



Celebrating 35 years of respecting and upholding the rights of older people

Your Rights. Your Voice | Legal | Aged Care Advocacy | Information

Annual Report 2020-2021



**Seniors Rights
Service**

Welcome to our Annual Report 2020-2021

Seniors Rights Service has been assisting older Australians as the leading provider of specialist legal services, aged care advocacy and education and information in New South Wales since 1986. Seniors Rights Service provides support and resourcing for older people to know their rights, and to be empowered and supported to insist on the enactment of their rights. Through actively listening to and representing the older people of NSW, and empowering them and their support networks, Seniors Rights Service undertakes to consistently deliver high quality, equitable services to all older people.

Our Services

Legal support, information and education services.

Aged Care Advocacy for people using, or wishing to access, in-home or residential aged care services.

Education and information for seniors, the community and service providers.

Systemic advocacy.

Our Vision

A society that respects and upholds the rights of older people.

Our Purpose

The purpose of Seniors Rights Service is to raise awareness and empower older people to activate, uphold, extend and defend their individual rights. We foster communities to respect and value seniors and their rights. We achieve our purpose by providing legal services, aged care advocacy and community education.

Our Service Principles

In all of its endeavours Seniors Rights Service will:

- empower older people as rights holders and active contributors to society;
- provide high quality, appropriate and timely services;
- provide equitable access to services for seniors regardless of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability, religion, political beliefs, sexual preference or any other characteristic;
- support capacity development of staff to ensure they can deliver high quality services;
- collaborate with other organisations in pursuit of common goals; and
- work with broader civil society to foster respect for older members of society and their individual rights.

Always was always will be Aboriginal land.

Seniors Rights Service recognises and acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as Australia's First Peoples and their ongoing connection to land and waters. We pay our respects to Elders - past, present and emerging - and to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities on whose lands we work.



Christene Polanski, our Broken Hill Advocate.

Our Priority Populations

Seniors Rights Service will prioritise engagement with older people who:

- are disadvantaged and vulnerable
- are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- reside in regional, rural and remote locations
- are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or other.



Contents

3	Welcome to our 2020-2021 Annual Report	28	Our Commitment to Inclusion and Diversity
6	At a Glance	29	Family Abuse Case Study
8	Our Board	30	Our Legal Services
10	President's Report	33	Abuse of Guardianship and Power of Attorney Case Study
14	Chief Executive Officer's Report	34	Our Work with First Nations Peoples
15	Our Funders	35	First Nations Peoples Case Studies
18	Our COVID-19 Response	36	Our Work in Regional NSW
19	Impact of COVID-19 Case Study	38	Our Outreach to Far West NSW
20	Our Aged Care Advocacy Service	40	Our Award Winning Radio Campaign to Stop Financial Abuse
23	Aged Care Advocacy Case Study	41	Family Violence Case Study
25	Aged Care Advocacy Quality of Care Case Study	42	Our Media Coverage
26	Charter of Aged Care Rights	44	Financial Report Year Ended 30 June 2021

Seniors Rights Service is a proud member of:



Shirley Williams, Aged Care Advocate, Albury



2020-2021 at a Glance

Total Number
of Enquiries

9,313

were made to Seniors
Rights Service in
2020 - 2021

Legal

2,894

enquiries

26%

of the clients for our
legal services were
from regional, rural or
remote locations

Advocacy

5,232

enquiries

521

education sessions
to aged care facilities
and home care clients
and staff

Intake
Referrals

1,187

Community
Engagement

225

information sessions at
expos, conferences,
and webinars

Social Media Presence



Facebook Likes

2,018

Facebook Followers

2,444

up 35% from 2019-2020



LinkedIn Followers

341

up 158% from 2019-2020



Twitter Followers

1,142

up 10% from 2019-2020

Customer Satisfaction

Community Engagement

97%

Legal Service

90%

Advocacy Service

88 %

Based on feedback from 296 surveys

COVID-19 Enquiries

763

enquiries were received
specifically about COVID-19

Celebrating our 35 Year History

Follow the key events in our history over the next pages

1986



We were established as The
Accommodation Rights Service
under the auspices of the
Redfern Legal Centre

1990



We became a registered
association and established
a community-based
Management Committee

Our Board

Seniors Rights Service thanks all our Board members for their guidance and thoughtful contributions over the year. Ours is a voluntary Board and we acknowledge the time they generously give to the organisation.

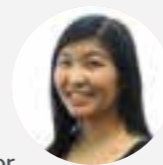
Margaret Duckett President

Margaret has held various senior roles including Director of the NSW Office of Ageing. Her career has been primarily in the health and social sectors, building on her science background in terms of health promotion, advocacy and policy development. Margaret has extensive experience in government and political processes, and strategic policy development and implementation.



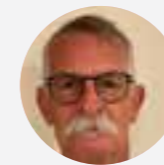
Elaine Leong Vice President

A career governance and legal professional to the for-purpose sector, Elaine holds a portfolio of professional, pro bono and volunteer roles. She is the general counsel and company secretary of Australia's oldest charity, The Benevolent Society, and partner in a boutique law firm with a focus on making the law accessible to individuals, families and charities.



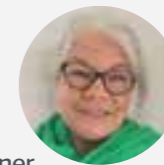
Ross Halfacree

Ross has held senior roles in both government and corporate sectors, most recently with large US, Danish and Swedish medical device manufacturers. Primary roles have involved business strategy design, risk management, sales and marketing strategies. Ross is on the fundraising and marketing sub-committee of Odyssey House, and supports his local community with pro-bono mentorship and coaching for small businesses and individuals.



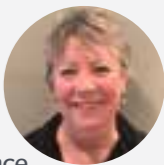
Barbara O'Neill

Barbara is a Dunghutti woman and an Indigenous Trauma and Recovery Practitioner, who specialises in the support of care leavers from institutions and the Stolen Generation. She is an Aboriginal Support Worker at the Junction Neighbourhood Centre in Maroubra. Untold Stories, her DVD and presentation at the 5th National Elder Abuse Conference, drawing on her own post-graduate research, provided unique perspectives on the impacts of ageing on Aboriginal people.



Anne Zele

Anne is an experienced senior business executive, with 25 years' experience as a non-executive director in the not-for-profit sector. A registered nurse, with a number of degrees, she has international experience across health care, energy and mining, and has expertise in human resources, commercial excellence, sales and marketing.



Barbara Anderson

Barbara's professional background is in health information management. Now retired, she has extensive experience in ageing and the care of older people. At NSW Health, her roles included principal policy adviser in the Aged Care Unit, Health and Social Policy Branch. Barbara also ran her own business as a quality improvement, accreditation and medical record consultant.



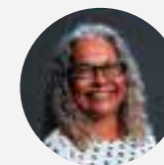
Carole Ferguson (resigned August 2020)

Carole specialises in legal and compliance management, compliance and risk advice, and financial services law. She has been a director, company secretary, compliance committee member and audit and risk committee member, and chair for listed and unlisted entities, charities, trustees and financial services operators.



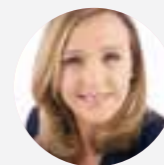
Wendy Morgan (resigned December 2020)

A Dyiringanj woman from the NSW South Coast, Wendy worked for the Commonwealth Government for 28 years, including for the Aboriginal policy area of the Commonwealth Employment Service. Wendy volunteers extensively in the Aboriginal community of south-west Sydney, is director of Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council and is a member of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing (MACA).



Carolyn Parker

Carolyn is an award-winning senior executive and accomplished non-executive director. She has 30 years of commercial experience with not-for-profit and ASX-listed companies, and family-owned businesses. Her expertise spans social housing and property management, community services, retail, wholesale, entertainment, hospitality, tourism and media.



1997

Our name changed to The Aged-Care Rights Service (TARS) to better reflect the broader work being done with older people



TARS assisted development and implementation of the Charter of Residents' Rights and Responsibilities with the NSW Minister for Aged Care

1999

TARS research contributed to the development of the Retirement Villages Act NSW 1999 and Code of Practice

President's Report



Margaret Duckett
Board Director, President

Reflecting on the achievements and challenges that Seniors Rights Service has faced over the past 12 months—in this our 35th year—it saddens me greatly that we are still grappling with the highly contagious and potentially devastating COVID-19 pandemic, something we were hopeful would be seen off in 2021. Unfortunately, this was not to be and once more our organisation has been at the forefront of the community's response to the pandemic ensuring that older people in NSW, and in particular our most vulnerable seniors, are supported with information and advice to help them through this very worrying time. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the particular vulnerability of older people in aged care and the need for all of us to ensure that their right to be kept safe from harm along with their right to connect with their loved ones is respected and protected. This balance has not been easy to achieve in the current environment.

Early in 2021, the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety concluded, releasing its final report and recommendations in February. The parlous state of our aged care system came as no surprise to many of us working in the field. The thousands of stories told to the Royal

Commission highlighted how the basic human rights of older people are being disregarded with terrible consequences. Unfortunately this mirrors our own experience. The people who seek out Seniors Rights Service for advice and support too often bear witness to appalling breaches of the most basic of human rights: the right to be safe and live free from harm; the right to be treated with respect; the right to make independent decisions about care and treatment, or about their personal or social life; the right to be listened to and to have their culture and beliefs recognised.

The Royal Commission provided an opportunity for us to make a number of submissions on behalf of older people across NSW addressing this situation. In our submissions we argued forcefully for a person-centered system based on human rights. The Final Report of the Royal Commission, *Care, Dignity and Respect*, made 148 recommendations to improve the quality and safety of aged care. Central to this reform was moving to a new rights-based Aged Care Act and away from a business model based on the commodification of older people. In particular, we are gratified to see a recommendation to vastly increase independent advocacy services

nationally. Advocacy provides a crucial means for individuals to understand and exercise their rights when engaging with the aged care system. Currently only 1.5% of all older people receiving aged care across the country were able to access advocacy services. This increased advocacy funding will enable a minimum of 5% of older people to access advocacy services, with further funding increases planned. We are hopeful that this will allow Seniors Rights Service to significantly increase our own advocacy services across NSW.

Towards the end of 2020 Russell Westacott, our CEO for almost ten years, resigned. I wanted to record the thanks of the Board for all Russell's hard work and commitment during his tenure. Through his vision, drive and tenacity, the organisation more than doubled in size over that time. He was also instrumental in setting up the Older Persons Advocacy Network that now plays a key community focussed role in the Commonwealth's response to aged care and the needs of an ageing population. I also want to welcome our new CEO, Shannon Wright, who joined us in February from the YWCA Australia, where she was Director, National Service Development and Delivery. Shannon

has already made a significant impact on the organisation, guiding a review of our current processes for the purpose of ongoing quality improvement and managing our response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. I look forward to working with Shannon to ensure that our organisation continues to respond effectively and proactively to the needs of older people across NSW, whatever the challenges.

