



in this edition:

- doll and stuffed animal therapy
- a new form of id
- wanted: aged care home for a parrot
- a new website for ilc
- and much more.

OUR VISION

To be a leader in the provision of quality, accessible and affordable community care services for the general and CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) communities.

OUR VISION

To be the focal point in Queensland for the promotion and study of the Italian language and culture.



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I hope this latest edition of Insieme finds you well and provides you with some distraction from the ongoing updates on Covid 19 restrictions.

We have been fortunate so far in Queensland as the Health Department has been vigilant and responsive in managing the small number of cases. However we do have to appreciate the difficulties faced by Victoria and its community during their lockdown period.

The pandemic is almost like a war.

However, we are still able to survive: we have running water, electricity, and access to federal government support, either financially or medically.

Many other countries, especially developing nations, are profoundly disadvantaged and our hopes and prayers go to all who cannot even get the basic human rights of food, water, shelter and health care.

This edition brings you up to date with our activities and how we have been able to best support our clients in making a difference in their daily lives.

We have kept in touch with people who have been isolating at home and provided support, information and/or access to particular services.

Co.As.It. staff is still at the frontline, and as a service provider, we are continuing to deliver services according to our Covid-19 processes, ensuring that clients and staff remain as healthy as possible by adhering to all the safety precautions.

This has protected and kept everyone safe and we will continue to be responsive at all times.

Our Clinical Team Leader is on-call to respond to clients and staff, ensuring that services are not undertaken if either client or staff is not well.

We are here to help, never hesitate to call us or pass on our contact to anyone else you feel may be struggling and would benefit from our support.

Keep safe and healthy.

Dina Ranieri

FIGHTING COVID AND HELPING OUT

THE NEED TO ENSURE THEY TOO CAN SURVIVE AWAY FROM THEIR HOMES AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES DURING THIS CRITICAL TIME HAS GENERATED WIDE SUPPORT THROUGHOUT OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY.

The CISS Program has been waging its own little battle against the impact of Covid and has been supporting International students, (predominantly Spanish-speaking) who have been stranded in Australia due to the pandemic.

With the loss of their jobs, many of which were in hospitality, these students are experiencing financial hardship since they do not qualify for government support. The need to ensure they too can survive away from their homes and support structures during this critical time has generated wide support throughout our local community.

Our CISS Officer Cintia Paolino created a connection page on Facebook called CISB (Connecting International Students Brisbane) and via the use of this page, we became aware of the 'Collect and Go Meals' being provided by Riverlife Church to international students in Brisbane who were

in financial hardship. Over three Sundays in July, these students were able to collect free meals from the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, a basic yet much needed service.

Grace, our Marketing and Promotions Officer was able to attend on one of these weekends and met with Robyn Robertson, the organiser of the free meal initiative, who said her church Riverlife had created financial support for hundreds of international students.

Aside from connecting local international students to practical support services, the CISS program is also continuing its webinar series for international students with valuable and current information and support, information that, Australia wide, has reached over 70,000 Spanish speaking Facebook users.

THE WEBINAR IS SHARED WEEKLY WITH THE FOLLOWING FACEBOOK GROUPS AND THEIR MEMBERS:

COLOMBIANOS EN BRISBANE (24,032)
AUSTRALIA COLOMBIANOS EN SYDNEY (20,273)
AUSTRALIA CHILENOS EN MELBOURNE (16,505)
COLOMBIANOS EN AUSTRALIA (6,661)
CONNECTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BRISBANE (3,077)



AN APP A DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY

STUDIES BY AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS DONE IN 2007 SHOWED THAT ONE IN FIVE PEOPLE BETWEEN THE AGE OF 16 TO 85 EXPERIENCE ONE OF THE COMMON FORMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS (ANXIETY, AFFECTIVE OR MOOD DISORDERS, AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS) IN ANY ONE YEAR.



Fruit lovers, we don't mean an apple (although that also works), we mean a mobile 'App' on your telephone, and yes it can keep you away from going to doctors. Our smart phones now have so many apps that they can monitor our physical and mental health, seriously.

Sounds alarming doesn't it? Please wait while I check my new app to see if I am stressed about this!

Studies by Australian Bureau of Statistics done in 2007 showed that one in five people between the age of 16 to 85 experience one of the common forms of mental illness (anxiety, affective or mood disorders, and substance use disorders) in any one year. So if we can learn to deal with these ourselves, we are doing well. Let's look at the apps available below.

There are phone apps designed to help users understand the physical symptoms of stress and anxiety, they measure your heart rate and encourage breathing to help lower our heart rate.

