



A Year in Review

2012/2013 Annual Report

To encourage people

of CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) background to participate equally in the Australian community life by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate community services.

To promote and extend

the knowledge and learning of the Italian language and culture to the wider Australian society.

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Governance

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Executive members:

President	Nereo Brezzi
Vice President	Tony Palella
Treasurer	Tony Brown
Secretary	Pina Carpenzano

Committee Members:

Peter **Accornero**
Joseph **Bonica**
Joe **Chisari**
Frank **Cotronese**
Angela **Filippello**
Massimo **Ficca**

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Nafiye **Scacheri**
Anna **Di Vincenzo**
Carmen **Bonica**
Anna **Muscio**
Connie **Riga**
Stefania **Di Leone**
Dina **Ranieri**
Tanina **Softa**
Carmel **Paolino**
Trina **Bechly**
Angela **Poli**
Tony **Brown**

President's Report

I am delighted to report that in the past year we were able to: increase our community services to clients and our client base; to continue significant efforts in language teaching; to implement a range of successful community events; and to consolidate administration at our newly refurbished Albion headquarters.

This was achieved with a revenue base of \$7.4 million.

As always, the dedication, hard work and diligence of all our staff and volunteers were evident and valued by the Management Committee.

We are grateful for the ongoing strong support from our many valued partners: the Australian and Queensland governments; the Brisbane City Council; Medicare Local; the Brisbane Catholic Education Office; the Townsville and Cairns Dioceses; and the Italian government.

Numerous challenges lie ahead as demand for our services increases while governments face competing requests for funding and they implement fundamental changes to the administration of service delivery.

The response of the Management Committee is three-fold:

- Ensure the continuation of a safe, co-operative and up-to-date working environment for staff;
- Enable the Director to operate with maximum flexibility;
- Review the organization's strategic direction and the resources required to achieve objectives.

Important developments of the year included:

AGED CARE SERVICES

The Home and Community Care (HACC) program, our biggest, has been administered by the Federal government since July 2012 for clients aged 65+. Those under 65 continue as State responsibility.

Significantly, we encouraged and participated in a consortium selected by Medicare Local - Nth Brisbane, to service over 230 clients previously under the Metro North Brisbane Hospital and Health Services contract.



Co.As.It.
had another
successful
year driven
by our staff
members and
our dedicated
volunteers
who must be
congratulated
for their
efficient and
effective service
provision to our
community.

Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) were full during the year while demand for EACH packages (Extended Aged Care at Home) continued to increase;

- We were successful in gaining funding under the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) from April 2013 to June 2014;
- Day Care Respite Centres (Casa Aurelia, Casa Serena, Wynnum and Gold Coast) all operated at capacity with plans afoot for expanding Casa Serena;

PROMOTION OF ITALIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

- ILC continued to provide services of co-ordination, professional development and access to teaching resources and materials;
- Italian language classes for adults continue with success and enthusiastic student feedback;

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Aged care information forums, August at the Gold Coast and Brisbane;
- Italian Ball, October at the Brisbane Convention Centre;
- Christmas concert at the Old Qld Museum;
- Christmas lunch parties for aged care clients at Casa Aurelia;
- Women's fashion parade, March at Victoria Park Golf Complex
- Italian National Day, June at the Brisbane Abruzzo Club
- Italian Play, La Giara, June at St Laurence's College Theatre

COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- After refurbishment, the main office at Albion was occupied from December 2012;
- Active plans for future use of Newmarket office are being considered;
- The high quality "Insieme" magazine continues successfully.

CONCLUSION

Co.As.It. had another successful year driven by our staff members and our dedicated volunteers who must be congratulated for their efficient and effective service provision to our community.

I wish to thank the Director, Mrs Dina Ranieri for her hard work, dedication and leadership and her willingness to represent Co.As.It. publicly and frequently whenever required.

With sincere appreciation, I thank all the members of the Management Committee who regularly contribute to policy making and administration of Co.As.It.

I offer special thanks to the Secretary Mrs Pina Carpenzano, to the Vice President Tony Palella and to Treasurer Tony Brown, all of whom work especially hard. It is very stimulating to be associated with people of such high integrity, vigour and generosity of spirit.

Cav. Nereo Brezzi, President

Director's Report

It is particularly satisfying to close 2012/13 and report on the many varied aspects of our organisation and the importance we make into the lives of our community members on a daily basis.

