

2021 ANNUAL SNAPSHOT



OUR IMPACT

Here is a snapshot of how COTA SA connected with the community and made a positive difference to the lives of older South Australians in 2021



Online Engagement

47,909 Website visits
136,638 E-news views
7,591 Subscribers
18 E-news publications



Social Media

3,557 Followers on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn



Country Outreach

13 Regional visits
800 Older people engaged
20 COTA SA club members
6 Listening posts



Volunteers

155 Volunteers
4500+ Hours of service



Let's Talk Aged Care

934 People supported to navigate aged care



The Plug-in

1,647 Participants
16 Projects





Peer Information

26 Information sessions
706 Attendees

Policy and Advocacy

5 Advisory Groups
27 Submissions
25 Policy council members
30+ Representatives on external committees

Rainbow Hub

491 E-news subscribers
12 E-news publications
12 Lunches
397 Event attendees

Phone Calls

5,117 Callers reached out to COTA SA by phone

COTA Visitors

97 Volunteers and participants

Strength for Life

5,000+ Participants
101 Providers
25% Providers in regional SA
500+ Classes per week

COTA (Council on the Ageing) SA is an older people's movement engaging every day with older South Australians all over our state. We are independent and non-partisan, we have our sights firmly set on calling out ageism, we are focused on overcoming disadvantage and inequality, we champion the diversity of ageing across our state and we offer programs which create new possibilities for and with older South Australians.

COTA SA is also the peak body representing the rights, interests and futures of more than 633,000 South Australians aged over 50, who together make over a third of our population. We were established in 1957 and continue to evolve and develop to reflect modern South Australia.

COTA SA is a proud partner in the COTA Federation, made up of COTAs in each state and territory along with COTA Australia. Together, our COTA reach and influence is felt both locally and nationally.

COTA SA connects with 100,000+ older South Australians each year including:

- Our **advocacy** on issues such as employment, housing, health, aged care, climate change, cost of living and transport to improve older lives.
- **The Plug-in**, our consumer engagement and insights social enterprise that provides opportunities for researchers, government and business to connect with, and better understand, older people.
- **Strength for Life**, offers an affordable way for older people to get and stay fit at more than 100 sites throughout South Australia.
- Our **Rainbow Hub**, with its influential Advisory Group, provides support and enables a voice for LGBTI elders.

- Our **Let's Talk Aged Care** team offers programs, services and opportunities to understand and access aged care and other services.
- Our **COTA SA advisory groups** and round tables offer representation, contribute to policy advice and provide lived experience across topics that matter to older people.
- Our **peer to peer programs** connect older people to one another for information, friendship and support.
- Our **staff and volunteers** provide information by phone, email and face to face, and contribute to expos, presentations and webinars.
- Our **social outreach program** can be deployed in times of need to reduce social isolation and loneliness including with older people who live alone and are not online.
- Our contribution to **research, universities, reviewers and investigative bodies** to better understand and engage with the needs and interests of older people.
- With 26% of older South Australians living outside metropolitan Adelaide, our ongoing focus on older people in **country SA** including through the Goolwa Victor Harbor and Yorke Peninsula Advisory Groups.
- **COTA SA Members, Member Clubs and Supporters** represent thousands of older South Australians and organisations across the state.
- Partnerships with organisations and people that represent the **diversity of older South Australians** including CALD and First Nations elders.

STANDING WITH OLDER SOUTH AUSTRALIANS

COTA SA IN 2021

COTA SA has had an active year getting out and about across SA from our new home base in Hutt Street and taking the opportunities offered as the State comes to terms with COVID-19. We connect with older people every day, all over the state in many ways.

More than a quarter of older South Australians live in a regional area so we hit the road this year offering workshops, providing services and standing up for issues all over the state. Our regional advisory groups have helped us stay in touch with local concerns in the two oldest regions of South Australia in terms of the average age of its residents, Goolwa, Victor Harbor and the Yorke Peninsula. Our Listening Posts focused on the Limestone Coast.

The Plug-in has grown in its reach and influence in the past year. We have surveyed, undertaken focus groups and connected with thousands of older people on many topics including managing major life transitions, improving health pathways, finding out what is needed to age well and gathering insights into what stops people from using public transport.

As part of the COTA Federation, we released the 2nd edition of State of the Older Nation in 2021, the report of a nationally representative survey of older Australians. It highlighted their experiences of ageism, elder abuse, retirement and other issues that matter to them including about their health and financial security.

COTA SA's Rainbow Hub is the home base for older people identifying as LGBTI. It is the go-to "place" for LGBTI elders to give and get support and information, for advocacy and to provide policy advice.

COVID-19 has not diminished an appetite for physical activity among older people. Strength for Life, as a bespoke and individualised strength and balance program for older South Australians, has bounced back after COVID-19. A quarter of our programs are offered in regional areas and we are working with South Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse and First Nation communities to improve the program's responsiveness and accessibility for all South Australians.

We are immensely proud of the work we are doing to test models that enable older people to reconnect, to try new things and to overcome loss through both Social Connections and Community Visitors. Volunteers are the mainstay of this groundbreaking work and they are also central to supporting the many callers to our office.

We have completed strategic planning for the period 2022-26. The feedback from older people and our many stakeholders has supported our continuing focus on the diversity of older South Australia, our strong advocacy in areas of inequality and disadvantage and our engagement directly and widely with older people. We have strengthened our focus on combatting ageism and we have committed to growing the programs and services we offer older people that give them the tools they need to live well.

At our core COTA SA is an older people's movement. We value the trust placed on us because we are non-partisan and independent. This is a central value in all that we do.

We cannot do our work alone. We express our thanks to many organisations with whom we share partnerships including our brand-new COTA SA Supporters. Our Supporters share our vision of ageing well and we recognise their generous support and active championing of COTA SA. We also thank our individual and club members who lend valued support to the COTA SA cause.

Emeritus Professor Anne Edwards AO, President and Jane Mussared, Chief Executive



COTA SA

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The Plug-in.

 **Strength for Life**

