

MCnews

JANUARY 2025 / SUMMER EDITION



PATRICIA BURKITT

Pathway to independent living

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Latest industry news



**Multicultural
Care**

Over 30 years
of Cultural Care
& Connection

Care finder Program

AVAILABLE TO SOUTH WEST SYDNEY RESIDENTS

The Care finder Program is a **FREE** and confidential service that supports older people to interact with My Aged Care, access aged care services and other community resources.

If you know anyone who will benefit from the Care finder Program, give them our contact details below.

Contact us

(02) 9718 6199

carefinder@mc.org.au

SCAN ME



Funded by

phn
SOUTH WESTERN
SYDNEY

An Australian Government Initiative

DO YOU HAVE UNSPENT FUNDS?

If you are an aged care recipient with unspent funds, we've identified ways for you to use your remaining funds more effectively, ensuring that you receive the best possible support, tailored to your individual needs. Our dedicated team is here to assist you in exploring additional services, personalised activities, or specialised support that aligns with your care plan.



- Centre-based respite
- Personal care
- Nutrition and meal prep
- Domestic assistance



- Occupational therapy
- Community transport
- Social support

If you have any questions or would like to discuss how to maximise your unspent funds for improved care, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team on (02) 9718 6199.

message

FROM THE CEO

Welcome to the Summer Edition of MC News!

We hope you had a great time during the holidays with family and friends.

At Multicultural Care, we are committed to providing you with the best care and support, day and night. We understand that flexibility is essential, and as part of our ongoing efforts to improve your experience with us, we are now offering after-hours support. If you need to make any changes to your roster or require assistance outside of regular office hours, our dedicated team is ready to help. Please don't hesitate to call us.

We also want to remind you that there is still time to complete our Annual Consumer/ Participant Survey. Your feedback is invaluable to us and helps us enhance the quality of services we provide. If you haven't already, we encourage you to share your thoughts and experiences with us.

In this edition, we've included important information about upcoming changes to your aged care services. We are committed to keeping you informed and ensuring that your care continues seamlessly. We are also excited to share the inspiring story of Patricia, who is finding her pathway to independent living through our services. Her journey is a testament to the positive impact of personalised care and support.

We also want to let you know that Multicultural Care now has an internal Occupational Therapist (OT), Marco (Tsz Yin) Leung, on board. Marco supports the CHSP, HCP and STRC teams, particularly for urgent or short-notice OT services.



We are also in the process of recruiting another OT. This role is part of our vision to build an internal allied health team to provide better services to our consumers/participants.

Additionally, we've included details about the Home Medicines Review program, designed to help you manage your medications at home more effectively. This is a great way to ensure you are taking the right medications in the right way, which can have a significant impact on your health and well-being.

Finally, we're thrilled to share some memorable moments from our Centre-Based Respite Christmas Party! The celebration was a wonderful opportunity to connect, have fun, and create lasting memories with our consumers/participants and their families.

Thank you for trusting us with your care. We look forward to continuing to support you on your journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosy Walia".

Dr Rosy Walia

COMMUNITY AWARDS

Congratulations to Multicultural Care and our volunteers for receiving the 2024 St George Community Awards. The awards recognise individuals, community groups and businesses which have made an outstanding contribution to our local community. We are so proud of our volunteers! Ambrose Lau received the Youth Achievement Award, Jessica Li received the Senior Volunteer Achievement Award, Dalton Garbin and Joao Paul De Souza received the Individual Volunteer Achievement Award, and Multicultural Care received the Multicultural Communities Award.



AFTER HOURS SUPPORT

Multicultural Care has implemented new rostering hours for all roster change requests. Our scheduling team will now be available from 7am to 6pm for any scheduling change requests via the rostering hotline number (02) 9129 7777. We also have an After-Hours Service from 6pm to 9pm Monday to Friday. For general enquiries on Sundays, you can call us between 12pm–5pm via the above number. Please note all other staff, including Care Advisors, are only available during normal business hours: 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday on our general office number (02) 9718 6199.



HAVE YOU DONE THE SURVEY?

You still have time to do the consumer/participant survey, either via the print or online version. If you are doing the print version, you can send it back to us via the post paid envelope we sent you.

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Nothing makes me happier than helping the consumers/participants. It gives me satisfaction that they appreciate what I do for them, and knowing at the end of the day I've done my work well. I look forward to seeing my colleagues at work and having a bit of a laugh and spending quality time with the consumers/participants, like having a cup of coffee with them in their homes.

~ Petti Litrico, BSS



60 day prescriptions

Nearly 300 medications are now available for 60-day prescriptions under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. If you take medication regularly, you may be eligible to receive a double supply on a single prescription. This could save you money and reduce your visits to the pharmacy. Speak with your healthcare provider to confirm the quantity of medication you can receive, depending on the stability of your health condition at the time. For more details, visit the Department of Health and Aged Care website.