Co.As.It. has two very important roles within the community, these being the provision of support services to the elderly, younger people with a disability and the promotion and the teaching of the Italian language and culture amongst primary, secondary school students and adult learners through our Italian Language Centre division.

Our energy over the last year has been consumed in the provision of community care services highlighted in the statistical data throughout this report. It is always surprising to realise how much was accomplished throughout the year and how it was all done so swiftly.

During the reporting period, we have been informed, instructed, inundated with documentation on policies, guidelines, regulations and so on to ensure we were well prepared for the Aged Care Reforms at our doorsteps.

Co.As.It. has concentrated over the last 12 months in

identifying the key elements in consumer directed care and has remodelled, restructured service provision to suit the needs of a consumer driven model of care.

The acquisition and renovations of our new central offices at Albion has placed the organisation on a more competitive level.

The management committee members are to be commended for their efforts and perseverance in turning a dream into a reality.

We have had good results in approvals of funding submissions with an 80% success rate across the various community projects presented to Government and other funding bodies.

The success of the many services provided by Co.As.It. is attributed to the commitment shown by our staff and the high quality of our services.

The ongoing search of suitably qualified staff is an ongoing challenge and on many occasions we rely on good networks within the community in identifying suitably bi-lingual staff.

It has been a year of recognising the importance of



partnerships; opportunities to work alongside other service providers, exchange ideas and improve efficiencies, not only in the community services section but also across the promotion and the teaching of the Italian language in the State.

Good and strong partnerships have been instrumental in maintaining the teaching of the Italian language in many Queensland schools and through the ILC, students, teachers and school staff have been supported and consulted in keeping the language alive.

Our commitment in providing a quality service at value for money is always our focus.

We can only hope that our efforts are appreciated and recognised by all that come in contact with Co.As.It. and the Italian Language Centre.

Dina Ranieri, Director

The year in Review

The year in review

FACTS AT A GLANCE

Brisbane and South Coast

PERSONNEL

Management **3**

Finance **4**

Special Projects **5**

Program Administration **24**

Aged Care Administration **20**

Community Care Workers **123**

Allied Health Staff **5**

Volunteers **43**

Italian Language Centre Staff **3**

Teachers **11**

DAY CARE RESPITE CENTRES

Brisbane:

Casa Serena

1 Lanchester Street, Stafford Heights

Casa Aurelia

79 Sussex Road, Acacia Ridge

Wynnum Community Hall

Cnr Cedar and Bay Terrace, Wynnum

Cleveland Baptist Church Hall

240 Bloomfield Road, Cleveland

South Coast:

Co.As.It. South Coast

18 Fairway Drive, Clear Island Waters

Co.As.It. Corporate Offices

35 Dover Street, Albion

Co.As.It. South Coast Office

18 Fairway Drive, Clear Island Waters

ILC-Italian Language Centre

5/321 Kelvin Grove Road, Kelvin Grove

Amidst an ever changing and increasingly complex aged and community care environment, Co.As.It. has been proud to provide high quality and flexible care services to many hundreds of people in our community.

Being a peak service provider in the aged care industry requires not only great administrative and organisational ability, genuine caring for people and the capacity to embrace new trends but most critically, it requires a skilled and dedicated workforce who are at the forefront of service provision.

At Co.As.It. we are proud of our human resources and particularly of the commitment and dedication of the community care workers who have enriched the lives of so many within the community.

The organization recognizes the value and richness of its multicultural personnel and has provided staff and volunteers with career pathways and educational opportunities.

Through their expertise, our workforce not only provides hands on support but also initiates, participates and contributes vital feedback to identify client and community needs.

This interaction at a 'grass roots level' has contributed to highlighting key goals and mapping directions in the organization's strategic plan for better person centred care and improved assessment and implementation in practice.

Over the past 12 months, Co.As.It. continued to expand its services.



Our growth in services was linked to the success in acquiring additional clients through the Medicare Local - Metro North Brisbane Consortium; additional funding under the National Respite for Carers Program and funding through the Aged Care Service Improvement and Healthy Ageing initiatives.

Co.As.It. continued to offer a comprehensive range of aged care, community support and social support programs that not only enabled the frail aged and younger disabled to retain their independence and continue to live in their own home, as well as supported families and individuals with social and recreational opportunities to stay connected to their local communities.

