

## Barb Carlin, 69, Port Victoria Manager of Operations Country Home Services



“Age is not a barrier, it’s an advantage”.

That is the message from Country Home Services operations manager Barb Carlin, who at almost 70-years-old has no plans of slowing down, and certainly no retirement on the immediate horizon.

In fact, it is people just like her, with a wealth of life experience under her belt that she is keen to encourage into the work force to experience the same satisfaction she does in helping people right across the region.

And whether it is for five hours a week, or maybe more, Barb is a firm believer that workers with ‘life experience’ have so much to offer as mature-aged employees in the home care sector.

“The interaction with people is just so rewarding and every day without fail, you know you’ve helped somebody,” she said.

“I’m really pleased to see the latest discussions around letting retirees work more because they have so much to give.

“And you don’t have to be highly-skilled or have a tertiary education, it’s so much about the interpersonal skills.

“It is about going into people’s homes and into their life, and they want somebody they can trust and build a rapport with, someone with similar life experiences who they can have a conversation with.

“So if you can relate to people, listen to them, provide some fairly basic services in most cases, and help people stay engaged with their community, then you’re exactly the type of person we need.”

For more information about working for Country Home Services visit

[www.countryhomeservices.org.au](http://www.countryhomeservices.org.au) or call 1300 773 202

For further information and support for older workers contact the Mid North Employment

Facilitator: Lisa Brock, [lisa@usgemployment.com.au](mailto:lisa@usgemployment.com.au) or 0449 671 183

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Barb has an extensive background in corporate health, having worked in the field for almost 30 years, including four years as chief executive of YP Health, and in Aboriginal Health for a couple of years before joining Country Home Services in 2013.

Barb said her career progressed by taking any opportunities presented to her, and that she was fortunate to have had some valuable mentors along the way, something she is keen to develop to help others through their careers in health.

She joined Country Home Services 10 years ago, and manages the service delivery functions of the business, recruitment, selection and management of contractors, finance, human resources, administration and IT.

Barb's region stretches from the Barossa Valley to Gawler, the Adelaide Plains and Lower North to the Yorke Peninsula.

Living at Port Victoria, where she can undertake much of her work from home, and as she approaches her 70th birthday, Barb said her work gave her great satisfaction, friendships and the feeling of making a positive contribution to regional communities.

"Work defines you in a lot of ways and if you're not involved in other community activities, work is very important," she said.

"I don't play bowls, or golf, I don't go to the pub, and if I wasn't working I think I would go crazy. I need the mental stimulation and reward of making a contribution, and I'm sure there are a lot of others out there who feel the same and still have plenty to give.

"Country Home Services is like a family, and I have some really strong bonds that I've formed through work.

"My passion is about improving people's lives. Every single person matters, everyone has a story and something to contribute.

"The people connection is key and I enjoy having conversations with those we are working with and feeling that you're making a difference to your community."

Barb welcomed any mature-aged person who could see themselves filling a role as a contractor to speak to someone involved and hear about the flexible, local working options available.

"You don't need formal qualifications, unless it's in a personal care role, you just need to be a caring person," she said.

"Of our contracting workforce, the average age is around 60 years old, which is indicative of the people who this type of work suits.

"Age is not a barrier, I think it's an advantage."

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