

# Koowee Connect

# NEWSLETTER



September / October

2020

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**Kooweerup**  
REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICE







# Messages from Management

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Greetings all,

Where else to start this article than to thank the staff for an extraordinary effort in dealing with the recent Outbreak. This really puts substance to the term “Health Care Hero’s”. To see everyone respond to the situation and help reduce and contain the risks was truly amazing.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> September it was heartening to receive the notification that KRHS Outbreak was closed and the 4 week cycle of outbreak and surveillance had ceased.

The management team thanks all those staff that expressed support for efforts during swabbing blitzes and for your rapid response to testing requirements. It was the successful return of these swabs that set our release date from outbreak



**Frank Megens**  
Chief Executive Officer

At the time of writing this article the Victorian daily new cases had dropped to 5 which is a very promising sign, nevertheless we continue to monitor the community spread through close attention to a handful of local postcodes.

The Covid management team at KRHS continues to revisit our reopening plan with the ultimate goal being restoring onsite visiting. To progress towards this outcome we monitor with interest the Premiers announcement and the gradual easing of restrictions and release of DHHS guidance documents. At no point have the staff taken their eye off the key reason for our hard works, the residents. We continue to strive to ensure life is as full as can be under the current situation. Importantly on the 21<sup>st</sup> September we implemented garden visits whereby residents could meet with relatives with the added assurance of social distancing being managed through installed fencing. We trust that the opportunity to meet without the physical barrier of a window will be of value to families and residents.

The focus on PPE management will continue over the next few weeks as we hone our skills and work towards adequate preparation should we experience another outbreak. FIT testing will be a key component of training and most likely be managed through a regional initiative.

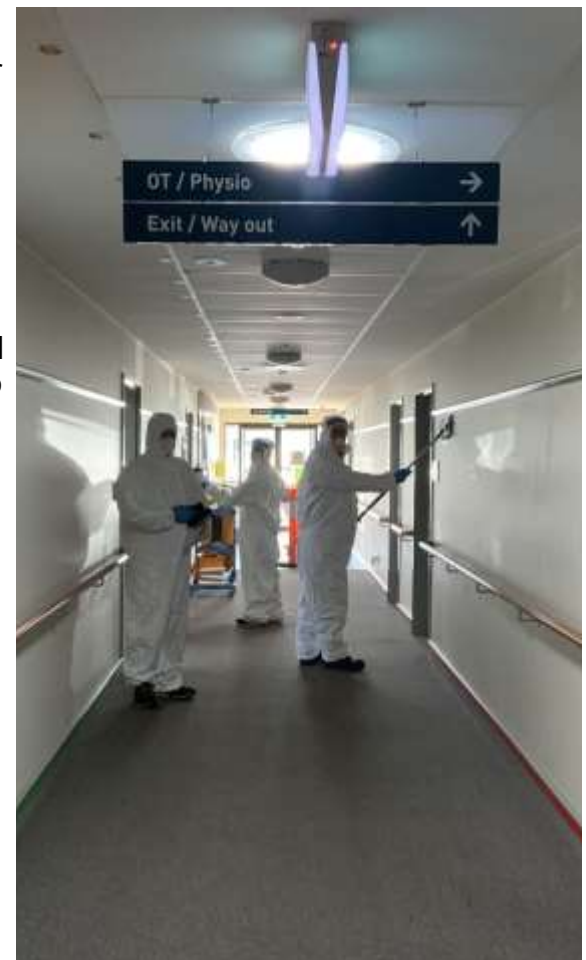
I recognise and thank Damian for his doggedness in assuring all staff have attained an adequate skill level in donning / doffing so as that we are safe into the future. This is a most important strategy and was recognised by the Australian Defence Forces visit to inspect our preparedness.

Our PPE supplies remain at adequate levels with routine scheduled deliveries now occurring. Despite what is reported in the press KRHS is well prepared to respond to the increase demand on PPE should we outbreak again. *Pictured right is KRHS deep cleaning on 21st August*

The collective contribution in managing our situation at KRHS has certainly secured our safety.

On behalf of the team, Thank you for your efforts

Frank





## Aileen Thoms

*Primary Health and Innovation Manager*

Hi Everyone, phew! it has been a challenging few months. I have been so delighted to see how supportive and caring staff are to the people we care for and to each other. The acts of kindness have been many and varied demonstrating the depth of compassion there is here. We have certainly experienced a strong sense of community and "in it together". A big Thank you goes out to each and every-one for doing their bit to keep us all safe.

As the stage 4 lockdown continues most people are feeling the impact of separation from family and friends, the worry about the numbers of

new COVID infections and the angst of what the future will bring is very real. Keep referring back to the fantastic tips shared in the newsletter over the last few episodes which will help to keep you well during this time.

The Corona virus pandemic will end and although we may not go back to life as it was pre COVID, we will adapt to a new kind of normal.

One great bonus has been how quickly and efficiently we have adapted to working remotely, digital platforms such as Zoom and MS Teams have made collaboration in the virtual space possible. While much of our workforce has continued to provide health care and support physically, remote working has also emerged strongly. As the line between family and work blurred, sometimes it was very visible when video meetings saw children climbing on knees, asking for school work support or dogs needing attention; it keeps it real and reminds us of the multiple challenges our staff are working through each day. Staff have adapted their work practise and find they are very able and productive. This flexibility may become the new normal.

I personally have missed the quiet interactions and ideas that get generated when we are having conversations face to face. There will still be a place for coming together to connect and be creative.