I also wanted to thank and acknowledge the work of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Committee and of our Inclusion Plan Committee. Our Reflect RAP has focussed our work and strengthened our relationships with First Nations communities and organisations. I will ensure that the momentum created by our first RAP does not wane, and that the organisation continues to foster and develop our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people. The process for developing a new Innovate RAP has begun and will be carried forward in the coming year. This year we have

“People in aged care should have the same human rights as all people. It is time that we put older people first. Sadly, some service providers and family members don't. When the rights of older people are respected and they receive good care, our whole society benefits. Older people are still citizens. We must fix this now, from the very roots of the system and up into the branches. Anything less cannot be contemplated.”

Margaret Duckett *The Australian* January 2021

2011



The Legal team re-wrote the Elder Law Chapter of the Lawyers Practice Manual



TARS played an important role in the development of the NSW Ageing Strategy

2013



We expanded our reach into regional NSW with staff based in the South Coast of NSW



We attended both the 2013 and 2014 United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Ageing in New York

President's Report (Continued)

also committed to engaging with diverse communities through the development of our first Inclusion Plan. Ensuring that we are inclusive, accessible and welcoming to all older people, no matter their background, is one of our fundamental principles.

This past year we have been extremely fortunate to have maintained and increased the invaluable financial support of seven government funding agencies at a time when we understand the call on government resources has never been greater. We were also extremely fortunate to be provided with additional funding to meet the demands placed on us by the COVID-19 pandemic through Legal Aid NSW and the Commonwealth Department of Health through the Older People's Advocacy Network. We could not do the work we do without our funders and we are particularly grateful for their ongoing support.

I also want to express my sincere thanks to our staff and volunteers for the work that they have done each and every day to support seniors across NSW. In COVID times this has been especially challenging. I also thank my fellow Board members for their guidance and thoughtful contributions over the year. Ours is a voluntary Board and I acknowledge

the generosity of every one of my colleagues and the time they freely give to the organisation. I thank Carole Ferguson who resigned in August, and want to especially thank and acknowledge Wendy Morgan, who resigned in December, for her input and in particular her work towards the development and implementation of our first RAP.

This year marks 35 years for Seniors Rights Service. The organisation was originally set up as an accommodation service, but it was quickly recognised that the issues effecting older people went further than housing problems, and a broader response to the many difficult and challenging circumstances confronting older people was needed. A holistic service providing legal services, aged care advocacy, social support and education developed over time and in 2015 our focus on the rights of older people was cemented in our name as we became Seniors Rights Service.

The growing number of seniors accessing our services each year is evidence of the need for an organisation to defend and foster the rights of older people. We believe it is the ageism that is so prevalent in our society that leads to a situation where older people are overlooked,

undervalued, and treated like second class citizens. This ageism unfortunately has not diminished over the past three decades. At Seniors Rights Service we observe the effects of ageist attitudes every day in the stories of people who come to our service for support. You can read some of these stories in the pages of this Report. Older people have the same human rights as all people. They deserve to be treated with respect and care.

We must fix our broken aged care system. We must address the ongoing ageism infecting our society, and we must fight for the rights of all older people and in particular those of the most vulnerable. Clearly there is still much work to do. Older people must not be treated as objects upon which an ageist society imposes its biases and assumptions. I am confident that Seniors Rights Service will play a leading role in meeting these challenges. COVID-19 is not going away anytime soon. We must protect the health, and the human rights, of our older citizens. As we face the year ahead, Seniors Rights Service will do everything in our power to do so.



Tammy Cabban, Aged Care Advocate, Wagga Wagga

We launched the Reaching Out project funded by Aged Care Service Improvement and Healthy Ageing Grant which assisted LGBTI populations across NSW

2014

Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP) was formed and we became a member



2015

We re-branded and changed our name to Seniors Rights Service to reflect the full suite of services we deliver - legal, aged care advocacy and education

We submitted a comprehensive report on abuse of older people to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Elder Abuse

Chief Executive Officer's Report



Shannon Wright
Chief Executive Officer

In February this year, as I started my role as Seniors Rights Service CEO, Sydney's Northern Beaches had just come out of a lockdown in response to COVID-19 and all signs were that, as we headed into winter, the pandemic would continue to occupy much of our focus and energy. I also knew that I was standing at the cusp of a period of much needed positive change in our sector stemming from the findings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. I sensed that the organisation I had just joined was well and truly up to the challenges presented by both these events and six months on, I am pleased to report that this confidence has been well founded.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated and committed staff of Seniors Rights Service who have continued to tirelessly provide support and advice by responding to well over 9,000 enquiries this year. Keeping abreast of the frequently changing public health orders and government advice has been vital. Issues such as the changing and various visitation rights in aged care, vaccination requirements, and continuity of care for people receiving home care, are all things that our advocates need to be on top of every day. I am extremely proud that they have been able to

provide high quality, accurate and accessible advice in these difficult circumstances and I am certain they will continue to do so as the pandemic continues to affect our community.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has greatly curtailed our community education initiatives as face to face events and information sessions have been cancelled. While we have been able to hold some events regionally and to offer online information, there is no doubt that providing information face to face is the preferred option for older people. Hopefully, we will be able to get back into the community in coming months as the pandemic allows.

In more positive news, as a result of the findings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, the Federal Government has committed \$17.7billion over the next five years to address serious issues of poor care in the aged care sector in Australia including introducing a new Aged Care Act, more home care packages, better staffing ratios and further training for workers. Although falling short of the \$10 billion per year recommended by the Royal Commission, this investment will help to make significant and much needed improvements.

Of relevance to our work is a commitment to provide \$94 million for expanded independent advocacy that will support greater choice and quality safeguards for seniors who are either in or considering Commonwealth funded aged care support. This funding will increase services provided by the nine aged care advocacy organisations who are members of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) including Seniors Rights Service in NSW. This will more than double the aged care advocacy workforce and improve access to face to face and virtual aged care advocacy. Seniors Rights Service will work with OPAN in coming months to design our service response to ensure that we empower more older people, their loved ones and representatives to exercise greater choice and control at every turn in their aged care journey.

The last year has seen a focus for the organisation on expanding our reach to regional and remote communities across NSW. With additional funding from OPAN we were able to further increase our network of regional advocates to six new regional locations and we now have 15 regional advocates across NSW. We were also able to undertake a targeted outreach activity to Far West NSW.

Our legal and advocacy team visited communities, aged care facilities and community services providing a unique opportunity to hear from seniors across the region with a special focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We heard about their issues and concerns and are developing strategic partnerships with service providers to extend our service design and outreach to better meet these needs.

The abuse of older people has also been a prominent issue for us to respond to this year. Our campaign *No Excuse for Elder Abuse* highlighted the different forms of abuse and provided a call to action to connect with our service for free and confidential advice and support. We provided a submission to the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Coercive Control in which we highlighted how the abuse of older people often includes psychological abuse, including coercive controlling behaviours, that are frequently perpetrated by an older person's children or grandchildren. We have seen that being older can significantly increase a person's vulnerability to abuse and exploitation as can having dementia or cognitive impairment. And frequently, we see this abuse

Our Funders

Seniors Rights Service gratefully acknowledges the funding we receive to support our work.

Commonwealth Department of Health through the **Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)** - National Aged Care Advocacy Program

Community Legal Centres Program administered by **Legal Aid NSW**

NSW Fair Trading - Retirement Village and Strata Legal service

NSW Department of Communities and Justice-Digital Innovation Fund

NSW Department of Communities and Justice Ageing Peaks Program.

Commonwealth Department of Health through **Council of the Ageing (COTA)** - Aged Care Systems Navigator Pilot Program

Multicultural NSW - support for our financial abuse video projects

2016

We established the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse working group to address improving our engagement with older people from non-English speaking backgrounds

We joined the National Aged Care Alliance

national
AGED CARE alliance

2017

We played a key role in the formation of the Older Persons Advocacy Network

OPAN Older Persons
Advocacy Network

We expanded our legal service with the establishment of the Strata Legal Service and expanded our services to include a new social support position

Chief Executive Officer’s Report (Continued)

perpetrated not by intimate partners but by the older person’s children. Our submission noted that there are significant barriers for older people to disclose abuse by an adult child or grandchild and they require considerable practical support to take protective steps. We argued for the situation of older people to be considered in any discussions of coercive control within future family violence legislation.

I was also extremely proud that our Money Matters radio campaign, aimed at recognising and preventing the financial abuse of older people, won the NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing Media Award this year. The campaign was made possible by a generous grant from the Ecstra Foundation and allowed us to produce radio and social media advertisements in four community languages as well as in English. These messages contained advice about how to spot the abuse of older people and what to do about it and were broadcast across the state for three months, reaching thousands of seniors through commercial and local community radio stations and social media.

Quality improvement is founded on processes that are fit for purpose, clear, accountable and transparent.

“I am extremely proud that we have just launched our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy that commits us to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are included in every aspect of our work and contribute to the provision of all our services.”

Shannon Wright February 2021

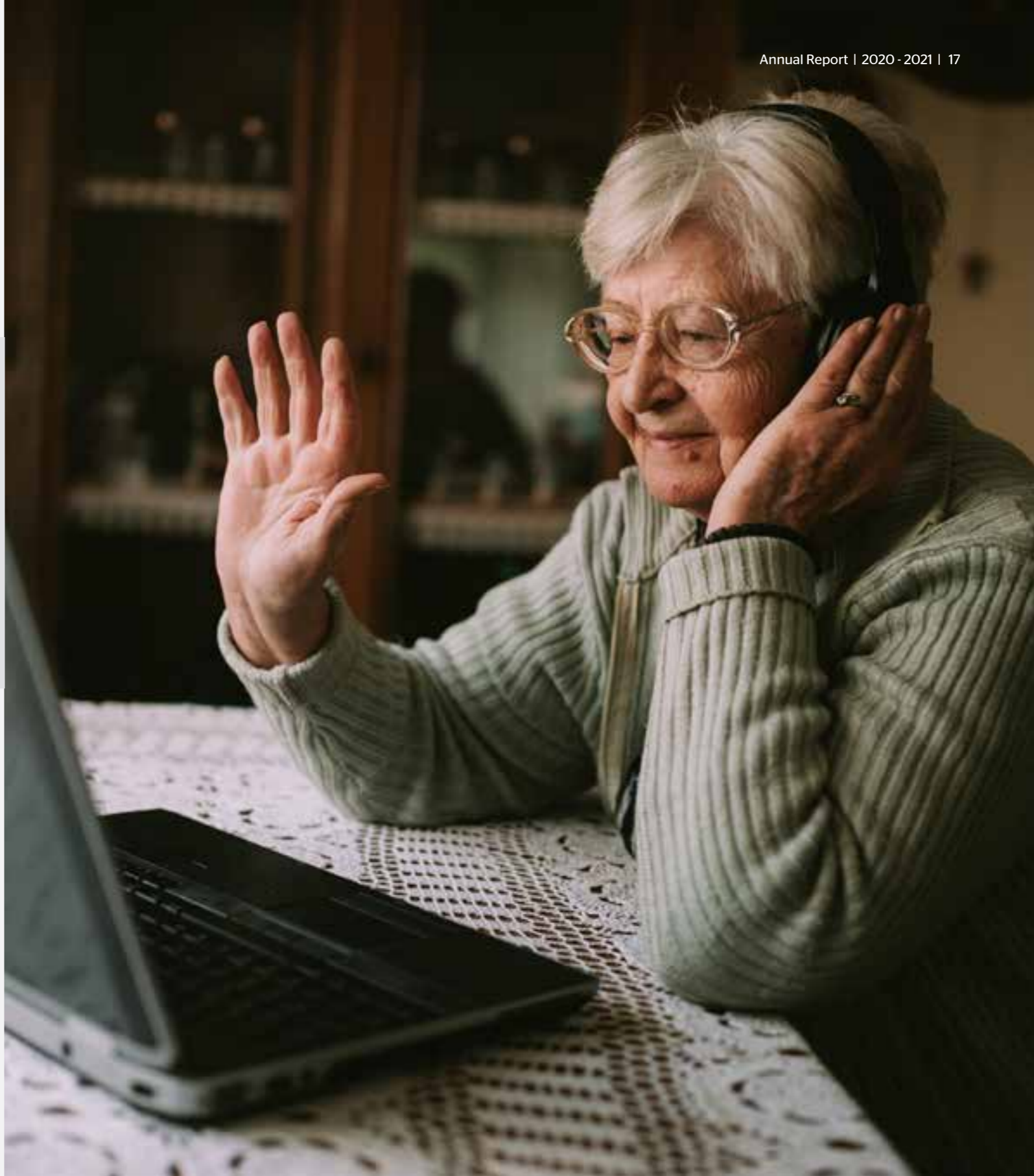
As the organisation grows this will be a key focus for me as it is essential that we maintain the quality service provision that we are well known for. This year Seniors Rights Service was again awarded Accreditation and Certification under the National Accreditation Scheme for Community Legal Centres. The National Accreditation Scheme is a sector led accreditation and certification process for community legal centres across Australia. It aims to recognise good practice in the delivery of community legal services and provide a quality assurance process. We are now