An app called **worrytime** is based on CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) and sets aside specific time/s to deal with worries. Basically it is empowering the user to DECIDE on a time and place to deal with worries which are then safely stored away and the user can get back to the present and on with their day. <https://au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/reachout-worrytime>

The **MoodMission** app helps you learn new and better ways of coping with low moods and anxiety. Tell MoodMission how you are feeling and it will

give you a tailored list of 5 missions that can help you feel better. Missions are activities and mental health strategies that are quick, easily achievable, and backed up by scientific evidence. <https://au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/moodmission>

Want to learn how to meditate? Hop into an app called **GiantMind** that teaches meditation in 12 days with one instruction per day. A softly spoken gentleman guides the user through to the end and you can find this app here: <https://au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/1-giant-mind>

Beat Panic is another app that teaches you to deal with panic attacks. Beat Panic is designed to help you cope with panic attacks or anxiety while you're out and about. It uses a series of flash cards in soothing colours to help you focus, slow your breathing, reduce your heart rate and release tension. <https://au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/beat-panic>



PROPELLING THE SHIFT IN TERMINOLOGY

A CASUAL MISUSE OF WORDS OR THE USE OF WORDS WITH NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS WHEN TALKING ABOUT DEMENTIA IN EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONS CAN HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT ON THE PERSON WITH DEMENTIA AS WELL AS ON THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.



The old adage “Sticks and stones can break my bones but words can never harm me” is today recognised as being completely untrue.

In our last edition we read about the power of words and their impact on us.

With the number of people living with dementia and cognitive impairment increasing, there has been a positive shift in the words we use to communicate with, about and to people with dementia.

Dementia Australia has propelled the shift in terminology, identifying that people living with cognitive impairment are often inappropriately stigmatized, excluded and treated in ways that have negative repercussions. A casual misuse of words or the use of words with negative connotations when talking about dementia in everyday conversations can have a profound impact on the person with dementia as well as on their family and friends.

It can also influence how others think about dementia and increase the likelihood of a person with dementia experiencing stigma or discrimination.

It should be noted that there are many different forms of dementia, each with its own cause. Senile dementia is an outdated term that used to be used when it was thought that memory loss or other cognitive impairment was a normal part of ageing rather than being caused by specific types of disorders of the brain.

The following terms/phrases are preferred when talking about a person with dementia:

- A person/people with dementia
- A person/people living with dementia
- A person/people with a diagnosis of dementia

The following terms/phrases should not be used:

- Sufferer
- Victim
- Demented person
- He/she's an attention seeker
- An onion with the layers peeling away
- Inmates (referring to people with dementia in care facilities)
- Losing him/her or someone who has lost their mind
- Slang expressions that are derogatory, for example, delightfully dotty, away with the fairies, got a kangaroo loose in the back paddock, a couple of cents short
- ‘They’ (talking about all people with dementia rather than the individual)
- Patient (when used outside the medical context)
- Subject
- Vacant dement
- He/she's fading away or disappearing
- Empty shell
- Not all there
- Dements
- Afflicted
- Offenders, absconders or perpetrators
- Dementing illness

Why?

Many of the terms listed are demeaning and derogatory. Terms such as ‘sufferer’ and ‘victim’ contribute to the stigma surrounding dementia and ‘demented person’ places the condition before the person.

Using the terms person/people with dementia or person/people living with dementia maintains the dignity of the person, emphasises that they are a person first and does not place judgements on the individual because they have dementia.

DOLL AND STUFFED ANIMAL THERAPY

THE ANIMALS WILL NUZZLE, MAKE SOUNDS AND EVEN TURN ON THEIR TUMMIES FOR BELLY RUBS. THE DOLLS CAN CRY, HICCUP, MOVE THEIR HEADS AND ARMS AND BOTH ARE DESIGNED TO BE AS CLOSE TO THE REAL THING AS POSSIBLE.

There has been a lot of discussion around doll and stuffed animal therapy for people living with cognitive impairment because it can be seen as demeaning and patronising but if one looks at the studies and the anecdotal evidence of the happiness these items bring to people, the discussion would stop in its tracks.

The nurturing instinct is strong in humans, and it is this instinct that is the reason why doll and stuffed animal therapy is so effective.

Studies have shown that people with Alzheimer's show reduced aggression and anxiety, improved communication, reduced wandering and agitated behaviour and are generally happier and more settled in their environment.

We are talking about the new aged responsive dolls and animals that respond to being patted. Baby dolls and simulated animals can respond to stimulus provided by the user with a series of in-built behavioural responses.

The animals will nuzzle, make sounds and even turn on their tummies for belly rubs. The dolls can cry,

hiccup, move their heads and arms and both are designed to be as close to the real thing as possible.

The best part is that there is no real need for feeding, bathing, changing or taking the animal out... all they need are regular changes of batteries to allow them to continue to respond to the user.

Studies show that just fifteen minutes spent bonding with a doll or animal (even if it has batteries) promotes the release of endorphins in the brain, producing a calming effect, reducing blood pressure and improving overall cardiovascular health.

Two of our clients were introduced to the responsive cat and dog series and it was a joy to see our clients' reactions.

Jean was delighted by her ginger cat but Rosanna was over the moon when she met her new puppy that she called Chico!

So much joy and so much happiness cannot be wrong. For more information or to purchase these devices go to <https://www.dementiashop.com.au/>



PLACES AVAILABLE IN OUR PROGRAM!

Are you under 65 years of age and live with a long term disability, chronic illness, mental illness or other condition that affects your daily living and your active participation in your community?

