



# ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

## 2022



# COTA SA

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 698,000 South Australians aged 50+, who together make up more than a third of our population — and represent half of the State's voting 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 through a range of programs, services, events and advocacy initiatives.

- Our **advocacy** on issues such as employment, housing, health, aged care, climate change, cost of living and transport aims to improve older lives.
- **The Plug-in**, our consumer engagement and insights social enterprise, 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 and Silver Rainbow Training program provides better support and amplifying the voices of LGBTI elders.
- Our **Let's Talk Aged Care** team offers programs, services and opportunities to understand and access aged care and other services for older people living in metro and regional areas.

- 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** connects 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 **COTA Visitors** program is designed to reduce social isolation and loneliness including with older people who live alone or in aged care facilities.
- Our contribution to **research, universities, reviewers and investigative bodies** helps to better understand and engage with the needs and interests of older people.
- Our **Fleurieu Neighbourhood Network** is a member-based social connection program run by and for people living in the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula.
- With 26% of older South Australians living outside metropolitan Adelaide, we maintain a focus on older people in **rural and regional** South Australia 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.
- We partner with organisations and people who represent the **diversity of older South Australians** including CALD and First Nations Elders.

## COTA SA

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# FOREWORD



Around 700,000 South Australians are now aged over 50; that's nearly 40% of the state's population. It's a compelling statistic that highlights the significant power held by older people in our state and the growing importance of COTA SA. As an older people's movement, we remain committed to advancing the rights and interests of older South Australians, so that ageing really can be a time of possibility, influence and continuing activity.

The census data released this year also reinforced what we have always known: that there is no one-size-fits-all version of contemporary ageing. At COTA SA we embrace and celebrate the many diverse faces of ageing and aim to be an organisation that all older South Australians recognise as being there to work with and for them.

In 2022, the COTA SA team has worked hard towards its vision and purpose and we're proud of our many achievements:

We were proactive and loud during the State and Federal Elections, drawing attention to the issues that older people told us matter most to them, including at our free Leaders Forum on Ageing. Our message was heard and we warmly welcomed, for instance, the new Premier Peter Malinauskas' early announcement of free public transport for older people in Adelaide. We continue to advocate for better transport options in Country South Australia.

We launched a sparkling new website with improved accessibility, navigation and functionality, showcasing vibrant new imagery and examples of individual South Australians embracing their ageing experience. Co-designed and road-tested with older people, the new website is providing information to more visitors than ever before. Our first podcast series, *Voices on Ageing*, is another reason to visit.

We marked the International Day of Older Persons with our flagship annual IDOP event held on 30 September, by asking 175 attendees and a further 250 survey respondents to help us re-write the ageing rule book which encouraged lively participation. Insights from the event including your vox pops have been shared in a video to be found on our website. Thank you to our generous sponsors for making this event possible and free for attendees.

COTA SA was awarded Australian Service Excellence Standards Accreditation, recognising our robust systems of governance and operations and overall excellence in customer service and program delivery.

We were delighted to welcome three new Directors to our skilled and experienced Board: Alexandra Cannon, Tony Catt and Justin Lynch, and we celebrated the contribution of longstanding Board member Creagh O'Connor AM at his retirement.

In September, after seven years of outstanding service, our Chief Executive Jane Mussared left COTA SA for another important job working on national ageing policy, but we moved smoothly into transitional arrangements led by General Manager and Acting Chief Executive, Miranda Starke and Finance Manager, Sarah Groth.

Through the year, we have continued to build on our wide range of trusted and independent programs to help older South Australians age well: Strength for Life, The Plug-in, Rainbow Hub, Let's Talk Aged Care, COTA Visitors, Silver Rainbow Training, and our new Fleurieu Neighbourhood Network which launched officially this year.

We've also undertaken special projects: our Social Connections initiative, Seniors on Board public transport peer education trial, Rainbow Horizons co-design trial into improving end of life planning for LGBTI elders, and Policy and Advocacy projects driven by our passionate Policy Council, our Rainbow Hub and extending our support for older people in the regions through our Advisory Groups in the Yorke Peninsula and Goolwa-Victor Harbor.

We acknowledge and give thanks for the enormous contribution our 141 volunteers have made to the delivery of these programs and projects.

This annual snapshot provides you with many facts and figures describing what we've done over the past year. However, it's our people — our fantastic staff, Board, Policy Council and volunteers, customers, members, COTA Supporters, funding bodies and older people who interact with us across the state every day — who can tell you the real story of COTA SA's positive impact in 2022.

**Emeritus Professor Anne Edwards AO** — President  
**Miranda Starke** — Acting Chief Executive



# OUR IMPACT & REACH

A snapshot of how COTA SA connected with the community and made a positive difference to the lives of older South Australians in 2022

## Ageing: It's time to re-write the rules

was held on 30 September in celebration of **International Day of Older Persons**. Special guests Maggie Beer AO, Keith Conlon OAM and Polly Sumner Dodd together with attendees and survey participants shone a light on ageism and rewrote the rules.



## Free public transport for older people in Adelaide

At a time when cost of living pressures are harder than ever, we welcomed the introduction of **free around the clock public transport for older people in Adelaide** and as a way for them to more flexibly fulfil their roles as volunteers, carers, grandparents, shoppers and community members.