licensed under this scheme until 24 February 2024.

The year ahead is full of promise and challenges. I look forward to working with the Board, staff, volunteers and all our stakeholders to ensure that we are up to the task and delivering on our vision of a society that respects and values older people and promotes and upholds their rights.

Stay safe, stay connected. Seniors rights are human rights.

Shannon Wright



2018



We changed our organisational structure to a company limited by guarantee



We hosted the 5th National Elder Abuse Conference, Together Making Change



We employed our first Aboriginal Aged Care Advocate



We led the production of The Abuse of Older People: A Community Response report which brought together 70 community leaders representing more than 50 organisations



Our COVID-19 Response

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic has taken much of our focus this past year. Seniors Rights Service has again handled record numbers of callers, with our team responding to over 700 enquiries about COVID-19 specific issues. These have included concerns and questions about visitation rights and the changing Public Health Orders that have limited access to loved ones, the vaccination rollout and requirements, worries about social interaction and isolation of residents and continuity of care when access to residents is restricted.

Just as we had gotten past the COVID-19 surge in NSW, we were called on to support our Victorian counterparts as they battled a devastating second wave of COVID-19 last winter with many deaths and instances of illness in the aged care sector there. This proved to be a successful model for the Older Persons Advocacy Network working together nationally when the need arises in a particular jurisdiction.

Although we were anticipating a quiet Christmas and New Year following the challenges of 2020, Sydney's Northern Beaches were hit by a COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown. Our Aged Care Advocacy team worked tirelessly over this period, responding to many enquiries from older people and their families across Sydney. We contacted all aged care facilities in the locked-down area to let them know how residents and families could contact us for information and support. We also took to community radio and social media to get our COVID safe messages out to older people and tell them about our services. Fortunately, the swift lockdown meant the Northern Beaches cluster was soon brought under control. The aged care industry is now much more prepared

than it was when the pandemic started and the community is also more aware.

We have been extremely fortunate to have received additional funding specifically to support our COVID-19 response. We received two grants from the Community Legal Centres Program administered by Legal Aid NSW that have allowed us to increase our frontline service capacity to respond to COVID-19 enquiries by providing one additional full time and one part time legal officer. We also received a focused technology grant to help us work remotely, something the organisation has had to do since March 2020. This funding helped us to set up our staff's capacity to work from home and to ensure that there was no service decline during this time. It is gratifying that we have been able to service more clients than we did last year. In addition, we received special COVID-19 funding from OPAN that allowed us to increase our service response by employing an additional two aged care advocates over the period.

We are extremely proud that our staff have been able to deal compassionately and professionally with the highly emotive and complex

issues that COVID-19 has involved. Many callers have been distressed and anxious, many others confused and angry. We have seen more older people becoming socially isolated and cut off from their families and community. Responding appropriately in these circumstances, while balancing the rights of individuals with the need to keep everyone safe, has required careful and considerate responses. The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over and we remain ready to respond to the needs of older people, their families and the community.

763

inquiries and issues related to COVID-19

Impact of COVID-19 Case Study

Marianna's Story

Marianna* is an 85 year old who is renting privately on her own. She contacted our service because she had been told her lease is not going to be renewed and she needed help to find a place to live that she could afford. She spoke with our social support worker and said she was feeling very overwhelmed by the idea of moving in a pandemic. She also disclosed she has been feeling alone since the pandemic hit and she kept thinking about just jumping out the window as it all seems too hard at the moment. Our social support worker spent some time with Marianna and assessed her need for urgent help. As a result, with her permission, we linked her into a local housing support service and a community mental health service for long term localised support. As part of our COVID-19 response, our social worker booked fortnightly phone appointments for follow up and phone counselling with Marianna.

*Names have been changed.



We expanded our regional reach to the Mid and Far North Coast, the Central West and South West NSW

Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA) was established co-chaired by Seniors Rights Service

EAAA
Elder Abuse Action Australia

We attended the 2018 United Nations Open-ended Working Groups in New York and presented *The Abuse of Older People: A Community Response report*



We were nominated as a finalist for a 2018 Human Rights Award, Australian Human Rights Commission, in the category of Community Organisations



Our Aged Care Advocacy Service



Pat Joyce
Manager Aged Care
Advocacy Services

During these challenging COVID-19 times, the role of aged care advocacy has never been more important to support the wellbeing of vulnerable older people who are seeking or receiving aged care services. Separation from family and loved ones, isolation and extended lockdowns and lack of clear communication has increased the anxiety and uncertainty of many older people who have turned to us for advice, information and support. This year we have dealt with 5,232 enquiries including over 760 enquiries about COVID-19 related issues.

The specific role of an aged care advocate is to assist older people to understand and exercise their rights and to have their voice heard as they move through the aged care system in Australia. These rights include the right to *safe and high quality care and services; the right to be treated with dignity and respect; the right to live without abuse and neglect; the right to make choices about care; and the right to be listened to and understood*. Advocates can stand beside older people and even be their voice in raising concerns and getting their issues addressed. For many older people, speaking out if something is not right with their



care can be difficult especially if they feel vulnerable and do not have the support of family or friends. They may fear the consequences of speaking up for themselves. An advocate is able to empower them to do so by providing information about their rights and the standards of care and services they can expect.

Under the National Aged Care Advocacy Program, Seniors Rights Service is the only independent aged care advocacy service covering all of NSW. This year, with additional funding from the Older Persons Advocacy Network, we have been able to assist many more aged care consumers particularly in regional NSW. We are pleased this is reflected in our data which shows that 36% of people who have accessed our advocacy service were from regional, rural or remote

communities, which is a significant increase from previous years.

As part of our aged care advocacy response, we are able to offer a social support service for clients with complex needs. This service provides a range of interventions including short term case work, phone counselling and referral pathways. The social support service assisted 328 clients this year, most of whom were experiencing or at risk of abuse. COVID-19 increased the vulnerability for many of these clients. We saw an increase in clients reporting imminent risk of homelessness or insecure housing, along with an increase in those experiencing psychological and emotional distress, isolation and loneliness due to restrictions imposed in response to the pandemic.

The social support service also delivered information and education to key stakeholders in relation to the abuse of older people and our services. Sessions were delivered to social workers, community organisations and mental health services to help build capacity in the sector and establish strong networks for collaboration on behalf of vulnerable clients.

Over the past year we have seen our advocates dealing with a wide range of complex issues and situations

including the emotionally charged enquiries about dealing with COVID-19 in aged care. The most common calls are those from aged care residents and their families about visitation rights. Many people have been separated for long periods of time by strict public health orders that have restricted movements in and out of aged care homes for indefinite periods. Many families have been prevented from seeing their loved ones for weeks on end, unable to hold them, reassure them and comfort them during the most stressful of times. These restrictions have often been inadequately explained to residents and families. Many have called our service desperate to find out what is going on with their loved ones, exasperated at the confusing and frightening situation they are confronted with. Many other callers have wanted information about vaccinations, about continuity of care and with worries about the social isolation of residents during the pandemic. The findings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and publicity around its final report have also contributed to the many calls we have received this past year.

Top seven Advocacy Issues 2020-2021

COVID-19
Human Rights
Financial
Quality of health and personal care
Access to care
Choice and decision making
Abuse of older people

“Many have called our service desperate to find out what is going on with their loved ones, exasperated at the confusing and frightening situation they are confronted with.

Pat Joyce, Manager
Aged Care Advocacy Services

2019

We launched our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan



The Aged Care System Navigator Trial was established through COTA

We attended the 2019 United Nations Open-ended Working Group in New York

We made submissions to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

Our Aged Care Advocacy Service (Continued)

Stay Connected and Supported in Your Community Project

In 2019 ABC Television ran a documentary program, *Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds*, that followed the developing connections of older people who were brought together with pre-school children. Over a period of five weeks, 11 retirement home residents and 10 pre-school aged children, spent time with each other playing games and participating in different planned and mixed activities. The relationships that developed between the young and older people were incredibly strong and the program showed the benefits to both age groups of having this sort of intergenerational connection. This series was a great success reaching over 700,000 viewers on average each night it screened and winning television awards both in Australia and overseas.

328

clients received social support

The ABC decided to run a second series in 2021 and invited the Older Persons Advocacy Network to provide a telephone response and referral service for six months during and following the screening of the second series. This helpline would provide people who viewed the program with advice and information on available activities and supports in the community. Referred to as the Stay Connected and Supported in Your Community Project this campaign aimed to raise awareness of and address ageism, loneliness and isolation of older people living at home and support older people to understand what services are available to help them to stay well and connected in their community. Seniors Rights Service partnered with the Aged Rights Advocacy Service in South Australia to provide this helpline which was funded by OPAN. Desire for people to participate in a program of intergenerational play was a frequent enquiry by callers to the helpline, many of whom expressed feelings of loneliness and isolation. There were also many enquiries from parents who wanted their children to build connections with older people. This program showed that there is a strong desire in the community for more connection across age groups with significant benefits for all involved.

