions among older adults with multimorbidity (the coexistence of two or more chronic conditions).

A separate review published in the *Korean Journal of Family Medicine* reported that pharmacist-led reviews reduced the incidence of drug-related problems and, potentially, the use of inappropriate medications. The review also noted improvements in medication adherence and patients' overall quality of life, which are critical outcomes for older adults striving to maintain their independence.

Medication reviews are also particularly valuable when cognitive decline is involved. A 2026 study in the *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association* emphasised that older adults with neurocognitive disorders, such as dementia, face heightened risk from inappropriate medications. It also suggested that pharmacist-led interventions could help these vulnerable people.

The message appears to be consistent: medication reviews conducted by trained pharmacists and supported by medical practitioners improve safety, reduce unnecessary medications, and contribute to better health and wellbeing in older people. If you feel like you are taking too many medications, or you think the medicines you are taking are not working well together, discuss this with your GP. (Source: NSA. *Disclaimer: this article is for information purposes only and should not be considered medical advice. Consult a healthcare professional about any health concerns or before making any changes to your medication, diet, or exercise routine.*)

KEEPING CASH AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE

Paying with cash withdrawn from a fee-free ATM is not just convenient, it can be the cheapest way to make a purchase. The success of the NSA *Keep Cash Campaign* tells us that many people want to pay for products and services with cash rather than cards or apps.

Cash remains essential, cost-effective, and inclusive – especially for older Australians who still rely on it for their everyday transactions. Yet one question persists: Does it cost more to pay with cash than by card or digital transaction? In most cases, the answer is NO.

Card surcharges, barriers to online banking for people who can't use the technology, and the steady decline of bank-owned ATMs disproportionately affect seniors. NSA Chief Executive Officer, Chris Grice, warns that "as cash use declines, so does the number of access points available to withdraw it". He notes that bank branch closures and the removal of bank ATMs particularly impact people who are less inclined to bank online.

In many regional areas, travelling to another branch simply isn't feasible, making it even harder for older Australians to continue using cash just as they always have. Keeping cash accessible and accepted matters to all Australians. Cash is a basic means of payment and it's a backup in case of emergency. Without cash, if the internet goes down, commerce and essential services come to a halt.

While digital payments are often promoted as cheaper or more convenient, card transactions can have hidden costs. Merchants may apply surcharges to debit and credit card payments – a practice NSA argues should be reduced or eliminated.

However, accessing cash can also be expensive if you use ATMs that charge per withdrawal. This is where **atmx**, Australia's largest fee-free ATM network, significantly changes the cost equation. Launched in 2020, **atmx** partners with many financial institutions to eliminate direct-charge fees for their customers, providing millions of Australians with fee-free cash withdrawals and balance checks across a growing network of machines nationwide.

With more than 1,750 active devices and a partner base of 25 financial institutions, **atmx** can now support more than 23 million cardholders with fee-free access. Some of the financial institutions partnering with **atmx** include Westpac; ANZ; St. George; Suncorp Bank; RACQ Bank; Bank SA; and Bank of Melbourne. The company's general manager, Con Tsiknis, reinforces the importance of maintaining access to cash, noting

that as digital payments dominate, “there is a growing need to ensure cash remains a viable and accessible payment option for all Australians, especially seniors who rely on it for everyday transactions”.

Mr Tsiknis says cash is an essential part of Australia’s economy and that **atmx** believes fee-free access should be a right, not a privilege. With an expanding national footprint – including in areas affected by bank closures – **atmx** helps many Australians access cash without added cost.

NSA’s partnership with **atmx** aims to raise awareness among communities, retailers, and policymakers about the continued importance of cash infrastructure and the need to keep cash viable. The result is a landscape where, when account holders with **atmx** partner banks use the **atmx** network for fee-free transactions, cash is often the cheaper option, avoiding both ATM withdrawal fees and card-payment surcharges. Paying with cash does not inherently cost more. In fact, thanks to the fee-free ATM network and absence of card surcharges, it may cost you less.
(Source: NSA, *atmx*)

BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries please contact our Secretary, Graham Tienan, on mobile 0407 736 453 or email nsacoorparoossec@gmail.com. Do remember to update any changes to your details. Emergency contacts need to be current.

SMILE

In honour of mothers and “aunties” everywhere, here are some jokes that we hope will put a smile on their face.

A mother had just finished taking a CPR class at a local college when she was in the shopping centre and saw a big crowd gathered around a still body. She took off running at a speed she didn’t know she could muster, yelling, “Everyone back! I know CPR!” Just as she threw herself next to the body and was about to begin, a pair of strong hands pulled her to her feet. “Ma’am,” said a police officer beside her, “we are trying to arrest this man.”

A police recruit was asked during an exam, “What would you do if you had to arrest your own mother?” His response was “Call for backup”

What did the lazy boy say to his mum on Mother’s Day when she was about to do the dishes?
“Relax Mum...you can just do them in the morning.”

There are two amounts of pasta mums are good at cooking: not enough and enough for 3,000 people!

Silence is golden. Unless you have kids, then silence is suspicious!

I hate when I’m waiting for mum to cook dinner, and then I remember I am the mum, and I have to cook dinner!

Why do Mothers need two visits to the optometrist?
Because they also have eyes in the back of their head.

Don’t you hate it when your mum’s voice is so loud, even your neighbours brush their teeth and get dressed!

Children: You spend the first two years of their life teaching them to walk and talk. Then you spend the next 16 years telling them to sit down and shut up!

What’s the difference between Superman and Mothers?

Superman’s just a superhero now and then. Mums are superheroes all the time.

