

ECHO GAZETTE

Helping our community enjoy independent lives in their own homes.

A few words from the CEO



As this is our first full ECHO Gazette for the year, I want to wish everyone a good year.

When 2025 ends we'll have completed the first quarter of the 21st century! If you, like me, can still vividly remember where you were and what you were doing when 1999 became 2000, it is incredible how quickly these years have passed! I was at work with WA Health Biomedical Engineering monitoring the State's medical equipment in case of any Y2K bugs. (Much good work meant there were none.)

This will be a year of change for aged care. With the new Support at Home program starting on 1 July, much work is ahead of us in preparation for that change. We look forward to helping you make the most of the government funding programmes that support you.

Until next time ...

Stuart Diggins
CEO

Summer Hydration and Personal Cooling

With extended periods of very hot weather this Summer, it is very important to stay well hydrated.

Here are some ways you can do this:

- Make sure fluids are always available and accessible. Keep drinks in reach and use assistive equipment if you need it.
- Have a choice of drinks during the day. As well as water, fluids to support your hydration may include tea, coffee, milk and juice-based drinks. Alcohol should be limited.
- Choose foods high in fluid such as soup, ice cream, jelly, custard, yoghurt and fruits like melon, apples, and pears.

Steps you can take to cool yourself:

- Minimise the time spent outside during extreme heat events.
- Wear light clothing.
- Ensure any cooling devices are working and switched on.
- If no air-conditioning is available a fan blowing with a wet sheet or towel in front of it can be highly effective for cooling the air.

Source: Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, 2023.



New seat allocation process for Bus Outings in operation

As described in the December ECHO Gazette the new method of allocating available seats for bus outings is now in operation. This is designed so that as many clients as possible can enjoy our regular bus outings.

It is pleasing that some clients who have been unable to get seats on the buses in the past were successful under the new method. The opportunity to nominate a maximum of three bus outings in a month from

those advertised for Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays provides opportunities for a greater number of people to take part during a month.

As signalled in December, there is no change to the booking arrangements for the shopping trips on Mondays and Fridays.

Home Care Package Taxi Vouchers

For some time, ECHO staff – including some Client Advisors and Support Workers – have been delivering taxi vouchers to our clients' homes on an

ad hoc basis. Unfortunately, this is no longer sustainable in terms of the costs of employee time and mileage, particularly if a Support Worker makes a special trip to the office to collect the vouchers. No charge has been made to do this.

For the future, the available alternatives are:

- Contact your Client Advisor and have a Personal Identification Number (PIN) account set up with Black and White Taxis. This is a popular option.
- The client or Next of Kin come to the office at Toowong Street, Bayswater and collect the allocated taxi vouchers.

CHSP Transport

A reminder to those clients who are approved under their CHSP program to receive transport assistance that Transport is available to be booked for medical and other appointments. It is very helpful if seven (7) days' notice of your transport need can be given so that your transport can be booked ahead.

We need more volunteer bus drivers and assistants.

We need more volunteers to drive and support our clients on our 12-seater buses. Assistants help with any client needs on a bus outing to a place of interest or entertainment, or on the twice-weekly shopping bus expeditions to local shopping centres. On these outings, our volunteers receive a subsidy towards their lunch. **If you, or someone you know, would like to help out, email volunteer.coordinator@echocommunity.org.au or phone 9271 7011.**

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