Main Residential Care Issues 2020-2021

COVID-19

Human/consumer rights

Financial: fees, assets, overcharging, hardship

Quality of health and personal care

Care planning in partnership with client

Main Home Care Issues 2020-2021

Human rights

Care planning for individual

Financial: fees, hardship, overcharging

Exploring options for care and accommodation

Quality of health and care

Main Commonwealth Home Support Issues 2020-2021

Exploring options

Health and personal care

Access to care and services

Care planning for individual

Financial issues



Aged Care Advocacy Case Study

Louise's story - Visitation Rights during COVID-19

Louise* contacted Seniors Rights Service about her mother, Marjorie, who is 92 years old and is a resident at an aged care home in Sydney. Marjorie has macular degeneration and short term memory loss from many small strokes. Louise visits every day in the afternoon to make sure Marjorie receives nourishing drinks, an evening meal and to sit and talk with her. Louise said the care workers do not have the time it takes to assist her mother as they are busy attending to other residents.

One afternoon she arrived at the facility and found the door locked and signs stating the facility was in lockdown due to a COVID-19 outbreak in the area. Louise called us for advice as she was very concerned that her mother would not eat if Louise wasn't there to feed her and would be very upset if she did not see Louise daily.

The advocate advised Louise that the aged care home was in a COVID-19 hotspot and specific health directives had been put in place for all aged care homes and hospitals in the area. The advocate explained the Visitation Guidelines for Residential Aged Care Facilities during COVID-19 and any exemptions for access. The advocate also explained the provider's responsibility to keep all residents safe and to provide care for all aspects of a resident's physical and mental health even during a pandemic.

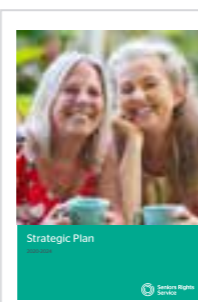
The advocate assisted Louise to create a plan to address her concerns. They examined the exemptions allowable under the health orders and discussed if Louise would fit the criteria as an essential care person. They discussed Partnerships in Care, promoted by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, and looked at incorporating that concept and role into her conversation with the management. Louise then felt confident to call the care manager to ask about her mother's condition and negotiate when she could visit her mother with appropriate precautions. Unfortunately, the care manager did not respond to her calls.

The advocate offered to call the care manager the next morning to advocate on her behalf. The care manager took the advocate's call and the conversation was productive and it was agreed that in a few days Louise would be able to see her mother again. The advocate suggested staff also assist by providing an iPad so Marjorie could see her daughter's face and be reassured. Louise was satisfied with this, and also by the care manager calling her again and reassuring her that she would be allowed access as soon as it was safe. A week later Louise was able to visit once a week for the next five weeks until the lockdown was lifted.

*Names have been changed.

2020

We launched our 2020 - 2024 Strategic Plan



We launched our First Nations Employment Strategy

Established our COVID-19 response crisis management team - including a national response team when required

2021

We launched our first Inclusion Plan



Our Aged Care Advocacy Service (Continued)

Aged Care Advocacy Education

Even though the ongoing restrictions in place have meant that delivering face to face education and information sessions in aged care has been challenging, we are pleased that we were able to provide 521 education sessions to aged care facilities and home care clients and staff. While we have used innovative ways of reaching residents in aged care homes with Zoom and other digital platforms, we have also found that providing information online is not as effective as visiting in person and talking with residents directly. Therefore, we have also made it a priority to provide brochures that can be displayed throughout aged care facilities and provide information and contact details for how to get help if needed. We also produced a newsletter with OPAN that has been distributed to every aged care home around the state, as part of a national initiative.

Aged Care System Navigator Trial

We are delighted that the Aged Care System Navigator Trial has been extended for another 18 months and we will be operating two trial sites again, maintaining our current site in Dubbo and the Orana Far West region that extends out to Broken Hill and a new site on the South Coast at Batemans Bay. Accessing information is often a challenge for older people, especially those living in rural and remote areas where access to the internet and for some, access to mobile phones is limited. This Trial aims to alleviate this issue by providing specialists with a deep knowledge of the aged care system in regional areas who can help people to 'navigate' their way around all the options. Helping people to register with My Aged Care and finding appropriate and available services which may mean they can remain at home and live independently

with an appropriate level of care, find a suitable residential aged care facility or move between service types.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all our aged care advocates for their dedication and hard work this past year. It has been challenging and it has often been heartbreaking, but it has also been rewarding. Seeing the difference we can make to people's lives makes any challenge worth our efforts. Empowering older people, in particular with information so that they can advocate for themselves, is especially gratifying.



Aged Care Advocacy Quality of Care Case Study

Les's story

Jenny's father, Les, had been living in the local aged care home for two years. Jenny said Les was not happy with many aspects of the care being provided including medications not being given on time, lack of variety of meals and laundry consistently going astray. Jenny wanted to rectify these things but didn't know how to go about it. After speaking to our aged care advocate, Jenny contacted the management of the aged care home. We helped Jenny to phrase her concerns and highlight the most pressing issues her father had raised. After some weeks Jenny returned to us letting us know the home's management hadn't addressed her concerns.

Our aged care advocate then helped Jenny to make a formal complaint to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. This time a formal meeting was held between the aged care provider and Jenny's father and our advocate went along to support him.

The outcome was very positive and the aged care provider was able to deliver the services Les needed. Les felt much more secure, knowing he had support to raise further issues and that the provider was listening to him. Jenny was grateful to our advocate for guiding her through the process of helping her dad uphold his rights - the right to raise concerns and have them addressed and the right to quality care.

*Names have been changed.

It is a good feeling knowing, someone is there to listen and help you as you age. I am 82 and just lost my husband of 66 years.

A comment from our Client Satisfaction Survey 2020-2021

Our Financial Abuse Awareness campaign won the NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing Media Award (Advertising)



We welcomed our first Aboriginal Solicitor

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Report released

Government provides additional funding to double our advocacy services across NSW

Charter of Aged Care Rights

All people receiving Australian Government funded residential care, home care or other aged care services in the community have rights.

I have the right to:

1. safe and high quality care and services
2. be treated with dignity and respect
3. have my identity, culture and diversity valued and supported
4. live without abuse and neglect
5. be informed about my care and services in a way I understand
6. access all information about myself, including information about my rights, care and services
7. have control over and make choices about my care, and personal and social life, including where the choices involve personal risk
8. have control over, and make decisions about, the personal aspects of my daily life, financial affairs and possessions
9. my independence
10. be listened to and understood
11. have a person of my choice, including an aged care advocate, support me or speak on my behalf
12. complain free from reprisal, and to have my complaints dealt with fairly and promptly
13. personal privacy and to have my personal information protected
14. exercise my rights without it adversely affecting the way I am treated.



Our Commitment to Inclusion and Diversity

Recognising that older people around NSW come from different cultures, speak different languages and practice different beliefs and religions, we are committed to including people from different cultures in all our services and activities. Understanding and including these differences in everything we do will improve the quality of our services and give a better experience for older people across NSW

Seniors Rights Service is committed to nurturing and driving a culture of inclusion where diversity is recognised, valued and embraced. After several years of planning and consultation we launched our first Inclusion Plan to formalise this commitment. This Plan seeks to build the capacity of Seniors Rights Service to foster diversity and inclusion through targeted and appropriate services that will help us to increase the number of older people from diverse communities accessing and using our services and to ensure our workforce is representative of the diversity in our community.

We will understand any barriers that may be preventing people from contacting us and address these barriers. Through appropriate and accessible communication channels, we want to listen and learn from older people from diverse backgrounds so that we can improve our understanding of their specific needs and respond appropriately.

This Plan complements and builds on Seniors Rights Service's Strategic Plan

and our Reconciliation Action Plan. In its development we have been mindful of the NSW Charter of Principles for a Culturally Diverse Society and our Plan includes a commitment to the following principles:

Inclusion: All seniors across NSW should have the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the services, programs and activities of Seniors Rights Service.

Respect: Seniors Rights Service will respect the beliefs, cultures, languages and issues faced by older people across NSW and ensure our services, programs and activities reflect this diversity.

Access: Seniors Rights Service will ensure that older people have the opportunity to access its services, programs and activities and will endeavor to remove any identified barriers.

Recognition: Seniors Rights Service recognises the importance of diversity as fundamental to the development of an inclusive organisation that is highly valued by the communities it serves.

Seniors Rights Service has in place a Cultural Safety Plan that commits us to ensuring a supportive workplace that respects and values diversity of customs, culture and beliefs and ensuring that our services are delivered in a manner that respects and values the customs, culture and beliefs of our clients and that prevents harassment or discrimination of any kind.

Our Inclusion Plan has been developed as a living document and, in embracing a culture of continuous development and quality improvement, will be monitored and updated in response to changing needs, feedback and circumstances. Ongoing monitoring of the demographic data of our clients will allow us to identify how diverse our client base is, including any gaps in our service reach and will help us to plan our service response to meet future demands.

Family Abuse Case Study

Eleni's story

Eleni* is 82 years old, a widow and is proud to have been living well in her own home for 65 years. She rang our service to ask for help as her adult grandson had moved in with her nine months ago and now she is frightened of him. She said that they used to be close and that she had practically brought him up but now things between them had changed. He yells at her a lot and controls everything she does including what she spends her pension on. He insists she give him cash on pension day and he doesn't pay rent or help with the grocery or utility bills. Eleni says she doesn't know how she can afford to keep them both. Eleni disclosed that this was the first time she had talked about this to anyone. She had recently tried to talk to her priest about the situation however she was told to put up with it and that it was part of her duty to look after her family. She said she feels very ashamed.

Our social worker checked Eleni's immediate safety and then worked with Eleni to find a time when her grandson was out so that she could get free confidential and independent legal advice from our solicitors. Eleni was relieved to learn about her legal rights, including options to have her grandson leave her house.

The social worker discussed with Eleni options for getting more support and with her permission, they linked Eleni into her local domestic violence services including police. Our advocacy service assisted with linking her back into home care services. Eleni felt more confidence to act and said she felt good knowing it wasn't her fault and that there were steps she could take knowing we were there to support her through the process.

*Names have been changed.

Seniors Week hosted by Jodi McKay MP Burwood.



Multicultural Seniors Luncheon hosted by Sri Lanka Association of NSW Inc in Blacktown



Our Legal Services



Tom Cowen
Principal Solicitor,
Manager Legal Services

Despite the challenges of the past year with COVID-19 restrictions, we were still able to deliver over 2890 legal services to some of the most vulnerable older people across NSW, 26% of whom resided in rural, regional, and remote NSW.

Our generalist legal service continued to deal with a range of issues of greatest concern to older people such as planning ahead, wills and estates, Enduring Powers of Attorney and issues arising from guardianship arrangements. We assisted clients with NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) proceedings in the Guardianship Division and participated in the Guardianship Division Consultative Forum where we provide the perspective of our clients.

In addition, our solicitors worked with our social support service to assist older people experiencing family violence or abuse. Older people facing these kinds of situations frequently benefit from our social work assistance to help them connect with other services and work through their legal options. This is particularly important for clients who have suffered trauma

which may make it difficult for them to understand or act on a one off piece of legal advice.