## Election advocacy

Effectively raised issues around older people and ageing well ahead of the State and Federal elections, including hosting a forum with candidates in the highly contested Federal marginal seat of Boothby.



## Volunteers

**141 volunteers** helped us deliver our programs and as receptionists, administration assistants and by visiting people in their homes.



## COTA Visitors

**49 volunteers brightened the lives of older people** by visiting them in their home more than 1,130 times.



## ASES Accreditation

Our commitment to service excellence and best practice was recognised through Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) accreditation.

## Driving solutions for housing insecurity

Joined the State Government's Housing Security for Older Women Taskforce to help drive real change and solutions for older women who are disproportionately affected by housing insecurity.



## Strength for Life

Since its introduction, nearly **22,000 people** have improved their strength and fitness through our most popular program, Strength for Life, including many participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.



## New Patrons for COTA SA

We welcomed Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, and her husband, Mr. Rod Bunten as Patrons of COTA SA to elevate our work in ensuring the voices of older South Australians are heard, respected and valued.



## Leadership changes

At the 2021 Annual General Meeting we farewelled Board Member Creagh O'Connor AM and COTA SA President Emeritus Professor Anne Edwards AO announced the appointment of Alexandria Cannon, Tony Catt and Justin Lynch to the skilled and talented COTA SA Board.

*I cannot speak too highly of your program and your choice of down to earth souls who have made my living easier and laughter once again the norm.*

LILIAN, COTA VISITORS RECIPIENT



## Aged care navigation

Over the past 12 months we **supported more than 1,000 South Australians to navigate the complex aged care system** and access the services that help them to age well.



*I wasn't sure I wanted a Visitor but she's made such an impact in my life. She was so easy to get along with and she brightened up my week.*

GILLIAN, COTA VISITORS RECIPIENT

## Social connections podcast

We helped older people across Adelaide reconnect with their community and shared the learning through Voices on Ageing, a six-episode podcast that is available to listen to on our website or through Spotify, Google and Apple Podcasts.



## Seniors on Board

**400 older people improved their understanding of how to use public transport** through 28 free community learning sessions.

## Maintaining independence at home

We helped nearly **700 people better understand how the Commonwealth Home Support Programme can help them maximise their independence** to live at home.



## Online connections

We connected older South Australians with information that helps them age well through various social media channels and delivered a regular e-newsletter to more than 10,000 subscribers.





## Rainbow Hub

**More than 400 older LGBTI people** attended a range of events and programs designed and delivered by the Rainbow Hub.



## Launched the Fleurieu Neighbourhood Network

With the highest proportion of people aged 50+ compared to any other area in South Australia, the Fleurieu Neighbourhood Network will provide opportunities for connection, participation, to be active, share information and offer support for people living on the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula.



## Rainbow Horizons

Our Rainbow Hub has been working on a Rainbow Horizons project to engage with older LGBTI community members to develop and trial and intergenerational LGBTI 'compassionate community' model that supports end of life care, planning and dying.



*"Helping someone else has a boomerang effect. We get back what we give — joy!"*

BEVERLEY, COTA VOLUNTEER

## Faces of Ageing campaign

In our efforts to redefine ageing, we invited diverse older South Australians to jump in front of the camera to change perceptions of what modern ageing looks like and be the face of future COTA SA communications and marketing materials.



*It's nice to know that  
by contributing, you're  
helping other people.*

HELEN, THE PLUG-IN  
INFLUENCER

## COTA SA BOARD

COTA SA's Board is comprised of people from diverse backgrounds who bring with them a wealth of knowledge and experience to ensure COTA SA and everything we do is guided strategically into the future.

Emeritus Prof Anne Edwards AO, President  
Anne Burgess AM, Deputy President, Chair Policy Council  
John Lipkiewicz, Chair Finance and Audit Committees  
Barry Apsey, Chair Governance Committee  
Alexandrea Cannon  
Tony Catt  
Helena Kyriazopoulos OAM  
Justin Lynch  
Julie Obst

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our leadership team work closely with staff and volunteers to make COTA SA's vision a reality.

Miranda Starke, Acting Chief Executive  
Sarah Groth, Finance Manager



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## COTA SA SUPPORTERS

We thank our current COTA SA Supporters who continue to ensure the future of COTA SA's work, programs and services.

Aboriginal Community Services  
Aboriginal Health Council of SA  
Amber Aged Care  
Ananda Aged Care Incorporated  
Bartons Chartered Accountants & Wealth Advisors  
Beyond Bank  
Catapult Wealth  
Centennial Park  
City of Mitcham  
City of Unley  
City of West Torrens  
Copper Coast Council  
ECH  
Eldercare Australia  
Flinders University's Caring Futures Institute  
Greven and Co  
Guide Dogs SA/NT  
Helping Hand Aged Care  
Hender Consulting  
Housing Choices SA  
Kalyra Communities  
Life Care  
Port Augusta City Council  
Regional Council of Goyder  
Resthaven  
SA Power Networks  
Self Storage Australia  
Spacetalk Watch  
St Basil's Homes (SA)  
Town of Walkerville

We also acknowledge the ongoing support of the Office for Ageing Well

**The Plug=in.**

**Strength for Life**