Within these programs, the organization's 200 skilled and trained personnel and 43 volunteers assisted over 2000 clients per week in all facets of daily living.

In order to improve efficiency of service delivery and to ensure accessibility and effectiveness, we relocated to larger premises and streamlined our internal processes and systems to assure swift responsiveness in meeting changing needs and to drive operations to best quality and flexibility.

These practices are governed by Co.As.It.'s Quality Management System which is underpinned by a culture of continuous improvement and supported by a program of audits, to ensure policies, procedures and standards are implemented and adhered to throughout the organisation.

These processes are imperative if we are to adapt to the many changes in community and aged care services reforms from State and Federal Government. Co.As.It. is

also meeting the challenge of financial sustainability by building a strong foundation and infrastructure through the acquisition of its own corporate offices, language and respite centres.

In the following 12 months, we look forward to implementing strategic priorities for revenue growth, improved business efficiencies and economic sustainability.

The Italian Language Centre (simply referred to as ILC), a division of Co.As.It. which promotes the study and appreciation of the Italian language and culture has continued its valuable role in language education.

Staff members have supported Italian immersion programs in high schools in the past year, providing resources, translations and financial contributions. Despite funding cutbacks from the Italian government and changes in the infrastructure for teachers, ILC is still the peak body for Italian language learning in Queensland and continues to support teachers of Italian with professional development, resources and expertise.

Its many programs aimed at adults, school aged children and pre-schoolers are constantly operating at maximum capacity. In the following year, new programs and new resources will maintain cultural and linguistic currency for all students.