We gratefully acknowledge the funding of Community Legal Centres Program administered by Legal Aid NSW that supports our legal work with older people in the community.

Retirement Village Legal Service

With funding from NSW Fair Trading, our legal service provides support and information to residents (and prospective residents) in retirement villages. Retirement village residents may be vulnerable for reasons that include health, physical disabilities, lack of knowledge of their rights, responsibilities and available options to resolve disputes. Our Retirement Village Legal Service can provide advice that can improve the quality and standard of living for these residents through the provision of information, advocacy and educational programs.

We provided 494 retirement village services to 303 clients during the year despite the restrictions on face to face consultations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary issue of concern for clients has been issues with retirement village management, in particular, where the operator is proposing to close or redevelop the village and the residents do not know or understand their rights.

Unfortunately due to the restrictions of the pandemic, our ability to offer education and information sessions to retirement village residents was reduced substantially and we look forward to resuming these when possible.

Strata Legal Service

With support from NSW Fair Trading, our Strata Legal Service continues to demonstrate that there is a real need for free legal assistance for older people living in strata. We provided over 300 advices, information and referrals throughout the year. Many of our strata clients are pensioners whose only significant asset is the unit in which they live. When faced with problems regarding common strata issues such as repairs to common property, special levies or conduct of meetings, they cannot afford private legal advice and are often unsure about the remedies available to them. Our Strata Legal Service can assist them in understanding their options and can draft suitable correspondence. This first step often resolves the issues quickly, avoiding a protracted dispute that can cause increasing frustration and anxiety. In some cases, we assisted with the drafting of applications to NCAT.

Service Outreach

With funding support from the Department of Communities and Justice Ageing Peaks Program, the legal service was able to participate in a significant outreach to the Far West region of NSW visiting Broken Hill, Menindee, Wilcannia, Dubbo, Bourke and Brewarrina. With our Aboriginal Solicitor and Aboriginal Legal Access Worker, we were able to focus on outreach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors. We also met with local Aboriginal Elders, local Land Councils, Aboriginal Medical Services, Local Area Health Services and Community Legal Centres. The main legal issues identified for First Nations Peoples were funeral

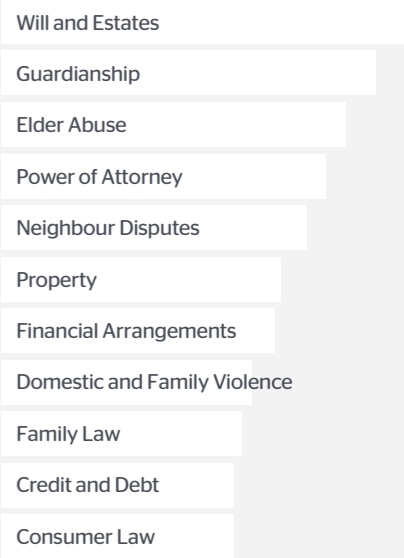
insurance; humbugging; predatory or unaffordable loan practices through payday lenders and buy now pay later schemes, Victims Services claims, housing issues, historical abuse matters, and Stolen Generations Reparations claims. We found that for each person we spoke to there were compounding legal issues with often one person facing five or six different legal problems. Dealing with so many issues meant each case was complex and needed to be dealt with carefully. This situation was obviously causing many older people significant stress and anxiety adding to their historic intergenerational trauma. This project afforded us the opportunity to reach clients that we simply had not been able to reach before and to forge new partnerships with services in the region.

In the Sydney region, our outreach work at Redlink, Men's Cave and the Dental Hospital continued to assist Aboriginal Elders from the Redfern area and surrounds.

Community Legal Education

Our solicitors were happy to get back to conducting face to face legal educations around Sydney in 2021. We were able to deliver 48 community legal educations during the period before further lockdowns and other COVID-19 restrictions affected our face to face activities. To mitigate against the effects of the pandemic on our education program, we produced several online information videos in place of face to face presentations covering various topics including planning ahead, granny flat arrangements and estate planning. Each is accessible on the Seniors Rights Service website.

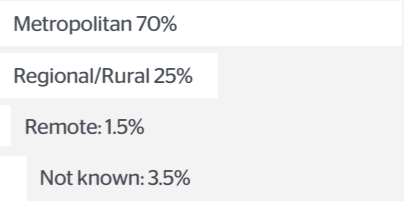
Top Legal client issues General legal service



Top Retirement Village issues



Legal services across NSW



The advice from Seniors Rights Service was invaluable as it resulted in the withdrawal of a proposal which was in breach of Section 101 of the Retirement Villages Act.

A comment from our Client Satisfaction Survey 2020-2021

Our Legal Services (Continued)

Law Reform Work

This past year we had the opportunity to contribute to our own and other joint submissions to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. We also provided a response to the draft recommendations of the Counsel assisting the Commission that supported their recommendations and in particular their recommendation for a new person-centred Aged Care Act based on a human rights framework.

Seniors Rights Service's Retirement Village service participated alongside other stakeholders in NSW Fair Trading's ongoing consultation process regarding reforms to the Retirement Villages Act following the Greiner inquiry. We lodged a joint submission with Macquarie University and the Retirement Village Residents Association on the *Retirement Villages Amendment (Asset Management Plans) Regulation 2020*.

We also provided a submission to the NSW Parliament's Joint Select Committee on Coercive Control. Our submission aimed to ensure that legislators were aware of the ways in which coercive control might affect older people. Firstly, those older women who have experienced coercive control within a long-term marriage or de facto relationship are likely to be suffering severe trauma and may have been isolated and controlled for so long that they need considerable support to survive independently. Secondly, although coercive control is commonly thought of as occurring within intimate partner relationships, older people may experience it at the hands of their adult children and our submission aimed to ensure that legislators were aware of this so that any new legislation would protect older people in this situation.

When it was a worry wondering where to turn for legal advice on a problem of great importance, it was a relief to be able to have the benefit of Seniors Rights Service at the end of the phone.

A comment from our Client Satisfaction Survey 2020-2021

Pro Bono Assistance and Volunteers

We have continued working with Baker McKenzie, Dentons, Hall & Wilcox, Holding Redlich, and Wotton + Kearney in our pro bono clinics. We have been very fortunate to receive assistance from several firms specifically for our First Nations clients. Hall & Wilcox, Sparke Helmore and Gilbert + Tobin have all provided solicitors to draft wills and other planning ahead documents for our First Nations clients from across NSW. Clayton Utz has been assisting First Nations clients to make Victims Services claims and to pursue complaints against funeral insurance providers. DLA Piper has been assisting Elders to obtain key identification documents such as birth certificates, whilst Lander & Rogers are looking at assisting with credit and debt matters.

We are also very grateful for barrister Hagen Jewell's representation of several of our clients on a 'costs recovered' basis. We appreciate his cooperative and collegiate approach and the mentoring assistance he has provided to those of our instructing solicitors with less experience in superior court work.

Unfortunately, our legal volunteer program has been affected by the

ongoing restrictions of COVID-19. While we have been able to host the occasional volunteer, we look forward to reintroducing our full volunteer program once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Customer Service and Feedback

We conduct regular client feedback surveys where clients can provide feedback on their experience of our service. This feedback is collated and analysed to focus future service delivery and for quality improvement purposes. Where clients identify themselves and raise a particular concern, there is specific follow up with them. Client Surveys were sent out in February to May 2021. This year we achieved a 90% satisfaction rating. When we looked at the 10% of clients who were not satisfied, this often related not to the service itself but the fact that they were not happy with the outcome and the legal remedies available or the specific law or legal situation, rather than the service that we provided.

Abuse of Guardianship and Power of Attorney Case Study

Geoffrey's story

An elderly man, Geoffrey* received treatment in a rural hospital and was preparing to return home. A concerned social worker assumed Geoffrey couldn't cope at home and decided to make an application to the Guardianship Division of NCAT. Geoffrey did not attend the NCAT hearing as he didn't think it was important as he lived with his partner and she could care for him. In his absence, and on the basis of the social worker's assessment, the Tribunal appointed Geoffrey's nephew as his guardian and financial manager for a period of one year.

Geoffrey's nephew then decided to move him to the secure dementia wing of an aged care facility located 40 km from his home. His partner of 17 years, who he lived with, had no way of visiting him as she had no transport. Soon after, Geoffrey's brother came to see him at the facility and told him that he would never get out of the facility. Another family member contacted Seniors Rights Service asking for assistance saying that Geoffrey did not have dementia.

After receiving a call from Geoffrey a meeting was arranged at the aged care facility with the Seniors Rights Service advocate, Geoffrey and his partner. Geoffrey was clear that he needed to get out of the facility. He said he felt like a prisoner and he was going to go mad if he had to stay in there. Meanwhile his partner was being evicted from their unit as she could no longer afford the rent on a single person's pension. Geoffrey was paying his aged care fees and the nephew controlled all Geoffrey's money.

Seniors Rights Service advised Geoffrey that the NCAT order could be reviewed and revoked and supported him to nominate a person to revoke the order. He asked a close friend to make the application to NCAT. When the advocate contacted the nephew, the nephew complained about the extra work that being a guardian entailed. The advocate suggested a new independent assessment to ascertain Geoffrey's capacity to make accommodation and other decisions to satisfy the NCAT guardianship division.

NCAT agreed to revoke the current guardianship order and a new guardian and financial manager was appointed. The advocate advised the new guardian she could take Geoffrey out of the facility. The guardian removed Geoffrey from the dementia ward. The advocate also advised Geoffrey that he did not need to consent to another cognitive assessment and Geoffrey decided he did not want another assessment. Geoffrey is now living independently and happily again with his partner, but unfortunately without all his precious possessions. His nephew had disposed of them.

*Names have been changed.



Our Work with First Nations Peoples



Seniors Rights Service acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders of NSW upon whose land we deliver services to older people, and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the unique position and contribution of First Nations Peoples to our culture and our future. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are one of Seniors Rights Service's priority populations. As a rights-based organisation, we are committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are able to be both active participants in, and recipients of, our services and activities.

Having launched our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2019, we have continued to be guided by the strategies and focus it has provided to help us increase our engagement

with First Nations Peoples across NSW in all aspects of our work. Our Reconciliation Committee was chaired by Board member Wendy Morgan, a Djiringanj woman, until her resignation in December and we extend our thanks to her for her insights and guidance. Board member Barbara O'Neil, a Dunghutti woman, now chairs the Committee and it has met every two months to ensure that the commitments we have made under our RAP are being upheld and drive our relationships with Aboriginal Elders and communities.