Moving forward we can keep doing our best to practise safe hand hygiene, cough etiquette and remaining at least 1.5 meters from others. These simple actions along with wearing our masks and staying home will take us to the next step.

I hope we can look forward to a better, more innovative, less selfish and kinder future.

Aileen



**Please visit our website  
for the latest information  
on KRHS and COVID-19  
restrictions**





**David Ramsay**  
*Director of Nursing*

Hello Colleagues

I am continually amazed at the efforts our colleagues are putting in, during not only the worrying time of the COVID era but the increased workload staff have.

Huge thank you and kudos to Terese Williams for the cookies she made for the staff.

There is a variety of messages but this is my favourite cookie.

Pictured below Aileen, Lea, Naomi and Brian at the Pop-up Covid testing station in Koo Wee Rup. A big thank-you to Jan Sabatucci who bought us soup this day and also to Tina Kendall who supplied mini pizzas and biscuits, all very much appreciated especially on the cold and wet days.



Pictured left is Frank, Aileen and Naomi at the testing station

# Safe decision-making as COVID-19 restrictions ease

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More emphasis is on us as individuals to make decisions about what is safe behaviour and how we should conduct our lives

Decision-making can be difficult, especially after stress or traumatic events, like the COVID-19 pandemic.

We're all been through a tumultuous past few months. The threat from the virus continues and the need for caution is ongoing.

While public health advice guides us, there are still decisions each of us must make particular to our own personal circumstances.

When to return to the office? Should I visit the city from my remote or regional area? Do I want to attend a party, funeral or wedding? How to care for my elderly parents? Should I catch a bus?

These types of choices involve levels of decision making about what is safe for ourselves, our family, friends and communities.

**Take your time** to make decisions that are right for you

**Weigh up** the complexity and look at all the moving parts

**Identify** what is important to you, your values and guiding principles

**Alternatives** Consider any alternatives and other options

**High-risk decisions** Make sure you understand the consequences of high-risk decisions

**Personal reactions** Consider how people will react to your decisions

**Use a pros and cons list** it can help guide your decision making

**Maintain vigilance** with your personal hygiene. This is the key to being safe, and keeping others safe

**If it doesn't feel right** then best not to do it. If in doubt, sit it out

*Excerpt from the Australian Red Cross website*



# Partners in Wellbeing



**For some people, the psychological, social and economic effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, have had a significant impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Many people also feel distressed and overwhelmed by the constant media reports and conflicting information about the situation.**

It's natural to feel a range of emotions, such as stress, worry, anxiety or feeling low. These feelings are common during and after distressing events like the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions put in place to stop its transmission. Experiencing these feelings does not always mean something is wrong.

However, if you are not coping or have been feeling distressed, anxious or down over several weeks, help is available through *Partners in Wellbeing* service.

The free service offers one-on-one support to help you improve your wellbeing, develop strategies to cope and provide emotional support when and as you need it.



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land we work on and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Support for your mental health and wellbeing during the Coronavirus pandemic and beyond

## Work out what is wrong together

Working with a Wellbeing Coach, you explore what is causing your stress or anxiety and help you gain clarity on your thoughts, feelings and experiences. Conversations will be a safe place for you to talk privately about feeling overwhelmed, unsafe or anxious without judgement.

## Get things under control

Through coaching and practical advice, your Wellbeing Coach will help you find strategies to manage stress, anxiety and improve your wellbeing and resilience.

## Get on with life

We help you to identify people in your life, support services, and other resources to draw on during times of stress. If required, a Wellbeing Coach will assist you to link with other support services in your local community.

## Keep Connected

We keep in regular contact with you to provide emotional support, practical assistance and help you use the strategies you have identified to manage your stress, anxiety and improve your wellbeing.

## Learn more about COVID-19

As the restrictions and advice in response to COVID can change, your Wellbeing Coach can provide up-to-date and accurate information on COVID 19 and current restrictions within your community.

## Additional support for people living with mental health concerns and carers

People living with mental health concerns and their carers may be particularly vulnerable during this time, with additional distress making it harder to cope, stay connected or manage wellbeing.



We celebrate, value and include people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.

# Mens Shed and Community Garden

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## It was the best of times, it was the worst of times

This year we celebrated the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII in the Pacific. I remember it very well because I was 13 at the time and I realised that this would be the absolute end of the air raids that we had endured for five years. So ... for the first time in all these years the lights in all the houses were turned on (blackout boarding taken down), the street lights were also turned on and buses could have lights on inside. Also for the first time my friend Colin Wilson and I were allowed to walk into town (about 5km) and join in the celebrations without our parents!

The town was packed with people all celebrating the victory and Colin and I did something which would be considered not quite right today. In the centre of the town - Wolverhampton (now a city) – there still stands a life-size statue of Queen Victoria's hubby Prince Albert; he is sitting astride a big black stallion in all his royal regalia high up on a sculptured platform. That night we gingerly climbed up the statue and sat behind Albert in his saddle on his horse and urged his steed to gallop with our loudest voices – which it didn't! What a memory that was.

Finally I have suddenly realised that some people do not find my jokes very punny!

Geoff Stokes



Keep an eye out for this sign in the community garden, as it says, the Mens Shed Garden Shop is open for business. You can purchase fresh organic fruit and vegetables along with preserves and sauces, I can highly recommend Charlie's special 'Black Sauce', its delicious!