Highlights of the Year

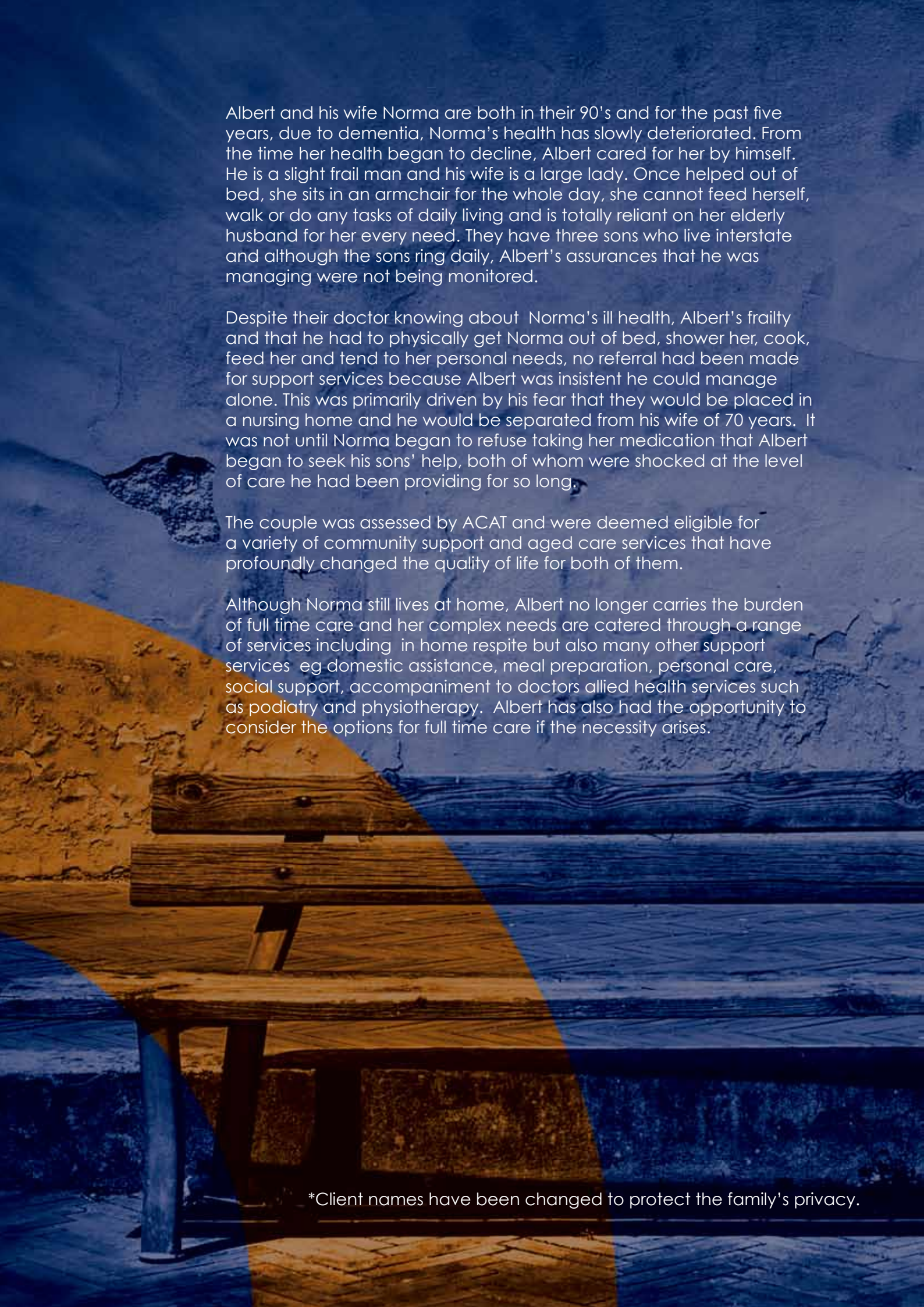
Highlights of the year

- The organization relocated to a larger, corporate office building.
- Diversity and Inclusion - a two year program funded under the Aged Care Service Improvement and Healthy Ageing initiatives through the Department of Health and Ageing which will cater to the needs of older members of the Italian community.
- Successful funding under the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) from April 2013 to June 2014.
- Co.As.It. absorbed an additional 230 clients through the Medicare Local - Metro North Brisbane consortium contract.
- A one-off grant of \$25,000 to create resources to support carers and family members in understanding dementia.
- The successful Annual Italian Ball held in October 2012 with the funds raised to be used towards the extension costs of the Day Care Respite Centre at Stafford Heights.
- Establishment of the 'Sunshine Groups' – specialised dementia Day Care Respite.
- Annual 'Appreciation Awards' luncheon recognising long serving volunteers.



Caring for the Community

Tailoring services
to suit the needs

A wooden bench is positioned on a sandy beach. The background features a calm blue ocean meeting a clear blue sky. The scene is captured in a wide-angle shot, emphasizing the solitude of the bench.

Albert and his wife Norma are both in their 90's and for the past five years, due to dementia, Norma's health has slowly deteriorated. From the time her health began to decline, Albert cared for her by himself. He is a slight frail man and his wife is a large lady. Once helped out of bed, she sits in an armchair for the whole day, she cannot feed herself, walk or do any tasks of daily living and is totally reliant on her elderly husband for her every need. They have three sons who live interstate and although the sons ring daily, Albert's assurances that he was managing were not being monitored.

Despite their doctor knowing about Norma's ill health, Albert's frailty and that he had to physically get Norma out of bed, shower her, cook, feed her and tend to her personal needs, no referral had been made for support services because Albert was insistent he could manage alone. This was primarily driven by his fear that they would be placed in a nursing home and he would be separated from his wife of 70 years. It was not until Norma began to refuse taking her medication that Albert began to seek his sons' help, both of whom were shocked at the level of care he had been providing for so long.

The couple was assessed by ACAT and were deemed eligible for a variety of community support and aged care services that have profoundly changed the quality of life for both of them.

Although Norma still lives at home, Albert no longer carries the burden of full time care and her complex needs are catered through a range of services including in home respite but also many other support services eg domestic assistance, meal preparation, personal care, social support, accompaniment to doctors allied health services such as podiatry and physiotherapy. Albert has also had the opportunity to consider the options for full time care if the necessity arises.

*Client names have been changed to protect the family's privacy.

The previous case study shows the real difference in people attaining a degree of autonomy, which without our support, would not be possible.

With an ageing population and longer life expectancy, it is expected that increasing numbers of older persons will be requiring aged and community and disability services.

Identifying this trend, the Government's policy in recent years and the Productivity Commission's Review of "Living Longer, Living Better" has focused on supporting older people to remain living at home with community support.

Co.As.It. is adapting to meet these new directions in care one of which is Consumer Directed Care (CDC) that empowers decision making and personal choice for the client who will decide how money allocated to their care will be spent.

Co.As.It. supports this tailor-made suite of services and is working towards supporting clients through this process.