In 2020 we launched our First Nations Peoples Employment Strategy recognising that we can only achieve greater engagement with, and relevance to, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples with the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. This Employment Strategy provides a framework for the inclusion of First Nations Peoples in our workforce as a crucial element in enabling us to reach this community. Cultural safety for Aboriginal communities and employees is critical for our strategy's success. Our commitment is to increase the number of Aboriginal employees within the organisation and ensure that career pathways are strengthened

and flourish. Seniors Rights Service is in a unique position to offer a variety of employment opportunities at different levels of experience. We were fortunate to receive 12 months funding to employ and additional Aboriginal advocate in Broken Hill, an Aboriginal solicitor in Sydney and two Aboriginal community liaison officers in Sydney and on the South Coast, bringing our complement of First Nations staff to five.

Respect is very important in every social structure in Aboriginal communities. Respect for Elders, the land and ancestors are fundamental aspects of Aboriginal culture. Therefore, it is important that our RAP and our Employment Strategy provide an Aboriginal specific and culturally sensitive foundation for ensuring respectful, participatory communication with First Nations Peoples. We have in place a Cultural Safety Plan and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols that provide guidance for ensuring respectful communications and relationships are fostered. Ensuring that our organisation is culturally responsive to our Aboriginal staff and open and responsive to their perspectives and input is a priority of management.

The organisation widely acknowledged its support for the Uluru Statement from

the Heart and for an independent voice to Parliament. We celebrated Sorry Day, Reconciliation Action Week and NAIDOC 2021. Much of this community acknowledgement was through our social media channels and included Facebook posts and Twitter campaigns and promotion through our website. COVID-19 restrictions meant that we were restricted to online participation in a number of events including Yabun Day that we again sponsored. We were also able to support an Elder Olympics community event this year in Liverpool by co-sponsoring with Marumali and the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council. We connected with over 100 First Nations seniors, hearing from them about their needs and situations and letting them know about our services.

During the next year, Seniors Rights Service will work with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new Innovate RAP to both guide us in developing a deeper engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and fostering more inclusive participation in all our services. Developing more formal collaborative relationships, through peak bodies, First Nations controlled organisations and community groups will be a priority of this RAP.

First Nations Peoples Case Studies

Edward's Story

Edward* is a proud Aboriginal Elder experiencing mental health issues and intergenerational trauma.

Edward was in serious financial hardship because of a \$700 debt that he was unable to pay. Edward had literacy issues, was under a great deal of stress and regularly went without use of utilities to try to cut back on costs. Despite Edward's attempts, the creditor company did not agree to a hardship variation regarding his repayments. Edward contacted Seniors Rights Service who drafted a letter to the creditor on his behalf.

Seniors Rights Service was able to negotiate a waiver of all interest in relation to the \$700 owed, taking much of the financial pressure off Edward.

This outcome meant Edward was able to resume the focus on his health and wellbeing and comfortably repay his debt.

Belinda's Story

Belinda* is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elder who sought legal assistance from Seniors Rights Service in relation to her late husband's funeral insurance. Prior to his passing, Belinda's late husband of 40 years paid monthly funeral insurance for eight years. The funeral insurer agreed to pay \$10,000 for Belinda's late husband's funeral, leaving a surplus amount of \$4,500. Belinda, who was very aggrieved at the loss of her late husband, sought a refund of the surplus amount from the funeral insurance agency to no avail.

Seniors Rights Service negotiated directly with the funeral insurer to secure the refund of the surplus funds to the amount of \$4,500 and an apology letter. The surplus funds were credited to Belinda's account within 48 hours. Belinda was very pleased with the outcome and felt reassured by Seniors Rights Service's efforts. Belinda has comfort knowing that the monies recovered will be used to honour her late husband's memory with family and community.

*Names have been changed.

Our Work in Regional NSW

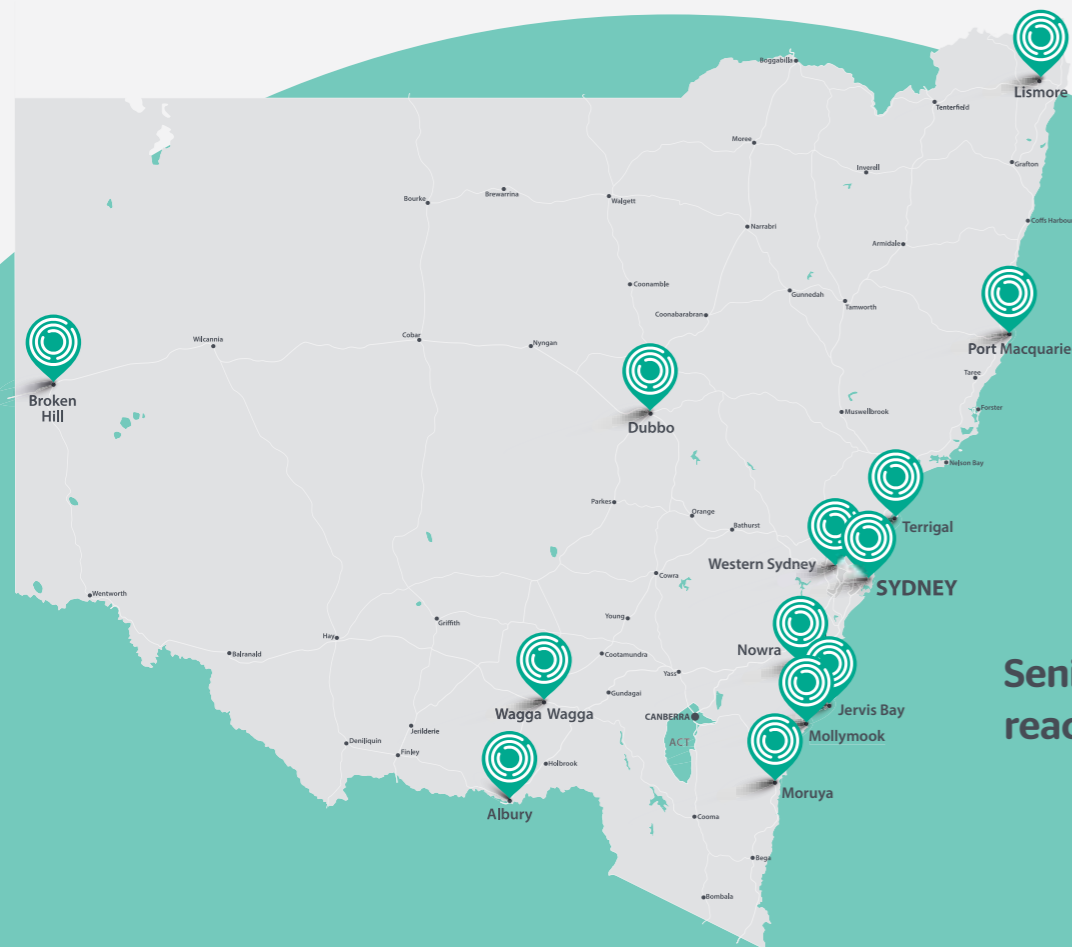
With our services now spread across NSW, Seniors Rights Service is able to reach elderly people in regional, rural or remote locations. Even as COVID-19 continued to present challenges, our reach was genuinely state-wide.

This year our regional presence has almost doubled with the addition of seven new regionally based aged care advocates made possible by a 12 month boost in funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health through the Older Persons Advocacy Network's National Aged Care Advocacy Program and additional COVID-19 funding.

These advocates were able to get out and about in our regional centres and managed to deliver over 600 education and information sessions at a range of venues and events. This included 311 education sessions delivered in aged care facilities across NSW representing almost 30% of aged care facilities statewide; 77 delivered to residential

aged care staff; 87 sessions to home care recipients and their carers and 46 education sessions to home care and home support staff. We also delivered 96 information sessions to community groups.

Older people in regional, rural and remote areas are often unable to easily access information about aged care services. Our two aged care Navigator positions, one based in Dubbo, and one in Wollongong that were funded through the COTA Navigator Pilot went some way to addressing this deficit.



Seniors Rights Service reach across NSW



Chistene Polanski, Advocate, Brian Attard, Solicitor, Bronwyn Gwyther, Aboriginal Legal Access Worker

Our Outreach to Far West NSW

This year, with support from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice we were able to engage with communities across Far West NSW and to hear from seniors living in regional and remote areas about their key issues and concerns. The information gathered will assist us to extend our service design and outreach and further refine and develop our policy advice and systemic advocacy. Because of the number of Aboriginal communities across the region we decided to include a focussed outreach that would reach First Nations communities and involve our Aboriginal legal and aged care advocacy staff.

This outreach involved four separate visits to a number of communities across the region including in Broken Hill, Menindee, Wilcannia, Bourke, Brewarrina, Hillstone, Wentworth, Balranald, Moulamein, Cobar and Nyngan. We ran three Infobingo events that intersperse fun games of bingo with information about abuse of older people, including what it is, how to

recognise it and what to do about it. We have found that it is often easier to raise these difficult issues during a relaxed and informal activity. These events also provided information about local services and the services of Seniors Rights Service. We also visited local aged care homes and gave information to residents and recipients of care. 85 aged care recipients were given personalised information about their rights and particular circumstances and we assisted several participants to identify and resolve current issues.

The main issues that were raised with us time and time again were the isolation of people in small remote communities and the lack of access to appropriate care. There was a general feeling that people in regional and remote towns are often ignored — being out of sight means being out of mind. Isolation was also raised as an issue contributing to loneliness, particularly in aged care, as many family members had moved from the area. The Community Visitor scheme

does not operate in small towns so this is a real issue affecting the quality of life for older people who have no one visiting them on a regular basis. A lack of access to allied health professionals, difficulty in retaining staff in aged care and a general lack of support services were also frequently raised issues.

For the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program, Seniors Rights Service met with Aboriginal Land Councils and other First Nations service providers as well as holding community meetings. When working with local First Nations communities it became very apparent that people were suffering from multiple issues including intergenerational trauma, poor mental health, homelessness and financial stress. Many people were dealing with up to six different but interconnecting issues. Many Elders were not willing to deal with services unless they included First Nations practitioners, and this was especially the case with health and legal issues. A wide spread and deep mistrust of the legal system and of government

in general been a barrier to seeking help. Being able to connect with First Nations solicitors and advocates from Seniors Rights Service helped to break down this mistrust and encouraged many people to share their experiences with us. The key issues they raised included: funeral insurance scams, humbugging, credit and debt, discrimination, housing, wills and estates, Power of Attorney and Enduring Power of Attorney, the Reparation Scheme and historical sexual abuse.

This important outreach has facilitated Seniors Rights Service's ability to collaborate with local service providers and to build their capacity and understanding of the needs and rights of older people. We have also gathered further insight and information about the concerns and issues faced by older people in regional and remote areas. These significant findings will enhance our planning and service delivery in the future and will inform our policy and advocacy work across the sector.

Very helpful, advised and resolved very quickly. Appreciated now knowing there is help for us out there - now in our 'eighties' we will require outside help - to stay in our own home.