The importance of hydration

Hydration is essential for maintaining body functions, as water makes up 60% of the body. Older adults are at greater risk of dehydration, which can severely impact brain function and overall health. Factors like reduced appetite and activity in seniors make staying hydrated more challenging. A 2017 study found that many older individuals underestimated the amount of fluid needed to avoid dehydration and lacked awareness of hydration needs. Proper hydration education can improve quality of life, reduce hospitalisations, and lower healthcare costs.



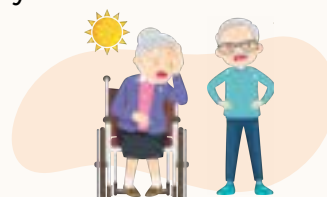
Support at Home updates

The Support at Home program will replace the Home Care Packages and Short-Term Restorative Care programs starting 1 July 2025. Your services with Multicultural Care will continue during the transition. The Commonwealth Home Support Programme will join Support at Home by 1 July 2027. Under the new system, participants will have quarterly budgets based on their assessment, with the option to carry over up to 10% or \$1000 limit of the unused budget to the next quarter. Visit health.gov.au for more information.



Preparing for summer

With summer comes bush fire season and residents are encouraged to take simple steps to lower their fire risk, including trimming overhanging trees and shrubs, mowing grass and removing the cuttings, and having a cleared area around your home. Bush Fire Survival Plans are available on the RFS website at rfs.nsw.gov.au. If you are a senior, or caring for a loved one who is elderly, it's also important to keep cool these warmer months. People over 65 are at increased risk of heat-related illnesses. Read the article above on the importance of staying hydrated this summer.



client story

PATHWAY TO INDEPENDENT

living

Patricia Burkitt has been receiving her Home Care Package (HCP) through Multicultural Care for almost a year. Initially hesitant to apply for assistance, she soon realised the vital role it plays in her life, especially after a fall and dealing with severe skin cancers and gout.

At 93 years of age, Patricia acknowledges that she needs more help than she originally thought.

“I left it very late to apply for something like [the HCP]. I didn’t think I needed it, but I was in denial and I really have needed it. And I’ve certainly needed help with getting to doctors and things like that because I had a fall and I’ve had a lot of trouble with skin cancers on one leg and the other leg has had gout, which has been terrible.”

Living independently in a terrace house, Patricia faces several challenges. The house, though old and not ideally suited to her needs, has been adapted to some extent. But her main difficulty lies in getting to her medical appointments. Her mobility issues prevent her from using taxis, and she requires assistance to attend these crucial visits.

“I worry about [missing appointments] a lot because it’s awfully hard. If you don’t turn up for an appointment, you’ve lost a place. They won’t give you another appointment easily or quickly,” she said.

Multicultural Care has been instrumental in providing Patricia with transportation, ensuring she never misses an appointment.



Patricia with our Bilingual Support Staff (BSS), Reham.



Multicultural Care has been brilliant with giving me help medically. They've given me a nurse.

Before receiving the HCP, Patricia managed well on her own but now finds it increasingly difficult. Her short-term memory issues add to her anxiety about forgetting appointments and paying bills. Despite these challenges, she remains resilient and resourceful, with the support of friends who assist with shopping and other needs.

To help her, Multicultural Care provides Patricia with several essential services.

“Multicultural Care has been brilliant with giving me help medically. They've given me a nurse. I have some wounds on the leg with the skin cancer that will not heal, and I might even need an operation on that leg. They've sent a nurse to dress the wounds for me. And the other thing is I've had a terrific physiotherapist who helped me with the fall and has been just brilliant with me. And she comes every two weeks.”

Multicultural Care also provides a driver for her medical appointments, alleviating her worries about transportation. She truly appreciates the help she receives, particularly the medical assistance and transportation. There is also a gardener who helps maintain a large hedge around her property, enhancing her safety.

Patricia feels that the HCP has significantly improved her situation, allowing her to manage her daily life more effectively. Her story highlights the invaluable support provided by Multicultural Care, enabling her to live independently while receiving the necessary assistance to address her medical and personal needs.

Home Medicines Review

HELPING TO MANAGE YOUR MEDICINES AT HOME

WHAT IS A HOME MEDICINES REVIEW?

A home medicines review is a service where doctors and pharmacists work together to support people who take medications.

If your GP believes a home medicines review would be helpful for you, and you agree, they will refer you to a community pharmacy of your choice and provide the pharmacist with your medical details.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

An appointment will then be arranged for a pharmacist to visit you, usually in your home. During this visit, the pharmacist will review all of your medications, including both prescription drugs and any over-the-counter medicines you may be using, such as those purchased at a supermarket or health food store.

The pharmacist will discuss how you are taking your medications and address any concerns or difficulties you may have.

Following the visit, the pharmacist will share their findings with your GP, who will then discuss any recommended changes to your medication with you.

