



Heather Lee OAM inspires

Our members were amazed to hear the real thing about growing old from the words of Heather Lee OAM, 2019 NSW Seniors Australian of the Year and eight-time world champion walker in the seniors age group. In her 70s, Heather, pictured with branch members, suddenly lost her beloved husband and turned her grief into a physical activity at the 2001 City to Surf that propelled her passion for athletics. She admitted she wasn't aware she had the prowess until she was doing it, and winning it. Since then, she has been competing in race walking, amassing championship titles, including World's Number 1 at the 2023 Australian Masters Athletics. In November this year, Heather celebrates her 100th Birthday, which she excitedly looks forward to because she says growing older is an achievement in itself, apart from accolades people receive in their own journeys. Heather's extraordinary life as an admired centenarian is proof she says, that keeping physically active, mentally curious and socially engaged do wonders for seniors. We will keep you posted on Heather's birthday highlights when she makes the announcement.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 25 June 2026 - 9.30am-12.30pm
Historian Joy Shepherd with Tea-rrific Biggest Morning Tea to support Cancer Council Australia

Joy presents folklores about early Hawkesbury, including the floods that led to the demise of Hawkesbury Development Company, an electricity provider in the region. Sumptuous morning tea for \$10 donated to cancer research.

Thursday, 30 July 2026 - Bus Trip to Western Sydney Nancy Bird Walton International Airport at Bradfield City then BYO lunch at Luddenham Village. Bus fee TBA, pay on the day. Leave 9.30am at McQuade Park, Windsor; back at 2.30pm.

Thursday, 27 August 2026, 9.30am-12.30pm - Guests Richmond-Windsor VIEW Club officers provide insights into their community network of local women formed in 1968 and supporting the Smith Family's Learning for Life Program.

Thursday, 24 September, 9.30am-12.30pm
We are amateur photographers! A photographer shows us how to create great photos with our smartphones, Three winners get prizes; all photos go into branch booklet.

NSA Latest Advocacy Updates following Treasurer Jim Chalmers 2026-27 Federal Budget announcement on 12 May.

NSA Community Engagement Manager Karen Furnivall (pictured) presented at our branch meeting on Thursday, 28 May, the following updates to keep us abreast of NSA policy recommendations and submissions to parliamentarians and executive branch of the federal government that are benefiting older Australians.



Budget Positives

- PBS Medicines - \$7.70 cap locked in until 2023
- RSV Funding - Vaccine free for 75 years plus, at a cost of \$449m
- Removal of Co-contributions - No out-of-pocket costs for showering, incontinence management, and dressing the Support at Home Program - \$250m a year
- Dementia Care - 20 new Specialist Dementia Care Units to support people with complex needs. Plus, Hospital to Aged Care Dementia Support Program to improve care transitions for stranded in hospital patients.
- Increased Aged Care Capacity - 5,000 new aged care beds each year to meet demand.

Private Health Insurance rebate outcome

- Higher rebate for seniors removed
- Seniors moved to standard under 65 rebate level
- Means higher out-of-pocket costs
- Expected to apply from 2026-27 onwards

To get an accurate estimate try our Private Health Insurance Estimator: https://bit.ly/NSA_PHI

NSA's Advocacy Position

- Supports aged care improvements; however, opposes funding via private health insurance rebate cuts.
- Calls for a fairer solution including a Productivity Commission Review.
- Need to address premium increases, specialist costs, and hospital charges.
- Push for affordable private health.

What NSA is doing about it

- NSA is calling on the parliament to reject the change and is working with an alliance of organisations to do this.
- NSA CEO Chris Grice is:
 - meeting directly with relevant federal parliamentarians (Ministers, MPs, and Senators) - sharing NSA research, policy recommendations, and the experiences of our members.
 - putting our case in media to gain community support and increase pressure on the government.

NSA Advocacy update - How NSA members / supporters can help:

- Share the estimator and health cost campaign with family and friends
- Email the NSA policy team – policy@nationalseniors.com.au to share how the change will impact them so we can share with the media
- Become a member with NSA or Join the Health Cost campaign – this help increase our numbers, increase our weight, and impact! The bigger we are, the louder our voice.

Photo on the right: NSA Chief Executive Officer Chris Grice on ABC News talked about rebate cuts.



Committee seeking new volunteers

Three new committee roles for our branch are needed, as our membership grows. We express our appreciation to those who have signed up, as we aim to bring your more activities and events that cater to your interests. The roles to be filled are the following:

- Secretariat - Duties are to prepare meeting minutes, attendance register and correspondence.
- Travel & Outing In-charge - Responsible for planning and coordinating branch travels and outings.
- Welfare Facilitator - Facilitate appropriate assistance for branch members to attend activities and events, as well as referral to NSA services they enquire about. Email: Branch Coordinator - nationalseniorshawkesbury@gmail.com.

Keep Cash Campaign Photo Frame & NSA Pull-Up Banner

NSA headquarters has sent the photo frame and pull-up banner that we will be displaying at every branch meet-ups and events we are holding. They look really nice and if you want your photo with it, just let us know. You must sign photo consent as it will be needed for the NSA Facebook page and our branch Facebook page.

Keep Cash car bumper stickers and retailer stickers

If you know of anyone or a small business and retailers who want to display these stickers, let the committee know, we have plenty.

National Seniors Australia is urging retailers who accept cash to proudly display our sticker.

Register for bumper stickers and retailer stickers to distribute in your local area.

Visit our **KEEP CA\$H** campaign page: bit.ly/3wEOLGu



Thank you branch members and guests for your support of The Apron Project event on our 28th May meet-up. We donated all proceeds from entry fees on the day to the Project that helps deliver educational support to primary school-aged children rebuilding their lives after experiencing traumatic domestic and family violence. The Apron Project founder, Sydney-based artist Sallianne McClelland, and Hawkesbury Mayor Les Sheather, pictured with branch members. Gail has produced a beautiful take of the aprons on display using her smartphone. While Pat and Ila made tea towels, guided by Sallianne and Ruth Swadling.