A comment from our Client Satisfaction Survey 2020-2021

Christene Polanski at Minindee



Bronwyn Gwyther and Christene Polanski



Education session at Menindee Metropolitan Lands Council



Our Award Winning Radio Campaign to Stop Financial Abuse



The Hon. Dr Geoff Lee MP Acting Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans with our CEO Shannon Wright

Our *Money Matters: Stop Financial Abuse* radio campaign, addressing financial abuse of older people, won the NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing Media Award. The Awards program aims to improve public perception of older people, to tackle ageism and encourage a greater quality of reporting and portrayal of older people in the media.

We are extremely grateful to the Ecstra Foundation for the grant that made this campaign possible. The Ecstra Foundation is committed to improving the financial wellbeing of all Australians and this campaign raised awareness of financial abuse of older people and ways to prevent it. Our campaign's call to action was to contact our free and confidential service for advice

and support. We believed that the restrictions on socialising with family, friends and within the community brought on by COVID-19 would make older people more isolated and would put them at more risk of abuse, including from members of their own family.

We knew a radio campaign was the best way to reach older people who may be isolated during the pandemic and possibly living with an abuser. We produced a statewide radio campaign in four community languages (Hindi, Arabic, Mandarin and Cantonese) as well as in English. A radio message was also produced for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. These short dramatised scenarios, highlighting different

aspects of financial abuse, played over 5,000 spots on commercial and community radio networks as well as on SBS radio over a period of three months. We were also able to include interviews with Seniors Rights Service staff who spoke about the many different types of financial abuse, how to recognise it and what to do about it.

Alongside the radio campaign, we also produced and released a series of short films, *Family Money Matters*, which illustrated common ways older people are financially and emotionally abused by family members. These films were performed in Hindi, Mandarin and Arabic (with English subtitles). Both the Hindi-language and the Mandarin-language films were launched via a live streamed event. With short, dramatic scenarios, the videos cover issues including pressure on older people by their children to sell their home or other assets and older people being pressured to support their adult children regardless of their personal wishes.

Both the radio advertisements and videos are available to listen, view and download from the Seniors Rights Service website.

Money Matters Radio Script

SENIOR WOMAN (80 yrs)

My son was spending my pension. Stealing from his own mother! I was so ashamed.

I rang Seniors Rights Service. They listened. And I realised taking money like this happens in lots of families. It's not right.

We talked through my options. All done over the phone. It was private. And free.

They were great. I've got things sorted now.

Do what I did.
Call Seniors Rights Service on 1800 424 079.

Family Violence Case Study

Heda's story

Heda* is 78 years old and lives in her home with her husband of many years. Heda migrated from the Middle East with her brother in the 1950s and settled in Sydney. Her marriage was arranged by people in her village back home. Heda reports her husband gets very angry at her very quickly, he lashes out at her with his walking stick and yells and screams at her. She says he has always been this way but that lately it is getting worse. She says he is getting dementia and is accusing her of taking money and sleeping with other people.

Heda contacted our legal service and our social worker spent some time with Heda at her local shopping centre café where she could talk safely. Heda told our social worker that the stress of living with him and the way he treats her is affecting her health. She is not sleeping and things are getting her down. Because of the social support we gave Heda, she felt able to take a further step and get legal advice from our solicitors. We were able to listen to her story and she spoke to us, for the first time, about how her abuse had been going on for a very long time and that she was also abused by her father. Heda said that this was the first time she had felt safe to tell someone about her abuse. Heda learnt that she had options and could be linked into specialised domestic and family violence services to explore more help. Heda agreed to a referral for ongoing case management and counselling at her local women's health centre. She was also linked into our navigator service to explore her options for getting some home care help at home.

*Names have been changed.



Our Media Coverage

Media Outlet	Date Published	Headline/Program	Potential Reach
Print			
Sydney Morning Herald	September 28, 2020	Article about financial abuse of older people by their adult children. CEO (then) Russell Westacott quoted.	Greater Sydney, NSW. Plus digital platforms
Northern Beaches Review	January 21, 2021	Article about mental health issues increasing amid lockdowns. Regional Advocacy Services Manager, Margaret Crothers, quoted.	Northern Beaches, NSW
The Senior	February 3, 2021	Article featuring our Aged Care Navigators and the importance of the trial program.	NSW
The Guardian	February 2021	Article about how the COVID-19 pandemic raises the risk of financial abuse of older people. President, Margaret Duckett, quoted.	National
The Australian	February 24, 2021	Op-Ed by President, Margaret Duckett: Humanity and rights must be at heart of aged care	National
The Senior	June, 2021	Interview with CEO Shannon Wright discussing the issues around abuse of older people often being hidden, including issues of coercive control.	NSW
Radio			
Richmond Valley Radio	July 3, 2020 July 10, 2020 July 23, 2020	Interviews with Advocate, Gerard Dunlop about the heightened risk of financial abuse during the pandemic and the services we provide that assist older people.	Northern Rivers region, NSW
ABC South East	July 18, 2020	Interview with Regional Advocacy Coordinator, Margaret Crothers about community concerns during the pandemic and how our services can help.	Southern South Coast, NSW
2WEB Outback Radio	July 23, 2020	Interview with Advocate Tammy Cabban about the heightened risks of financial abuse during the pandemic and the services we provide.	Bourke, NSW
Eastside FM	July 31, 2020	Interview with Regional Advocacy Coordinator, Margaret Crothers about restricted visitation rights and policies in aged care homes.	Greater Sydney, NSW
SBS Radio	July 31, 2020	Interview with Aged Care Navigator Lisa Johnston about what people from diverse backgrounds could consider when choosing aged care during the COVID-19 pandemic.	National Radio and Podcast
2DU	July 2020 September 2020	Interviews with Aged Care Navigator - Orana Far West, Lisa Johnston about the heightened risks of financial abuse during the pandemic and the services we provide seniors across NSW.	Dubbo, NSW
ABC Newcastle	August 4, 2020	Interview with Advocate Jenny Samuels about the heightened risks of financial abuse during the pandemic and the services we provide.	Newcastle, NSW
2ARM	August 28, 2020	Interview with Advocate Tammy Cabban about the heightened risks of financial abuse during the pandemic and the services we provide.	Armidale, NSW
2BS	September 1, 2020 October 6, 2020	Interviews with Communications and Media Manager, Jane Schneider about the heightened risks of financial abuse of older people during the pandemic and the services we provide to assist seniors.	Bathurst, NSW

Media Outlet	Date Published	Headline/Program	Potential Reach
Radio			
ABC Western Plains	September 2, 2020	Interviews Aged Care Navigator - Orana Far West, Lisa Johnston about financial abuse of older people.	Parts of Far West and Orana regions, NSW
Indian Link	September 6, 2020	Interview with Education Manager Diana Bernard about Family Money Matters film resources - financial and emotional abuse of older people.	25,000 regular online listeners
Koori Radio	September 7, 2020	Blackchat: Interview with Board Director Barbara O'Neill about financial and other forms of abuse that are affecting First Nations people.	Sydney, NSW
SBS Mandarin Radio	September 23, 2020	Interview (using interpreter) with Education Manager Diana Bernard about Family Money Matters films highlighting abuse of older people.	National
SBS News	October 1, 2020	Interview with CEO Russell Westacott about prevalence of abuse of older people.	National, online and podcast
ABC Radio National	October 6, 2020	Law Report: Interview with Regional Advocacy Coordinator, Margaret Crothers about abuse in aged care sector, the aged care Royal Commission and issues, such as people's rights, especially during COVID-19.	National
DCFM	November 11, 2020	Interview with Aged Care Navigator Lisa Johnston about the heightened risks of financial abuse during the pandemic and the services we provide.	Dubbo, NSW
Radio Northern Beaches	December 2020	Interview with Regional Advocacy Coordinator, Margaret Crothers discussing effects of COVID-19 on seniors and how we can support them.	Northern Beaches, NSW
2GB	January 2021	Interview with President Margaret Duckett discussing the rights of seniors and how our services can help uphold them.	Sydney, NSW
2RPH Optimal Life	February 17, 2021	Interview with President Margaret Duckett about COVID-19 and the effects on aged care provision.	Sydney Digital - online and Spotify
Richmond Valley Radio	March 1, 2021	Interview with Advocate Gerard Dunlop about the important work Seniors Rights Service does in our communities.	Northern Rivers Region, NSW
Great Lakes FM	April 28, 2021	Interview with Manager Advocacy Services Pat Joyce about the Recommendations from the aged care Royal Commission.	Great Lakes area, NSW
ABC News Radio	May 11, 2021	Interview with Advocate Christene Polanski about legal and aged care needs of people in remote regions.	Far West, NSW
2Dry FM	May 25, 2021	Interviews with Solicitor Brian Attard and Advocate Christene Polanski about the work of Seniors Rights Service in Far West NSW.	Broken Hill, NSW
Wilcannia River Radio	May 27, 2021 June 2, 2021	Interview with Advocate Christene Polanski about the work of Seniors Rights Service in Far West NSW with Aboriginal communities.	Wilcannia, NSW

Financial Report Year Ended 30 June 2021

CONTENTS:	PAGE	CONTENTS:	PAGE
Directors' Declaration	44	Statement of Financial Position	49
Auditor's Report	45-46	Statement of Changes in Equity	50
Auditor's Independence Declaration	47	Statement of Cash Flows	50
Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income	48	Notes to the Financial Statements	51-58
		Profit and Loss Statement	59-60

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

The directors of the company declare that:

1.

The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 48-60, for the year ended 30 June 2021 are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and:

(a)Complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013; and

(b)give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the company.
2.

In the directors' opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

Director:

Margaret Duckett

Director:

Anne Zele

Dated this 7th day of October, 2021



MEAGHER, HOWARD & WRIGHT
CERTIFIED PRACTISING ACCOUNTANTS
ABN 42 664 097 441

Ken WRIGHT J.P. M.Com. F.CPA
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Independent Auditor's Report
To the Members of Seniors Rights Service Ltd

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Seniors Rights Service Ltd ("the Entity"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the Committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Entity is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the Entity's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended; and
- b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* ("the Code") that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, which has been given to the Committee, would be in the same terms if given as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the financial reporting responsibilities under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and the Committee for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation of the special purpose financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the relevant Australian Accounting Standards in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for Profits Commission Regulations 2013* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits*

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Commission Act 2012 and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the special purpose financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intend to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Committee are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide the Committee with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

Meagher Howard & Wright
CPA

Suite 506, 55 Grafton Street
Bondi Junction NSW 2022

Ken Wright
Partner



15 October 2021

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MEAGHER, HOWARD & WRIGHT
CERTIFIED PRACTISING ACCOUNTANTS
ABN 42 664 097 441

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Auditor's Independence Declaration
To the Directors of SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE LTD
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as lead audit partner for the audit of the financial report of Senior Rights Service Ltd for the financial year ended 30 June 2021, I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, that there have been

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

MEAGHER HOWARD & WRIGHT
Certified Practising Accountants



Ken Wright
Partner

Date: 15th October 2021

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	NOTE	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income			
Revenue	3	4,116,864	3,476,131
Expenditure			
Advertising expenses		(130,871)	(71,128)
Auditor's remuneration	4	(10,000)	(10,000)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		(183,904)	(176,064)
Employee benefits expenses		(3,128,413)	(2,493,557)
Finance costs	5	(7,863)	(16,126)
Other expenses		(548,964)	(522,700)
		<u>106,849</u>	<u>186,556</u>
Surplus for the year	5	106,849	186,556
		<u>106,849</u>	<u>186,556</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year		<u>106,849</u>	<u>186,556</u>