It continues in the meantime, to deliver existing services that provide opportunities for people to engage fully in community life.

Co.As.It.'s focus remains on keeping the organisation capable, flexible and responsive and in 2012/2013, the following services furnished holistic person centred care that enhanced independence, spiritual fulfilment and enjoyment of life for many in our community.

Different programs for different needs

The organization delivers services that support positive ageing through its Home Care Support Program, Home Care Packages Program and Day Care Respite Services in the Brisbane North, Brisbane South and South Coast areas.



FACTS AT A GLANCE

HACC Clients
1966

Service Hours
224,313

Brisbane North
Caboolture
Pine Rivers
Brisbane South
South Coast

HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE (HACC)

In the past year, under the HACC program Co.As.It. has supported over 1,900 clients with a basic range of home services that have included personal care, respite care, domestic assistance, meal preparation, allied health and social support permitting them to continue living in their own homes for as long as possible.

The vitality program approach to service provision has provided holistic treatments that focused on the maintenance of good mobility and independence and provision of social support and day care respite services that promoted social interaction, independence and physical well-being.

This program has empowered clients and increased confidence and motivation to make further gains in the clients' individual self-care needs.

DAY CARE RESPITE SERVICES

Co.As.It.'s Day Care Respite Centres offered an extensive range of support services for carers and family members looking after frail, aged and younger disabled loved ones.

In Brisbane, Casa Aurelia operated five days with seven groups per week; Casa Serena operated six days with six groups per week; Wynnum two

days with two groups and the South Coast centre three days with three groups per week.

These groups function under the administration of a team of dedicated coordinators, staff and allied health personnel.

The liaison and close collaboration of the aged care team in both offices and their professionalism in case management, has smoothed the progression of increasing services for clients who are ageing at home.

In 2012/2013, Co.As.It. implemented 816 day care respite sessions incorporating activity programs that addressed emotional, physical, social and recreational needs.

These sessions provided families and carers needing a break from full-time caring with 118,841 hours of service.

Respite is not only important for the carer but also for the clients who experience varied activities created by our trained staff. Several diverse cultural backgrounds are represented in the centres and activities always reflect and celebrate the rich diversity of the clients.

Programs converged on both internal commemorative functions and external events in those cultural communities with which we engaged.



There were numerous and highly enjoyable themed days including Bastille, St Patrick's, Latino, Valentine's, Mother's and Father's Days, Easter, Italian National Day, Christmas and many birthdays — even a 100th!

Italian National Day festivities were shared across the centres and students from Bulimba State School entertained the combined groups at Casa Aurelia with traditional Italian music, dance and songs.

At Casa Serena, two and three generations were brought together when the Girotondo Playgroup spent a day at the centre rekindling the clients'

memories of nursery rhymes, traditional songs and childhood games.

Melbourne Cup Day races, with fancy hat competitions were a reflection of the excitement in the wider community; equally popular were the fashionable high teas, the clowning and gelato activities.

Clients also took pleasure in different outings that included visiting the Greek Respite Centres, the local RSL Clubs and picnics at Redcliffe and Sandgate.

In the past year, Co.As.It. initiated special dementia specific respite groups to support people living with dementia and their carers (Sunshine Groups).

SUNSHINE GROUPS

The "Sunshine Groups" are held at The Casa Aurelia Day Care Respite Centre. The Day Care Respite services are run by specifically trained staff who are skilled and equipped to work with clients living with dementia.

These groups are facilitated by a master practitioner in the Spark of Life Program who continues to guide and inspire the workers to seek alternative methods of engaging with people with cognitive impairments.

The pervading attitude is to reach the person with dementia by stimulating and rekindling responses from those other senses that are still functioning well eg. auditory, tactile and emotional.

This approach to connecting with clients who have dementia is both innovative and challenging and Co.As.It. is proud to be leading the way in new promising strategies.

The increasing incidence of dementia has resulted in additional funding being made available.

Co.As.It. was successful in securing two funding grants to create resources and through the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) extend respite to include overnight, weekend, flexible and emergency respite care.





NATIONAL RESPITE FOR CARERS PROGRAM (NRCP)

Maylene has been caring for her husband Vincenzo for the past four years as they both struggle with the progression of his Parkinson's Disease.