*Vegetables available now are*

Silverbeet  
Lettuce  
Rhubarb  
Spring onion  
Parsley  
Celery

Also watch the whiteboard near the kronos machine for weekly specials





Home Care has continued to provide valuable services to our community during this COVID period. Our care staff have all completed training around Personal Protective Equipment and COVID screening and have been supplied with PPE to assist in keeping our community safe. During this time, Home Care has been able to provide one on one services to clients assisting with daily activities such as showering, housework, transport to appointments and shopping, and respite. Through these service opportunities staff have been able to provide important social interaction for those who are isolated and vulnerable in our community.

## Carer Stress

The demands of caring can sometimes feel relentless, especially during these COVID restrictions. Many carers experience physical, mental or emotional tension related to their caring role. Some stress is normal, but when stress reaches significant levels it can affect your health and wellbeing. It is important to reach out for assistance if you are feeling overwhelmed or need a break. Home Care is able to assist those with packages by providing respite services that allow carers to have a break.

## New staff

This month Home Care have welcomed two new staff members – Care Advisor, Marijana and Office Administration, Debbie.

Marijana comes to KRHS with experience in Case Management and Social Work having worked for over 12 years in the local Government areas in Melbourne before moving to Dalyston in 2013. Since moving in 2013, Marijana has worked as a Social Worker at Bass Coast Hospital in Wonthaggi. Marijana is passionate about Case Management and is excited by the opportunity at KRHS to continue this work within our community.

Debbie comes to KRHS with extensive experience in Administration in both local council and nursing agencies. Debbie lives locally and enjoys taking care of her animals on her hobby farm. Debbie loves spending time with her family and is looking forward to spending time with the grandchildren when restrictions ease.

With their wealth of experience and enthusiasm, Marijana and Debbie will both be highly valued members of the Home Care team. We hope you join with us in welcoming them.

*Pictured below left Debbie, right Marijana*



# Healthier Together

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**Our Cardinia Cooks Project** started out as a way to help connect small business owners, local farmers and food producers and the community particularly during these difficult times.

The idea was to put together hampers based on ingredients for a meal made from fresh local produce, with the hampers available at a fully subsidised rate (supported by grant funding from Cardinia Shire Council).

Participants registered for the hampers advertised on Facebook and with all the ingredients on hand then joined in our live cooking streams to make some delicious snacks and a healthy meal for dinner.

The first session was hosted by our very own Lyndsay Sharp and her daughter Keely who helped us all make a couple of tasty dips and some flat bread for dipping.

The next session saw Jenny Bayliss (our Volunteer Coordinator) stepping in to take us through a delicious Chicken, lemon and garlic stew.

All recipes have been designed to ensure they are family friendly, healthy and so far they have been targeted more towards children cooking along, while remote schooling during restrictions. They have also been taken from recipes included in our Circle of Friends Cook Book which is being developed currently.

The last hamper included a fact sheet on growing veggies from scraps which many of the children really enjoyed. We decided to run a competition while we wait patiently for restrictions to be eased to enable people to travel for the hampers. The competition asked for photos to be sent in showing how their veggies were growing.

We had some fabulous entries and drew out the names of two winners who will each receive a voucher to spend at the Emerald Fruit and Vegetable barn and Nar Nar Goon Farmers Market Café, who each provided the hamper ingredients.

Here (right) are the pictures of our lucky winners and/or their vegetables and below a few other photos of other entries we received. If you would like to be involved in or want to know more about our Cardinia Cooks hamper and cooking sessions, or be a part of our community cook book please contact Jenny Bayliss on 5997 9704.



*Pictured above (Skyla) and below the winning photos*





## Cook Well Eat Well

Developed by nutrition experts, Cook Well, Eat Well is a new resource with ideas for cooking with common pantry staples

Cook Well, Eat Well is here to support Victorian families during the coronavirus lockdown and beyond

According to VicHealth data, 1 in 2 Victorians have been meal planning during the coronavirus pandemic, with 46% of Victorians doing so to save money

With 1 in 2 Victorians meal planning during the coronavirus pandemic to save money and keep healthy, we know it can be tough to come up with nutritious and affordable meal ideas.

KRHS is here to support you during this time, with some help from VicHealth and Nutrition Australia, who have created easy-to-follow healthy recipes you can make with common pantry staples.

Check out their new website Cook Well, Eat Well for ideas on cooking with ingredients like flour, rice and lentils. With more recipes being cooked up regularly over the next three months, you can forget the stress of meal planning and supermarket shopping.

Visit Cook Well, Eat Well at [www.cookwelleatwell.org.au](http://www.cookwelleatwell.org.au) and tag your recipe creations using #cookwelleatwell.



## Cauliflower and Bean Burrito Bowl

### Ingredients (serves 4)

- ½ cauliflower, chopped into florets
- 1 cup basmati rice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small red onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed or minced
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 400g canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 large carrot, coarsely chopped
- 3 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 small avocado, sliced
- ½ cos lettuce, finely chopped
- 1 lime, cut into wedges
- ½ bunch fresh coriander leaves, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup natural or Greek plain yoghurt

### Method

Preheat oven to 200°C. Place cauliflower on a baking tray and drizzle with half the oil. Roast for 20-25 minutes, turning halfway through

1. In a medium saucepan add rice and 2 cups of water and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to a simmer. Cover with lid and cook for 15 minutes. The water should be absorbed, remove from heat and set aside.
2. In a frypan heat the remaining oil over a medium heat. Add onion and sauté until onion begins to soften. Add garlic and spices, stir and heat through for 2 minutes. Add black beans, carrot and tomatoes. Combine well and cook for 8-10 minutes.
3. Divide rice among bowls. Top with bean mixture, roasted cauliflower, avocado and lettuce. Squeeze lime over ingredients and sprinkle with coriander leaves. Serve with yoghurt.