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	NOTE	2021 \$	2020 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	1,935,023	1,254,974
Trade and other receivables	7	27,913	113,660
Other current assets	8	<u>2,041</u>	<u>2,075</u>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>1,964,977</u>	<u>1,370,709</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	9	<u>77,310</u>	<u>261,214</u>
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>77,310</u>	<u>261,214</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>2,042,287</u>	<u>1,631,923</u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	10	885,140	572,898
Provisions	11	<u>558,141</u>	<u>496,961</u>
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>1,443,281</u>	<u>1,069,859</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	10	-	63,587
Provisions	11	<u>112,121</u>	<u>118,441</u>
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>112,121</u>	<u>182,028</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>1,555,402</u>	<u>1,251,887</u>
NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)		<u>486,885</u>	<u>380,036</u>
EQUITY			
Retained earnings	12	<u>486,885</u>	<u>380,036</u>
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>486,885</u>	<u>380,036</u>

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	NOTE	RETAINED EARNINGS \$	TOTAL \$
Balance at 1 July 2019		193,480	193,480
Profit attributable to equity shareholders		186,556	186,556
Balance at 30 June 2020		380,036	380,036
Profit attributable to equity shareholders		106,849	106,849
Balance at 30 June 2021		486,885	486,885

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	NOTE	2021 \$	2020 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from Grants & Funding		5,038,828	3,770,704
Payments to suppliers and employees		(4,359,948)	(3,527,552)
Interest received		1,170	15,340
Net cash provided by operating activities	14	680,050	258,492
Net increase in cash held		680,050	258,492
Cash at beginning of financial year		1,254,973	996,481
Cash at end of financial year	6	1,935,023	1,254,973

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

The financial reports cover Seniors Rights Service Ltd as an individual entity. Seniors Rights Service Ltd is a not for profit Limited by Guarantee company incorporated and domiciled in Australia.

The functional and presentation currency of Seniors Rights Service Ltd is Australian dollars.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

1 Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements - reduced disclosure requirements that have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012. In the opinion of the board the company is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial statements who are not able to command the preparation of reports so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and are consistent with prior reporting periods unless otherwise stated.

2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Property, Plant and Equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment of losses.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured using the cost model.

Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, is depreciated on a straight line basis over the assets useful life to the Company, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

Leased assets and leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or their estimated useful life.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. Employee benefits payable later than in one year have been measured at balance date plus related on costs.

Provision for parenting leave and redundancy are made due to statutory obligations and factors that may be impacted by changes to grant funding. Current wage rates are used in the calculation of these provisions.

Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the company has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the outflow required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting year. The discount rate used is a pre-tax rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The increase in the provision due to the unwinding of the discount is taken to finance costs in the statement of other comprehensive income.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

Government Grants
A number of the Company's programs are supported by grants received from the federal, state and local governments. If conditions are attached to a grant which must be satisfied before the Company is eligible to receive the contribution, recognition of the grant as revenue is deferred until those conditions are satisfied. Where a grant is received on the condition that specified services are delivered to the grantor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction. Revenue is recognised as services are performed and at year end a liability Grants In Advance is recognised until the service is delivered.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

Cash Flow Boost
The first cash flow boost payment from the Australian Government have been recognised in full as income in the 2020 financial year. In addition, the second cash flow boost payment has been taken up as a sundry receivable and recognised as income in the 2020 financial year given that it is a matching amount based on the first agreed support payment as an eligible employer.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

Comparative Amounts

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

Where a change in comparatives has also affected the opening retained earnings previously presented in a comparative period, an opening statement of financial position at the earliest date of the comparative period has been presented.

Adoption of New and Revised Accounting Standards

During the current year, the following relevant standards became mandatory and have been adopted retrospectively by the {entity}.

The accounting policies have been updated to reflect changes in the recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses and the impact of adoption of these Standards is discussed below.

1058	Income of Not -for-Profit Entities	01 January 2019	30 June 2020
No change, no impact			

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
3 Revenue and Other Income		
Revenue		
Sales revenue:		
Rendering of services	4,040,432	3,348,675
Other revenue:		
Interest received	1,169	15,340
Other revenue	75,263	112,116
	<u>76,432</u>	<u>127,456</u>
Total revenue	<u>4,116,864</u>	<u>3,476,131</u>
Interest revenue from:		
Interest Received	1,169	15,340
Total interest revenue on financial assets not at fair value through profit or loss	<u>1,169</u>	<u>15,340</u>
Other revenue from:		
Cash Boost	-	100,000
Sundry Income	75,263	12,116
Total other revenue	<u>75,263</u>	<u>112,116</u>
4 Auditor's Remuneration		
Auditors Remuneration - Fees	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
5 Profit for the year		
The result for the year was derived after charging / (crediting) the following items:		
Profit before income tax from continuing operations includes the following specific expenses:		
Expenses		
Employee benefits expense:		
contributions to defined contribution superannuation funds	255,938	205,992
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	183,904	176,064

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
6 Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash in Hand	400	400
Cash at Bank	<u>1,934,623</u>	<u>1,254,574</u>
	<u>1,935,023</u>	<u>1,254,974</u>
7 Trade and Other Receivables		
Other Debtors	854	70,398
Trade Debtors	-	22,607
GST on Acquisitions	<u>27,059</u>	<u>20,655</u>
	<u>27,913</u>	<u>113,660</u>
The carrying value of trade receivables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short term nature of the balances.		
8 Other Assets		
Current		
Load to Go	<u>2,041</u>	<u>2,075</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
9 Property, Plant and Equipment		
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Plant and Equipment:		
At cost	783,032	783,032
Accumulated depreciation	(705,722)	(521,818)
Total Plant and Equipment	<u>77,310</u>	<u>261,214</u>
10 Trade and Other Payables		
Current		
Grants in Advance	588,075	247,182
Lease Liability	76,943	186,293
Accrued Expenses	114,889	56,293
Reserve for Asset Replacement	48,000	48,000
GST on Supplies	57,233	35,130
	<u>885,140</u>	<u>572,898</u>
Non-Current		
Lease Liability	-	63,587
11 Provisions		
Provision for Holiday Pay	246,878	177,883
Prov'n for Long Service Leave	269,300	285,697
Provision for Parenting Leave	41,963	33,381
Provision for Redundancy	112,121	118,441
	<u>670,262</u>	<u>615,402</u>
Total provisions	<u>670,262</u>	<u>615,402</u>
Analysis of Total Provisions		
Current	558,141	496,961
Non-current	112,121	118,441
	<u>670,262</u>	<u>615,402</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
12 Retained Earnings		
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	380,036	193,480
Net profit attributable to members of the company	<u>106,849</u>	<u>186,556</u>
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	<u>486,885</u>	<u>380,036</u>
13 Capital and Leasing Commitments		
Operating Lease Commitments		
Non-cancellable operating leases contracted for but not capitalised in the financial statements:		
Payable - minimum lease payments		
Not later than 12 months	63,232	186,293
Between 12 months and five years	-	64,910
	<u>63,232</u>	<u>251,203</u>
The organisation signed a lease commencing 1 November 2016. This lease is for 5 years to 31 October 2021 and has a 3 year option. The company introduced AASB 16 in 2020 and the 2019 accounts were amended so that the 2020 changed was reflected in the comparison in 2019. This resulted in a profit adjustment reduction of \$18,548 from \$32,451 to \$13,903		
14 Cash Flow Information		
Reconciliation of result for the year to cashflows from operating activities.		
Reconciliation of net income to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Profit after income tax	106,849	186,556
Cash flows excluded from profit attributable to operating activities		
Non-cash flows in profit		
Depreciation	183,904	176,064

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Changes in assets and liabilities		
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	34	575
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	85,747	(83,457)
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	248,655	(115,234)
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	<u>54,860</u>	<u>93,988</u>
	<u>680,049</u>	<u>258,492</u>

15 Financial Risk Management

The company is exposed to a variety of financial risks through its use of financial instruments.

The company's overall risk management plan seeks to minimise potential adverse effects due to the unpredictability of financial markets.

The company does not have any derivative instruments at 30 June 2021.

Objectives, Policies and Processes

The board of directors receives overall responsibility for the establishment of the company's financial risk management framework. This includes the development of policies covering specific areas such as interest rate risk and credit risk.

Risk management policies and systems are reviewed regularly to reflect changes in market conditions and the company's activities.

The day-to-day risk management is carried out by the company's finance function under policies and objectives which have been approved by the board of directors. The chief financial officer has been delegated the authority for designing and implementing processes which follow the objectives and policies. This includes monitoring the levels of exposure to interest rate and assessment of market forecasts for interest rate movements.

16 Statutory Information

Seniors Rights Service Ltd

PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
INCOME		
Grants	4,040,432	3,348,675
Interest Received	<u>1,169</u>	<u>15,340</u>
	<u>4,041,601</u>	<u>3,364,015</u>
OTHER INCOME		
Cash Boost	-	100,000
Sundry Income	<u>75,263</u>	<u>12,116</u>
	<u>75,263</u>	<u>112,116</u>
	<u>4,116,864</u>	<u>3,476,131</u>

PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
EXPENSES		
Advertising & Promotion	130,871	71,128
Auditors Remuneration - Fees	10,000	10,000
Bank Charges	1,311	1,330
Cleaning	11,620	10,918
Conferences Expos and Seminars	31,846	57,733
Computer Expenses	91,294	13,842
Depreciation	183,904	176,064
Digital Resources	36,542	-
Funding to RVRA	25,000	25,000
Employee Provisions expenses	52,600	61,366
Insurance	16,647	17,925
Interest	7,863	16,126
Legal, Consultants & Support Fees	54,678	104,972
Motor Vehicle Expenses	5,827	5,484
Office Expenses	9,220	10,190
Office Assets Equipment Acquisitions	43,165	19,243
Practicing Certificates	3,580	3,280
Postage	8,335	11,416
Printing & Stationery	58,058	83,698
Reference Literature & Software	16,510	415
Rent	7,272	17,706
Repairs & Maintenance	18,133	37,882
Salaries	2,805,489	2,214,822
Staff Amenities	10,871	11,377
Staff Training	3,515	-
Subscriptions	15,108	18,383
Superannuation	255,938	205,992
Telephone	23,351	6,504
Travelling Expenses	43,921	69,244
Web Expenses	27,546	7,535
	<u>4,010,015</u>	<u>3,289,575</u>
Profit	<u>106,849</u>	<u>186,556</u>



Notes





Your Rights Your Voice

Legal | Aged Care Advocacy | Information



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Publication number: 3.2.6 | Seniors Rights Service Ltd | ABN 98 052 960 862 | ACN 626 676 533