Vincenzo often gets depressed and becomes aggressive and uncooperative as his wife tries to provide personal and medical care. The anxiety of providing full time care as well as the physical demands of her role and long time sleep deprivation, as Vincenzo wakes often, was resulting in emotional and physical deterioration.

Following their assessment, the most critical support service was to provide her with a few nights of uninterrupted sleep which would re-energise both

her emotional well being and her coping capacity and also provide a break from Vincenzo's complex needs.

Co.As.It. supports Maylene with domestic assistance, personal care for her husband, social and recreational support for her and most importantly, in home, overnight and weekend respite on a regular basis under the NRCP.

For Maylene, this service has made a profound difference in how she manages her own health and provide care for her husband.

Its flexible program is now enabling her to keep her husband at home with her, maintain her caring role and both are enjoying the changes these services have made in their home.

Like Maylene, this program has provided substantial and crucial support to other families and carers in the community and continues to be in high demand.

Clients have enjoyed many wonderful days shared in a program of events whilst still receiving the high quality care for which Co.As.It. is recognised.

*Client names have been changed to protect the family's privacy.

Co.As.It. also improved the quality of life of many in the community through its Community Aged Care packages (CACP) and Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) packages that deliver individualised tailored and managed care for clients with complex care needs.

Community Aged Care Packages (CACP)

140

Hours of service Brisbane

18,796

Hours of service South Coast

13,883

Extended Care at Home (EACH) Packages

25

In-home hours of service

11,214

Unfunded in-home hours

592.75

Allied Health services

1,819

COMMUNITY AGED CARE PACKAGES (CACP)

CACPs are specifically planned and coordinated packages of care tailored to help individuals better manage their care needs.

In 2012, all community care workers received specialised training that gave them skills and strategies to promote functional independence in clients.

With encouragement and support, clients were supported in accomplishing tasks of daily living.

Packages in the Brisbane and South Coast areas have been running at capacity, these packages have prevented the elderly in being admitted to low level care in aged care facilities.

Primary support services accessed have been domestic assistance; personal care; social support; transport to and from appointments, meal preparation and gardening.

Coordinators in Brisbane recorded over 18,700 hours of service in this program whilst the South Coast recorded over 13,000 hours.

To maintain currency with industry trends, Coordinators attended several training sessions and conferences during the year.

EXTENDED AGED CARE AT HOME (EACH)

Co.As.It. has continued to demonstrate a commitment to the philosophy of 'positive ageing' by addressing changes that ageing may bring to the individual.

This includes, but is not exclusive to, the physical processes, decline or changes to cognitive abilities, social interaction with peers, and more importantly, the roles of family relationships that the ageing process may alter.

Although EACH clients have been deemed 'high care' the team continues to encourage independence and increase capacity in as many activities of daily living as feasible.

The program offers registered nursing care; allied health care, personal care; transport to appointments; social support; domestic assistance; equipment and medical supplies, assistance with oxygen and/or enteral feeding.

This high level of care for complex needs is a demanding and challenging field but also one that has made nursing at home a realistic alternative to care in a hospital environment.





Creating connections,
building capacity

Supporting families and individuals

Supporting
families
and
individuals

Community and Individual Support (CISS)

Total client contact

1,053

Families

130

Hours of Service -
Emergency Relief

88

Hours of Service
Advocacy, Counselling
Information services,
Referral

562



COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT (CISS)

Co.As.It. has been a strong presence within the community since 1978 and continues to work in partnerships with other agencies to support parents, children and young people, and incorporates a comprehensive range of complementary services that comprise casework/case management and counselling; early childhood services ie. playgroups; community outreach; information dissemination, advocacy and referral; community education; early intervention/prevention strategies. Throughout the past year, 130 families/clients/individuals used the program to create positive changes in their lives.

Language support and information dissemination was provided to assist and build capacity in a range of areas eg. accommodation, work placements, legal issues, Public Trustee and Centrelink matters.

The Co.As.It. quarterly newsletter *Insieme* also provided information and maintained linkages with clients, sponsors and other community organizations.

The program established practical strategies that nurtured positive self image for the supported person with the aim of achieving positive and competent tasks in daily living.

Support and community education activities were particularly important and included: health information workshops, information sessions and community events.

Notable activities and events for this period were the annual Christmas Community Concert attended by over 500 people from the Italian and wider community and International Women's Day celebrated with a high tea and fashion parade attended by 320 ladies.