**Tip** Use any canned lentils or legumes you have on hand – four bean mix or red kidney beans also work well

# Avoidable blindness and vision loss - Early detection is key

Did you know that many eye conditions have no symptoms in the early stages?

Age-related macular degeneration, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma and refractive error are the main causes of blindness and vision loss in people aged over 40. As they can develop slowly, you may not notice a change in your vision until later stages.

The good news is that if they are detected early through regular eye tests with an eye health professional, vision loss can often be avoided.

If you are aged over 40, have a family history of eye disease (such as age-related macular degeneration or glaucoma), have diabetes, smoke, or are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, you may be more at risk of developing one of these eye conditions.

Don't wait for symptoms, make eye health a priority by having regular eye tests every two to three years or as directed by your eye health professional.

An eye test is a comprehensive check of the health of your eyes. Eye tests can be booked directly with an optometrist, without a referral. Many people can access a Medicare rebate covering some or all of the cost of an eye test. Some people may be eligible for subsidised, low-cost glasses. If required, your GP or optometrist can refer you to an ophthalmologist (medically-trained eye specialist).

To find your local optometrist visit <http://www.optometry.org.au/vic/find-an-optometrist/>

The Vision Initiative has developed multilingual resources for communities in 10 languages in addition to English- in Arabic, Burmese, Cantonese, Dari, Greek, Hazaragi, Italian, Mandarin, Tamil and Vietnamese.

Visit <http://www.visioninitiative.org.au/health-professionals/professional-resources>

For more information on eye health and vision care, or to find out more about services and supports available for people who are blind or vision impaired, speak to an optometrist, ophthalmologist or your GP, or visit [www.visioninitiative.org.au](http://www.visioninitiative.org.au)

## Save your sight – get tested

*The Vision Initiative is a health promotion program funded by the Victorian Government and managed by Vision 2020 Australia, which aims to prevent avoidable blindness and vision loss in Victoria. To order free eye health resources or organise a presentation for your organisation contact the Vision Initiative team on 03 9656 2020 or by email at [visioninitiative@vision2020australia.org.au](mailto:visioninitiative@vision2020australia.org.au)*



### How do I protect my eyes?

- Have regular eye tests if you are aged over 40.
- Book an eye test without delay if you notice a change in your vision.
- Wear a hat and sunglasses when outside.
- Wear eye protection when playing sports such as squash or working in a dangerous environment.
- Maintain a healthy diet and exercise regularly.
- Keep good control of your diabetes (blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol levels).
- Stop smoking.
- Follow the advice of your optometrist or ophthalmologist.



## Wordsearch, just for you

R	R	P	O	S	I	T	I	V	E	Y	I	A	U	L	A	B	I	O	N	Z	S	M	Y	W	APPRECIATION
C	N	T	A	U	I	K	O	J	K	R	X	X	O	V	B	D	T	Y	P	A	J	F	J	X	CAREGIVER
K	J	N	T	H	O	U	G	H	T	F	U	L	N	E	S	S	F	X	D	D	N	D	B	H	COMMUNITY
E	N	C	O	U	R	A	G	E	M	E	N	T	P	T	E	A	O	G	W	S	Y	D	L	S	COMPASSION
U	T	E	A	M	W	O	R	K	N	G	U	H	E	R	O	J	E	K	V	K	G	M	T	A	CONNECTEDNESS
K	E	N	M	B	M	R	K	O	X	F	X	C	P	J	V	G	V	P	U	I	T	C	N	N	COVID
M	W	H	H	I	B	M	I	D	X	A	N	J	A	G	N	C	E	P	U	N	O	I	W	I	DOFFING
S	E	L	F	L	E	S	S	N	E	S	S	B	K	R	B	S	S	T	A	D	J	W	P	T	DONNING
V	V	G	Q	P	S	Z	J	B	K	D	P	E	J	S	K	P	U	L	H	N	X	G	L	I	ENCOURAGEMENT
B	K	A	R	A	S	C	O	N	N	E	C	T	E	D	N	E	S	S	B	E	F	A	H	S	ESSENTIALS
Y	B	N	P	G	D	Y	Q	P	B	O	R	Z	T	N	I	G	D	K	M	S	R	U	G	E	FRONTLINE
C	J	M	Z	Q	W	G	C	M	F	A	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	T	Y	S	O	T	E	R	GENEROSITY
O	O	Z	L	K	H	B	H	Y	C	V	E	Y	R	E	S	I	L	I	E	N	C	E	I	V	GRATITUDE
C	L	C	R	R	E	Z	G	E	N	E	R	O	S	I	T	Y	A	J	N	Y	R	T	Z	N	HEALTHCARE
H	P	B	U	C	A	P	P	R	E	C	I	A	T	I	O	N	V	K	A	A	D	S	M	L	HERO
G	R	S	W	J	D	X	Y	H	W	J	G	H	G	W	I	I	J	G	C	B	K	C	P	Z	KINDNESS
Z	B	A	L	U	G	K	M	F	C	N	R	O	T	P	S	D	V	H	B	S	T	T	L	V	MASKS
M	A	E	W	U	W	G	N	S	K	Y	A	E	S	S	E	N	T	I	A	L	S	J	O	Q	POSITIVE
D	H	G	L	W	N	Y	Z	M	B	K	T	F	L	Y	F	L	O	M	O	K	S	P	S	Z	RESILIENCE
H	O	O	J	I	F	R	O	N	T	L	I	N	E	O	A	H	N	D	T	C	O	V	I	D	SANITISER
H	D	F	N	A	C	A	C	C	B	E	T	S	T	E	U	W	K	Z	M	R	W	L	G	K	SELFLESSNESS
S	H	N	F	W	M	V	O	J	O	L	U	K	H	V	G	E	B	Q	R	K	E	N	A	D	STAYS SAFE
J	O	V	Q	I	V	V	K	J	Q	F	D	F	X	J	O	B	X	J	J	W	B	Z	P	Q	TEAMWORK
D	P	H	G	P	N	J	O	C	A	R	E	G	I	V	E	R	Z	T	W	C	T	Y	I	Z	THOUGHTFULNESS
Q	W	B	J	V	P	G	W	E	L	L	N	E	S	S	T	A	Y	S	A	F	E	S	T	W	TOGETHER
																									WELLNESS