DO I NEED TO PAY FOR THIS SERVICE?

The Commonwealth Government will pay the pharmacist to visit your home. Your GP's service may be directly billed to Medicare or you can claim a Medicare rebate, as with any other consultation.

For more information, ask your doctor, pharmacist or call the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Information Line on freecall 1800 020 613.





Elder mediation & support service

Let's Talk: Elder Support, from Relationships Australia NSW, offers mediation for older individuals and their families to address age-related concerns and disputes. It provides a safe space for discussing intergenerational challenges and planning for the future. The service ensures that the older person's voice is heard, their rights are protected, and their preferences are respected. Call them to learn more 1300 364 277.

Advance Care Directive

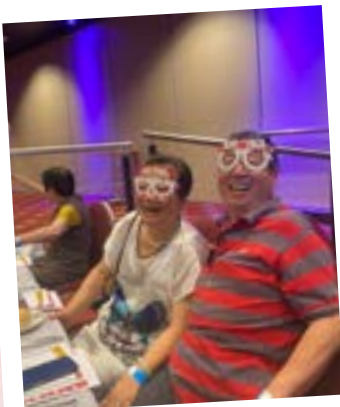
An Advance Care Directive allows you to specify your healthcare preferences in case you're unable to make decisions due to illness or injury. It helps loved ones and medical staff make informed choices on your behalf. Creating an Advance Care Directive is a key part of Advance Care Planning. Health professionals will use your Advance Care Directive to make decisions when you are unable to make or communicate decisions about the care and treatment you want. For more details, visit health.nsw.gov.au.



Gardening and cleaning caps removed

The Australian government has removed the controversial cap on services from the new Support at Home program, which will replace the home care packages from July 2025. Minister for Aged Care, Anika Wells, announced that they are removing the cap of 52 hours per year for cleaning services and 18 hours for gardening services. The cap removal doesn't mean services will be unlimited. The cap previously sparked opposition from consumers/participants, families, home care providers, and peak bodies.

CENTRE-BASED RESPITE *christmas* SNAPSHOTS 📷



Here are some photos from our 2024 Centre-Based Respite Christmas Party at the Burwood RSL. Our consumers/participants enjoyed live performances, bingo, a raffle and amazing food. Thank you to everyone who joined us on the day, especially to our team for organising the event.

Changing to a HOME CARE PACKAGE

Home Care Packages (HCP) are funded by the Australian Government to support older Australians who want to maintain their independence at home.

AM I ELIGIBLE FOR HCP?

Contact My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 to know if you are eligible for a package.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHSP AND HCP?

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) is a government-funded initiative that aims to assist older Australians with entry-level home support services. HCP is designed for people with more serious and complex aged care needs. Under HCP, you get a care manager to liaise with you for all your needs.

CAN I MOVE TO HCP WHILE ON STRC?

Yes, your Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC) Care Advisor can help you transition from STRC to HCP. If you get HCP assigned whilst receiving STRC, you need to let your STRC Care Advisor know immediately that you've received your assignment letter from the Department of Health and Aged Care stating that you can now start HCP. As soon as you sign up for HCP, your STRC funding will immediately stop.

WHAT SERVICES CAN I GET WITH HCP?

In addition to care management services, HCP services include domestic assistance, meal preparation, personal care assistance, allied health support services, social support, transport assistance, nursing care, access to assistive technology, assistance with home and garden maintenance and centre-based respite.

Contact us on (02) 9718 6199 to learn more about moving to a Home Care Package!

JOIN US!

Multicultural Care is seeking expressions of interest from family, friends, and representatives of our consumers/participants to join our Quality Care Advisory Body (QCAB) and Consumer Advisory Body (CAB).



Our Quality Care Advisory Body (QCAB) supports and informs the governing body (the Board), helps with problem-solving and suggests improvements to Multicultural Care's services. QCAB members provide independent feedback to the Board on the quality of care provided to consumers/participants. Your involvement will make a significant impact on the services we provide. If you want to discuss and consider specific issues in relation to the delivery of care and services provided by Multicultural Care, then we want to hear from you.

The Consumer Advisory Body (CAB) provides Multicultural Care's governing body (Board) and leadership team with feedback about the quality of care and services. Consumer/Participant CAB members will share ideas, opinions, and suggestions about the quality of Multicultural Care's care and services. Joining lets you share your concerns and ideas with those in charge of your care. If you have questions about the Consumer Advisory Body, please don't hesitate to contact us.



For questions and clarifications, please contact:

Barry Cowling

Quality, Compliance and Risk Manager

✉ qcrmanager@mc.org.au

☎ (02) 9718 6199

Multicultural Care will be covering any out of pocket expenses such as travel and parking. As a show of thanks for your attendance and contribution, we will also be giving a \$50 gift voucher.



CONTACT US

☎ 02 9718 6199 (General)
02 9129 7777 (Rostering)
🕒 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

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