Practical, social and emotional support also continued to provide the framework for increased autonomy and assisting people to take control of their lives.

In these past 12 months, over 176 emergency relief clients contacted the organisation and \$11,300 was dispensed to families and individuals in food, personal hygiene products, subsidies, bill payment, emergency relief and food vouchers.

Supporting
those
no longer
at home

COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME

This program provides companionship for Italian residents in aged care facilities who would be at a greater disadvantage if the CVS visitors could not provide social, emotional and spiritual support through its volunteers.

However while the numbers of elderly being placed in care continues to rise steadily, the recruitment of bi-lingual volunteers is becoming harder.

This is attributable to the volunteers ageing themselves, a lack of driving skills in the women of this cultural group; extended family obligations and a general fear of aged care facilities and their end of life connotation.

Often a volunteer will help to ease the immediate cultural shock experienced by elderly Italians moving into an aged care facility.

An inability to communicate in their own language becomes the single reason many do not participate in the everyday activities of their facility, resulting in isolation and alienation and more significantly, deep loneliness.

Co.As.It. is funded for 12 volunteers who have become an integral community resource for Italian residents.

CALD (CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE) SUPPORT IN AGED CARE FACILITIES

As part of its commitment to holistic care, Co.As.It. is proud to continue providing services to people even after they leave home to live in a residential aged care facility.

Within the Brisbane metropolitan area, 10 aged care facilities with Italian residents are involved in the CALD Activity Program which runs fortnightly and has been specifically created to bridge the gap in providing diversional therapy activities, in Italian, between the facility and its residents.

Due to linguistic and cultural disparity and inappropriate activities, Italian residents are not able to fully engage in the social/recreational programs at the facilities.

Often times, recreational pastimes as embroidery, crocheting or sewing are too close to the working life of the resident to be considered leisure. The CALD Activity Officer plans, prepares and carries out games, discussions and other hobbies that are culturally suited to the interests of the residents.

Family members and volunteers participate in what is a highly successful support service.

VOLUNTEERS

Once again, Co.As.It.'s wonderful volunteers continue to be an integral part of our service delivery which allows us to deliver many services and support that we would not normally be able to offer our clients.

They donate their skills, experience, talent and time at all levels of the organisation and we wish to acknowledge their significant contribution to enriching the lives of others.

The Co.As.It. Medal of Appreciation was awarded to five volunteers during the Italian National Day festivities who have been involved in assisting the organization in the running of the Day Care Respite services at the South Coast, Brisbane and in the Community Visitors Scheme for 5 years or more.

Community engagement

Bringing people
together to share,
engage, participate.

Community
engagement

Creating and maintaining strong linkages within the community is an integral factor in fostering community spirit and inclusiveness. It also ensures that Co.As.It. continues to provide opportunities that nurture cultural exchange, education and social interaction.

A number of events were held this year that reflected the community's interests and also promoted connectivity and inclusiveness.

The annual International Womens' Day Fashion Parade and High Tea hosted by TV Personality Gretel Killeen was a celebration with 320 women and highlighted the wonderful role of women all over the world who had experienced social injustices in the past.

The event celebrated collectively, the many advances made by women now in roles that were once the sole domain of men. This function was also inspirational for attendees who heard first hand stories by other women on the challenges facing young girls and women in different countries.

Italian National Day celebrations held on 2nd June, 2013 were attended by over 350 people and attended by numerous guests of honour including the Italian Ambassador HE Gian Ludovico

De Martino Di Montegiordano and the Lord Mayor Graham Quirk. This occasion is an opportunity for many members of the community to share in their bi-cultural identity and commemorate a significant day that is celebrated worldwide.

This day also represents an acknowledgement of the history and traditions which have been transported internationally but which have contributed significantly to the economic, social, and artistic developments in many countries where Italians migrated.

Each year Co.As.It. organizes a community Forum that addresses current trends and needs within the community. In August 2012, the Forum was held as a direct response to the Federal Government's policy reforms of "Living Longer, Living Better."

Attended by 120 people the free information sessions were aimed at encouraging people to take control of their own health, well being and enjoy their chosen lifestyle.

Co.As.It. presented a number of stimulating sessions with guest speakers on

- improving quality of life,
- managing stress,
- maintaining a healthy mind and body and
- managing legal affairs.