The **ONLINE LOVE Club Gathering** is a weekly online social catch-up and check in for older LGBTQ people to connect and share:

- How you are keeping busy?
- How you are managing your health and wellbeing?
- What you are reading, watching or listening too?  
What's making you laugh?
- Any anecdote or stories

[https://www.aconhealth.org.au/ageing\\_programs](https://www.aconhealth.org.au/ageing_programs)

## Words of Wisdom

There is a lot of Collective wisdom within the walls of Killara and Westernport unit. During lockdown our staff have been getting to know even more about the residents.

Our Words of Wisdom project was introduced as a result of being contacted by Laura from Bendigo Bank. She wanted to organise something so that the community could see how the residents in our facility were coping with lockdown and not seeing their loved ones.

The series of interviews with some of the residents is based around the question of "What would you tell your 18 year old self if you had the chance to go back in time!"

During our first session the subject matter was 'Dating Advice'!

As you can see there were a few wry smiles and the residents enjoyed having something different to take their mind off the issues of today!

With more sessions planned we look forward to hearing many more Words of Wisdom from our valued elders of the community.







Words of Wisdom



P.S. I've been married to my beautiful wife for 66 years

Words of Wisdom



Words of Wisdom



Words of Wisdom

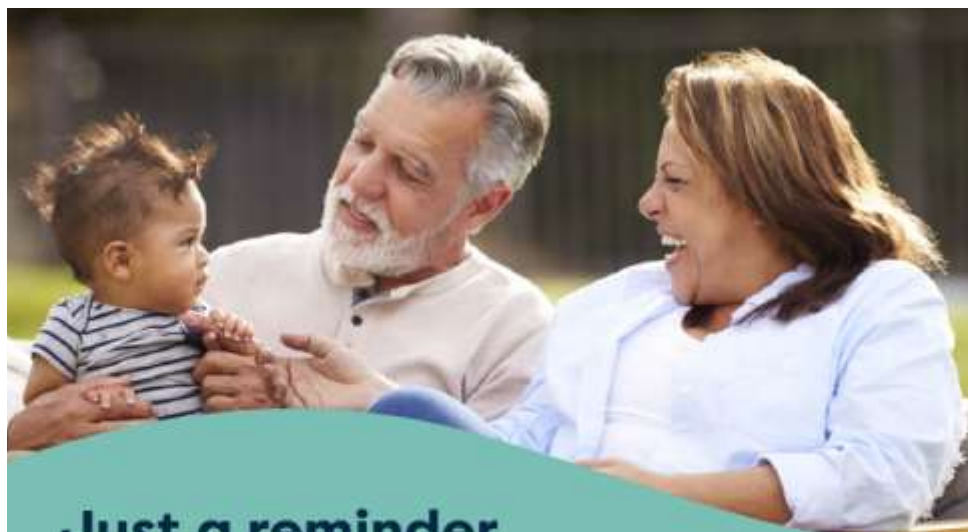
## Dementia Action Week

**A little support makes a lot of difference**  
**September 21st -27th 2020**

The theme of this year's Dementia Action Week is 'A little support makes a lot of difference'. The week aims to increase awareness and reduce discrimination- demonstrating that with a little support, people living with dementia can continue to live well, make significant contributions to our community, be active decisions makers and live a rich and active life.

The concept for Dementia Action Week 2020 has been developed in consultation with Dementia Advocates, who have a lived experience of dementia. Dementia Australia's engagement with Advocates indicates that there is a perception that people living with dementia are solely dependent on their loved ones and carers. These beliefs can lead to judgements and discrimination against people living with dementia.

During Dementia Action Week, KRHS have helped spread the word on how to better support people living with dementia by sharing Dementia Australia tips and tools on Facebook and flyers distributed across KRHS. If you would like to know how you can help keep the world open for people living with dementia, go to <https://discrimination.dementia.org.au/action-week/> or contact Angelique on 5997 9792 or [jauffreta@krhs.net.au](mailto:jauffreta@krhs.net.au)



## Just a reminder of how you can help me

Here are seven ways you can make things a little easier for someone like me living with dementia.

- 1 Make home life easier for me with a few smart changes.
- 2 Give me a little space to do things for myself.
- 3 Listen to me, don't always try to solve my problems.
- 4 Give me a minute to find the right words.
- 5 Remind me with clever technology.
- 6 Help me plan my own social life.
- 7 Encourage me to stay active and healthy.

