

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 2020

Older South Australians document COVID-19 through postcard project

The state's peak body for over 50s is asking older South Australians to get creative with handwritten letters, stories, poems and drawings to help document their experience of COVID-19.

Postcards from behind the COVID curtain – a project by COTA SA – responds to this extraordinary time in older people's lives and provides an opportunity for them to capture how the pandemic has affected them.

The postcards project involves sending those interested in participating a pack of two specially designed postcards.

One postcard will be postage paid and have a return address to COTA SA. On this postcard, older people can write or draw about their experience of living during the COVID-19 lockdown measures first-hand.

They will be collated and shared with the wider public through publications and as part of an exhibition during COTA SA's festival for modern ageing, ZestFest, in 2021.

The second postcard, for personal use only, is to give to a friend, family member or neighbour to stay in touch or initiate or reignite a relationship.

COTA SA chief executive Jane Mussared said COVID-19 has taught us how much social contact matters.

"There is something very personal about a handwritten letter or postcard, so we want to embrace this and provide an opportunity for older people to record their experiences," she said.

"We look forward to hearing from older people who may have found this period very lonely and lacking purpose but also from those who have had positive experiences by learning something new or finishing projects.

"We really want to hear from people who are not online too and those living regionally.

"*Postcards* is a chance to connect. Loneliness and social isolation are particular risks for older people who were especially encouraged to limit their activities and contact with others during the pandemic.

"We have printed 2500 postcards initially. We hope the word spreads quickly so that we become inundated with requests. We would love to have to print more before submissions closes at the end of August."

For more information about Postcards from behind the COVID curtain visit the COTA SA website: <https://www.cotasa.org.au/programs/postcards-behind-covid-curtain.aspx>

To participate in the project, please contact COTA SA by:

- **Phone:** (08) 8232 0422
- **Email:** postcards@cotasa.org.au
- **Mail:** GPO Box 1583, Adelaide SA 5001

Include your name, phone number, postal address and how many postcard packs you would like (if you are ordering for friends or an organisation) in your email, telephone message or mail.

COTA SA is an older people's movement and the peak body representing the rights, interests and futures of more than 633,000 older South Australians aged over 50.

For interview requests or more information, please contact:

Ben Smeaton – bsmeaton@communicate.net.au or 0488 940 010

Bec Tape – rtape@communicate.net.au or 0438 806 983