This forum was not just for older persons- many community members who wished to experience a rejuvenation of spirit and wellbeing also attended.

Participants engaged in gentle exercises, learned effective techniques on relaxation and viewed demonstrations on the wide range of assistive devices designed to increase functional independence.



Cultural connections

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Co. As.it. has a history of providing the wider community with an annual exhibition or event that highlights and reflects the richness of our cultural diversity and the many benefits derived in living within a multicultural milieu.

The events also highlight the Italian presence within Queensland and the noteworthy influences and contributions made by this migrant group to many sectors in Australia's development.

In June 2013, in collaboration with the Sydney theatrical company Bottega d'Arte Teatrale, Co.As.it. organised a stage production of Noble Prize Winner for Literature, Luigi Pirandello's novel "La Giara" for Brisbane audience.

Sponsored by Multicultural Affairs Queensland, the event provided Brisbane theatre aficionados and the general community with the opportunity to engage and appreciate an internationally recognised literary work.

INTERNS

In September 2012, students from Ca` Foscari University, Venice, began a 3 month internship with Co.As.It.- ILC, engaging in many areas across the various divisions of the organization.

Exposing students to contemporary and colloquial Italian, the students created and delivered many presentations to schools in Brisbane and North Queensland on aspects of Italian culture.

Of particular interest to the pupils were the celebrations of traditional Italian events eg. Carnevale and Italian National Day which they later planned and implemented in the schools.



Italian language teaching

Italian
language
teaching

The ILC promotes the study and appreciation of the Italian language and culture.

Adult Italian language students

304

After Hours students

80

Playgroup students

36

Private language students

34

Child Care Centre students

40

Total students within primary and secondary state and catholic schools

15,000

ILC

The ILC - Italian Language Centre is a division of Co.As.It.

The 2012/2013 financial year has seen the ILC and its programs develop and grow through the close collaboration of its staff members.

Numerous programs operate at different levels and classes are implemented various configurations, viz. playgroups, within child care centres; insertion classes in primary and secondary schools; after school hours; adult and private lessons.

Reduced funding from the Italian government has necessitated a restructuring of the ILC but it still contributes to the Italian language programs delivered in Primary and Secondary Schools throughout the State with a total of 15,000 students learning Italian.

The Italian Language Centre also supports Italian language programs within Catholic, State and Independent schools by:

- sourcing didactic materials;
- disseminating information on events promoting Italian language and culture
- contributing towards costs related to the Italian language programs.

Memorandums of Understanding were re-negotiated late in 2012 to formalise funding contributions in 2013 with:

- Brisbane Catholic Education Office
- Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns and Townsville
- North Lakes State College
- A select number of schools eligible to receive annual contributions





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2012/2013, ILC provided support and opportunities for teachers of Italian to maintain their language proficiency and cultural competency through five professional training sessions organised with support from the Italian Consulate 's (Adelaide) Italian Education Advisor Dott.ssa Ignazia Nespolo who also presented PD sessions in Brisbane.

In Cairns and Townsville, professional development was delivered by Dr Sonia Schleuter, Lecturer at James Cook University.

GRAPHIC COMPETITIONS

To celebrate the "XII Settimana della Lingua Italiana nel Mondo 2012" the ILC launched its Graphic Competition with the theme "L'italia dai Territori al Futuro".

Winning entries were publicly displayed on the occasion of the Studitalia 2012 Awards ceremony held at the Department of Education, Training and Employment offices in October 2012.

The Christmas Graphic competition was open to all students of Italian from Prep to year 7.

Hundreds of entries were received and deserving winners were awarded certificates, medals and lolly-filled Christmas stockings.



SPEECH COMPETITIONS 2012

Always a highlight of the school academic calendar, each year, students of Italian compete in highly attended Speech Competitions that showcase linguistic competency.

Co.As.It. /ILC is proud to support these events regularly held in Brisbane by the Brisbane Catholic Education Office; in Townsville and Cairns organised by the Catholic Education Services Dioceses and at the University of the Sunshine Coast, in collaboration with the Multicultural Language Teachers Association Queensland (MLTAQ).



Studitalia 2012

ILC continued its collaboration with the Department of Education, Training and Employment.

Annually students of Italian across the State compete in a scholarship competition that culminates in winning a month-long trip to Italy and the opportunity to attend an Italian college in Cividale del Friuli (Udine).





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