Dementia. A little  
**support**  
makes a lot of  
**difference**

Find out more at [dementia.org.au/actionweek](https://dementia.org.au/actionweek)



This Dementia Australia initiative received funding from the Australian Government.

For information and advice on dementia call

**National Dementia Helpline**  
**1800 100 500**

Monday - Friday, 8am - 8pm (except public holidays)  
For language assistance call 131 450



## Dementia Action Week

**21-27 September 2020**

A little support makes  
a lot of difference



## Competition:

### Name the Muscovy Ducks

KRHS welcomes 3 new residents to the Westernport Garden.  
1 male and 2 female Muscovy Ducks, hopefully they will soon feel right at home and maybe start a family.

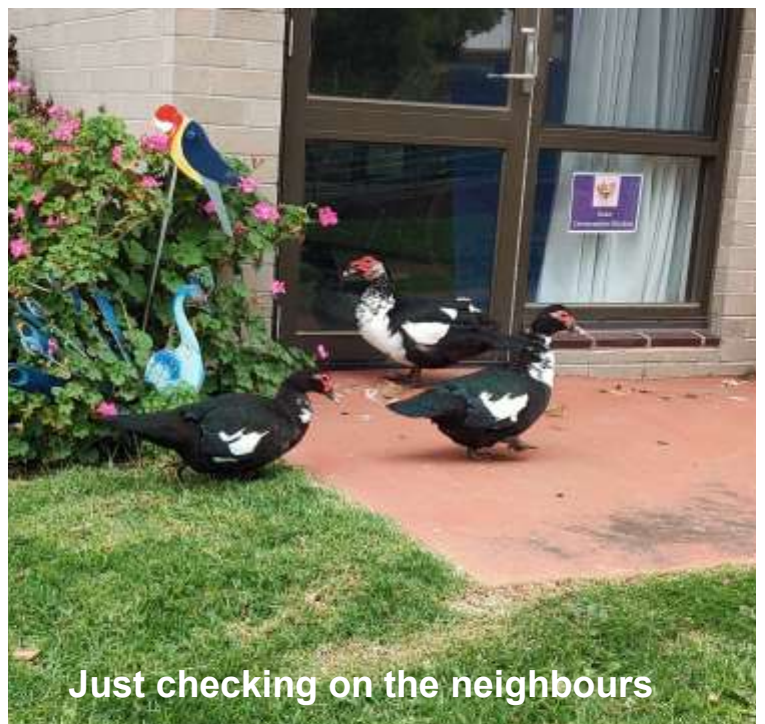
**The ducks have no names and we would like you to name them to win a prize.**

Please place your duck names and your name and contact info to  
Lea Duff duffl@krhs, 5997 9790  
or drop a note with the Leisure and Lifestyle girls or at reception.

Competition ends 1st November with the winning names announced in the Nov/Dec Newsletter

### Some fun facts about Muscovy Ducks

- These ducks do not swim as much as other ducks as they have underdeveloped oil glands.
- The domesticated Muscovy duck is the sole domestic duck species that has not been bred from the mallard stock.
- The record for the heaviest Muscovy is held by a male duck from an Australian breed which weighed almost 22 lbs (10 kg).
- They often make low-pitched sounds and wag their tails, whether to show their playful nature or to scare away predators.
- The ducks are usually silent and are rarely heard calling or making any sounds unless they are attacked. The hens make a soft trilling coo while the drakes have a low and hushed breathy call. The males can also make puffing and hissing sounds to ward off enemies.
- The males do not generally get far off the ground even though they can fly.
- They fly with their necks held straight like a goose.
- Muscovy Ducks can make good pets because of their peaceful temperament. Like all other domestic ducks, they need water to survive.
- They do not like to be handled by humans and can find their own food.
- It takes around 24 hours for all the ducklings to come out of their eggs after the first egg hatches. The ducklings remain close to their mother for the first 10 to 12 weeks to keep warm as their bodies are not yet developed to produce adequate heat. The mother can risk her own life to protect the baby ducks from predators and other dangers. The male also stays close to the nest for several weeks to protect the ducklings. The ducklings are trained to hunt and forage for food by both parents.
- Their average lifespan ranges between 8 years and 12 years in wild. They may have a longer life expectancy of around 20 years in captivity.



Just checking on the neighbours

# Gathering of Kindness

The Coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) has taken a lot of us by surprise. Some may say that they feel like the world as they know it has been turned upside down. However, during these challenging times a silver lining starts to appear from the dark cloud, as we see kindness prevail all over the world.

We have seen people living in locked down countries come together in a display of solidarity, applauding healthcare workers' heroic work during the outbreak, and others choose to close the distance between them by singing on their balconies. At a more local level, we are seeing members of our community supporting one another, offering to collect groceries, calling others for a friendly chat and writing letters to residents, children drawing them pictures, all to help spread a little light and bring some joy to those missing their loved ones. But it doesn't stop there, as the saying goes, 'kindness breeds kindness'.

This kindness pandemic is contagious, having a positive ripple effect across KRHS. We are seeing staff going above and beyond, coming together and displaying random acts of kindness in different ways. Social and mental health support for staff has been offered by our residential Social worker, and those working remotely have taken to daily 'check ins' with their peers and management. Staff BBQ's, weekly themed dress up days and a KRHS "Rona playlist" competition have all helped boost morale and created some light heartedness in the organisation. Some peers have banded together, encouraging others to stay active with the '50km in May' competition.

