

Home Maintenance

An Information update for clients of our Home Assist and Commonwealth Home Support Home Maintenance and Home Modifications Programs

Program Update – Enhanced Services Offered

Well it was a busy start to the year for our Home Assist and Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) staff with many clients adversely affected by significant weather events including heavy rains which caused significant increases in calls for assistance with gutter cleans, roof repairs, yard tidy ups and high pressure gurney cleaning to decrease falls risks around access areas to clients homes. That all seems like a distant memory now in the wake of the recent Covid 19 health emergency that we have now all been living with since mid-March.

As you would all be aware this has meant some significant changes for us all as we have learned about social distancing, increasing hygiene standards and staying at home. We have all had to make some adjustments but I would like to reassure all our clients that our staff are still available and our services continue for all your essential home maintenance and home modification needs. We have been providing information sheets for clients via all our staff and contractors outlining the additional safety protocols being followed to enhance your safety when we come into your home and this also includes our staff and contractors asking you additional questions about your health and asking you to keep us informed if you are unwell or your health status changes and also giving you the opportunity to postpone work if you wish to. As we all go through this time together we have also increased our range of services to you our clients to include the ability to assist you with accessing essential grocery items, medication or medical equipment that you may need to have collected or delivered. You may well receive a phone call from one of our staff who are undertaking welfare checks on a regular basis to ensure that you are managing well and are able to access any supports that you might need at this time. Whilst talking with you our clients, it has been interesting to note that in contrast to many younger people struggling with being isolated at home, many older people have advised us that they are quite used to being at home, are used to their own company and can always find things to do. For those interested in some virtual garden tours check out: <https://www.visitnsw.com/love-nsw/virtual-garden-walk>

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The Autumn Edition

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ACRO Home Modifications Workshop

As many clients accessing home based support services such as home maintenance and home modifications will know there are a number of key personnel involved in ensuring that clients seeking assistance to stay living safely in their home can access the services they need. Two of these key personnel are RAS assessors (Regional Assessment Services) and Occupational Therapists (OTs). RAS assessors conduct initial interviews with clients in their homes after they register for My Aged Care and assist clients with referrals to service providers in the community such as ACRO to undertake subsidized home maintenance or modifications.



Occupational therapists (OTs) undertake assessments with clients in relation to their physical safety needs and provide diagrams and recommendations to our service about where to install home mods to improve safety and enhance your independence in your homes. It is essential that our services communicate and work together to meet the needs of our clients. We therefore host an annual home mods workshop where our staff demonstrate the range and scope of our home mods and where OTs and RAS assessors can speak directly with our carpenters and builders who manufacture and install the home modifications for you.

ACRO Home Maintenance eNewsletter

Home Safety & Security Update

Did you know that all clients registered with our program have access to an annual security hardware subsidy? This is funding available up to \$80 that can be spent on items which improve the safety and security of your home. This could include **installing a new lock, key safe or a new smoke alarm**. As you may be aware there have been changes to the smoke alarm legislation in Queensland. All new smoke alarms should be photoelectric and not more than 10 years old. If you think your smoke alarm was installed more than 10 years ago please ring our office for a new free smoke alarm to be installed.



Stay Connected

Free daytime webinars are now available to help improve the online skills of seniors to access online services and connect with loved ones during the pandemic. These online courses are being delivered by the eSafety Commissioner as part of the Federal Government's Digital Literacy for Older Australians "Be Connected" initiative.

Hosted by professional eSafety Commissioner trainers, the courses will offer participants guidance to help build basic online skills and confidence to carry out video chats, telehealth, shopping and banking.

The classes feature key topics specifically for remaining connected while social distancing measures are in place, including:

- ▶ video chatting with family, friends and health professionals
- ▶ ordering groceries and other shopping essentials online for home delivery
- ▶ carrying out everyday tasks online, including accessing essential services
- ▶ accessing Federal Government information updates from australia.gov.au and the Coronavirus Australia app

Those interested can [register here](#).

We hope you have enjoyed reading our quarterly newsletter. If you would like more information on any issues around home maintenance, home modifications or have any suggestions for future newsletters about topics you would like covered or would like to give us any feedback at any time please contact us. To book a job you can call or email our staff. We are also available as guest speakers for local community groups or events. Please stay safe and stay home and remember to keep washing your hands ☺

Fiona Begg
ACRO Programs Manager

Safety and Security – Inside and Outside Your Home

Although the cooler weather reduces the bush fire and storm risk it is important to continue to monitor and undertake preventative maintenance in and around the home. Also for clients who may be self isolating or prefer to have tradespeople conduct work outside the following key areas can be considered to enhance your home safety and security:

1. Clear leaves, twigs and other debris from the roof and gutters
2. Reduce vegetation loads along access paths, remove excess ground fuels material such as long dry grass, dead leaves and branches
3. Trim low lying branches up to two metres from the ground surrounding your home.
4. Ensure access paths are clean and dry to reduce risk of falls.

If you require assistance through our program to undertake any of these maintenance issues ie **gutter cleans** or **yard tidy up or High Pressure Gurney to access paths safely** please contact our office and we will arrange a subsidized visit from a contractor to help reduce these risk factors.

*Have you got our
new number?*

(07) 3856 6222

*Give Jennifer or
Annelies
a call and they
can
post you a free
fridge magnet*