Our Healthcare Heroes have been recognised for their hard work, staff have received letters of gratitude for their commitment during these challenging times and have been encouraged to take short leave to rest and recharge. Not to mention, the overall generosity of peers has been unsurpassable, as our staff members' altruistic natures shone through. Home baked cupcakes were brought in for staff to indulge in, soup and biscuits made for the swabbing team as they battled the elements and staff were treated to a 'thank-you' cookie to sweeten up their day. Then there are those who stealthy carry out random acts of kindness, just make their workspace a better, brighter place.

We have learnt that amid these uncertain times, there is also community, support and hope. The added benefit of helping others is that it is good for our own mental health and wellbeing. It can help reduce stress and improve your emotional wellbeing. But most importantly, don't forget being kind isn't just about kind to others, we need to take time to be kind to yourself too!

Do you have a story about kindness that you'd like to share? We'd love to hear about it. It doesn't matter how big or small it is, if you gave, received or witnessed it, we'd love to hear your story of kindness. If you have an idea for making your part of the world a better place, the we'd love to hear that too!

If you would like to share your story and have it featured in the next KooWee Connect, contact Angeliq on 5997 9792 or [jauffreta@krhs.net.au](mailto:jauffreta@krhs.net.au).





## Flattening the curve of mental ill-health

The pandemic has impacted many people's mental health whether it's through health concerns, disruption to routines, social isolation, domestic violence, financial stress, unemployment or work-related stress - the list goes on.

This increase in risk factors means that more people are likely to experience mental health conditions like depression and anxiety unless we use public health measures to "flatten the curve of mental ill-health" much like we "flattened the curve" of COVID infections.

It is said that more programs at community level and population wide policies that address risk factors are escalating due to the pandemic will be needed.

Loneliness is something most of us have experienced during the lockdown, our Pen Pal project, Ready2GO and Econnect are just a few examples of how people in our community are contributing to reduce this and create wonderful new connections for people. *(excerpt from Prevention united)*

The Ready2Go project is a resilience program first established in Cockatoo, to support people within the community during heatwaves and other extreme weather conditions such as fire or flood and now a pandemic. The project provides the volunteer an opportunity to support community members who are living independently but, due to age, chronic health issues, disability or social isolation, may need additional support during these times.

If you or someone you know would benefit from these projects or would like to help please contact Alex Paxton, [paxtona@krhs.net.au](mailto:paxtona@krhs.net.au) or Angelique Jauffret [jauffreta@krhs.net.au](mailto:jauffreta@krhs.net.au)

### EConnect Kooweerup



Workshop details:

Are you feeling a bit lonely ? out of touch?  
unsure about technology?  
Would like to see family and friends more?  
KRHS can help - our friendly staff can  
assist you get connected. Phone 59979686



## Ready2Go

### Koo Wee Rup



**Kooweerup**  
REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICE



# THE HUB

Koo Wee Rup Youth Centre

 **live zoom**

**Join a fun group chat with weekly themes,  
games and prizes**

**Thursdays 4.30 - 5.30pm**

**Contact Brian Harlow for the link**

5997 9687 harlowb@krhs.net.au



Supporting local youth



## The Hub goes online

Beginning in August, the Koo Wee Rup Youth Centre (The Hub) started running a weekly session on Zoom for young people to get in touch with local youth support.

This gave young people an opportunity to have a chat about how they are handling all the challenges that 2020 has thrown at them whilst also seeking advice and support.

It also provided a safe space for them to enjoy some fun games and make new friends.

The Hub online runs every Thursday afternoon from 4.30 to 5.30pm

Contact Brian on 5997 9687 or [harlowb@krhs.net.au](mailto:harlowb@krhs.net.au) to get the link to the group.





## The power of language nursing home resident vs aged care consumer

Older adults should have a say in how they want their care and services delivered to them  
(Source: My Aged Care website)

A few years ago, when the Royal Commission into aged care began, so too did the aged care reforms which brought about legislative changes, as well as a new set of industry standards.

Along with these changes came a new way of describing nursing home residents. Previously, in all formal descriptions, nursing home residents were called care recipients. Informally, care recipients were known as residents.

Then all of a sudden, the language changed and formally and informally, care recipients and residents respectively, became known as aged care consumers.

Since then there has been quite a bit of backlash towards the title change, not only from aged care providers, but care staff, the general public, and aged care consumers themselves who still preferred to be called residents.

But this is because the Government didn't really explain why there was a change, and why the change was important.

In addition to this failing, the Government only changed some of the literature. For example, the most current version of the Aged Care Act, still uses the terms care recipients and residents. Even members of Government refer to aged care consumers as "residents" in their speeches and general announcements to the public.

So why are we bothering with making the change? Well, to really understand this, we must go back to 2010 when the mental health reforms were underway.

During this time, mental health patients were fighting for more say into their healthcare, more individual support, more advocacy.

There was a high incidence of seclusion and restraint, at times for punitive reasons than a clinical need.

There was a huge power imbalance. The mental health reforms rose to balance the power and empower patients to be a driver of their own "recovery". Healthcare started to become more of a collaborative process. To achieve that, language was used to empower patients. The word patient already placed people seeking mental health treatment in a position under the authority and power of the clinician.

Patients do what the doctors tell them, end of story. So, changing the label from mental health patient, to mental health consumer, endeavoured to bring about some power to the patients, as they were "consumers" of a service, a customer if you will.

Subsequently, they pushed for rights like those any consumer, customer or patron of a service may have, and may often expect.

Imagine going to a restaurant and being told that you couldn't have the porterhouse, they were only doing salmon, and you had to eat that because that was your meal. Imagine the outrage!

In a restaurant, the consumer or patron has choice, has waitstaff who care for their needs, and there is often mutual respect and a balance of power. The consumer gets what they want, and the service provider gets paid and delivers the appropriate service.

Jump forwards now to 2018, when the Aged Care Royal Commission formed, and the aged care reforms started to make changes. There were and still are, many similarities between mental health patients and nursing home residents.

Power imbalance, lack of choice, impersonal care and treatment. We needed to change this from the ground up, and that started with empowering older adults to have a voice, to have choices, to have a say in how they wanted their care and services delivered to them.

And so, the language changed to label nursing home residents as consumers of an aged care service.

To empower these older adults into speaking up, to acknowledge that they are in fact paying for a service, and therefore should be treated like a customer, a patron, an "aged care consumer".

They are no longer a resident of a service, like a tenant with a landlord overseeing their care. They are now on an equal and balanced platform.

In summary, language and how we define and label people is an incredibly important part of aged care reform. Just like how it was with mental health reforms a decade ago. The label of patient and resident creates an imbalance of power.

Using language such as "consumer", enables people to feel empowered so that they can be involved in their own healthcare needs and decisions

Does everyone feel the same as me?? Like the days are flying past so quickly I have no idea what day it is...yet the year seems to have dragged on so incredibly slowly?!

This Newsletter will be the second last edition before Christmas and let's hope the last one in isolation? But while we dare not get our hopes up I also believe we need something to look forward too, so let's all keep doing the right thing so we can hope to celebrate Christmas with loved ones.

Not much news to share with you again, and although working hard and trying to stay connected with as many of you as I can via phone calls, emails and letters, my apologies if you haven't heard from me in some form. As always please don't hesitate to contact me for any reason at all, I'd love to hear from you and see how you are doing.

I'm sure by now you got the postcard with all the smiling faces we put together after hearing from many of you how much you are missing everyone. The feedback I received was lovely and I'm so glad it made you smile and you got to see that we are all doing well. In particular, our utmost gratitude must go to all the staff in the main facility for their tireless support of the residents and their families to ensure everyone remains safe and in the best spirits possible given the circumstances. True heroes each and every one!!

On that note speaking of heroes, here are some more stories from some of you, our fabulous volunteers for your interest and enjoyment. I've loved hearing about what got you started in volunteering here at KRHS, or what you enjoy most about doing it. Please keep them coming, you can send them in or email me baylissj@krhs.net.au with anything you'd like to share!

Now let's hear a bit from Tina Kendall.....*Our story with KRHS started just before Dallis was diagnosed with dementia. I cared for my mum at home, and I put her into respite here so that Dallis and I could go to WA to see our son and his family. Lyndsay and her family already lived here, so they were able to visit. We were all impressed with the level of care that she received.*

*A couple of years later when Dallis was diagnosed we made the decision to move here, so that if he needed to go into care, it would be within walking distance for me to visit.*

*We also wanted to downsize. Whilst we were waiting for our house to sell I started bringing Dallis over to the men's shed so that he could get to meet people before we shifted from Longwarry.*

*Everyone was so welcoming it was like we had always lived here.*

*We started coming along to work in the community garden on a Saturday, Dallis continued with Wednesday's and I started to volunteer at the Monday night youth group. I joined the walking group and our children and grandchildren got involved with all the activities as well.*

*Dallis is now a resident of the WPU and I work here. I'm also part of the ready to go program and the peer support program. KRHS has been wonderful for Dallis and I and our family.*

*Tina.*

Tina continues to help out with our Ready2Go program by checking in on her buddy during these difficult times...thankyou Tina I know your kindness makes a lot of difference.





And another from Shirley, who has also continued to volunteer during the pandemic by spending a lot of hours in discussion with the Cardinia library, as well as delivering books (prior to restrictions), to ensure that our avid readers amongst the residents continue to receive some much needed reading material for which I know they are very grateful. Thanks Shirley your support during this time is appreciated as much as ever if not more!

*Just sending you a little about why I enjoy volunteering.....*

*My name is Shirley Courcoux and I have been volunteering at the Hostel and Regional Health Service for about seven years. I take books to some of the residents which I order from the Library and collect them from the mobile on a Friday. My love of reading makes me want to encourage others to read, and I love meeting the residents and having a chat with them when I take the books around. It is great to meet other volunteers and the friendly staff.*

*Regards Shirley*

Thanks again everyone who has contributed, I will continue to feature your letters in newsletters to come! Until next time, please look after yourselves and stay safe....hope to see you soon?!

Virtual hugs to you all,  
Jenny Bayliss  
Volunteer Coordinator

*Pictured is Shirley (right)  
with Lyn Lamshed*



## Volunteer Postcard

*Hey there,*

*Just a message from us to you to let you know we're all OK and hope you are the same!*

*We miss you and can't wait to see you all back here one day. Until then here's a thumbs up, a wave and a smile to show you we are thinking of you.*

*If you need any support, have any questions or simply just feel like a chat please reach out at any time.*

*From your volunteer Coordinator, Jenny Bayliss and all the staff and residents of KRHS*





**Please visit our website for the latest information on KRHS and COVID-19 restrictions**