We know that your independence is important, so this program may help you for a short period of time until you feel able to carry on by yourself.

We help clients when it is hard to do grocery shopping and then have to carry heavy packages home if they can't drive - we can do this for them and drop the shopping off to them at home.

Feel like you can't venture out by yourself? Everything is loud, confusing and disorienting, can't quite remember which form of public transport to use, we can be there to reassure you along the way.

Have you been depending on takeaways because you just don't have the energy to make a meal - we are good at cooking, we'll come and prepare healthy meals at your place, ready to eat whenever you need them.

There is not much we cannot do - but we need to know you need us - so if you would like a little support during Covid or just because you are not managing well on your own at the moment, let us know.

Bridget is at our office every day and she enjoys working out how to make life easier for her clients, so give her a call on 3624 6100.



A FANTASTIC SERVICE FOR A BETTER LIFE

The purpose of the Commonwealth Government's Home Care Packages (HCP) is to enable people to remain living in their own homes for as long as possible.

Current Home Care Package clients Ross and Chris Sutherland are extremely grateful for the services they receive and the fact that all of their needs can be met by one provider.

Ross has a level 4 package and that allows him to access in-home services for personal care, wound care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and 3-monthly wellbeing checks.

Co.As.It. has facilitated equipment hire and purchases including an adjustable bed and specialised mattress, hoist and sling, a purpose-built shower chair and treatment chair, as well as

handrails and minor bathroom modifications in the interest of safety.

All of these services are coordinated by an efficient and caring team that place the clients at the centre of care.

Ross receives two services daily to hoist him in and out of bed and transfer him to and from his electric wheelchair, shower him and prepare him for the day/evening.

Chris is on a level 2 package, awaiting a higher level. She currently accesses carer respite, transport to her local shopping centre and social support, domestic assistance and taxi vouchers.

For further information about Co.As.It.'s HCP services, please call 3624 6100.



A NEW FORM OF ID

As older people lose their driver's license and many don't have passports nor other forms of ID, proving their identity can get a little tricky.

Queensland has recently updated its Photo Identification Card for anyone aged 15 years and over who do not have other forms of ID.

This card replaces the Adult Identification Card that was phased out in April 2019.

One of our staff recently heard a client express his concern that after having handed in his driver's licence, he no longer had a valid photo ID document. Thankfully, this staff member was aware of the card's existence.

Valid for 10 years at a cost of \$71, it is an ideal form of identification for people without a licence or passport and it is easy to acquire through the Transport and Motoring Service Centre, Police station, online or mail.

For more information you can refer to:
<https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/licensing/proof-of-age>

UNA NUOVA FORMA DI RICONOSCIMENTO

A seguito del ritiro della patente - cosa che succede a molti anziani - provare la propria identità può diventare un problema, soprattutto per quelli che non si trovano in possesso di un passaporto valido.

Il governo del Queensland ha apportato di recente alcune modifiche alla Photo Identification Card, disponibile per chiunque abbia più di 15 anni senza altre forme di identificazione.

Il documento sostituisce la Adult Identification Card, caduta in disuso nell'aprile dello scorso anno.

Un membro del nostro personale è venuto al corrente dei problemi che affliggevano un nostro cliente che si era trovato di recente senza più la patente e senza passaporto. Fortunatamente era al corrente dell'esistenza della Photo Identity card e siamo quindi riusciti a risolvere il problema.

Valida per 10 anni e con un costo relativamente basso (\$71), è un valido ed efficace strumento di identificazione per tutti coloro che non hanno passaporto o patente. Il documento si ottiene facilmente contattando la Motorizzazione, la polizia, l'ufficio postale o anche, volendo, online.

*Per ulteriori informazioni:
<https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/licensing/proof-of-age>*



ACTIVITIES DURING COVID



Although Covid restrictions have meant that we stay away from each other as much as possible, some of our clients have been turning their hand to more practical activities that they can do at home.

Long term client Alfio Maccaronio was walking in his local area when he came across a timber shelf discarded on the footpath. Recycling and repurposing has been a trait for many of our older people well before it became fashionable.

Who remembers their grandparents putting olives in the used butter kerning container? Or using empty beer bottles to preserve home-made tomato sauce? As it was just too good a shelf to leave to

the weather, he took it home where he considered what new purpose he could give it. It wasn't long before it emerged as a strong plant stand that Alfio and his wife Connie have filled with healthy, colourful plants.

He is very proud of his magnificent passion fruit vine and his orchids and has even created a lizard home for the little reptiles in his garden.

Alfio has been a carer for Connie for many years but he still finds time to create, redesign and repurpose many articles that have reached their use by date as well as create a beautiful garden that they both enjoy.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

How many times have we all wracked our brains trying to come up with solutions to everyday issues?

How to reach the top shelf without dragging out the ladder? Guaranteed, there are many of us who will stand on a chair rather than make that extra little effort to grab the ladder. We know you're out there!

What is worse and frustrating, is how often we rely on complicated solutions when often the simplest one is staring at us and we just cannot see it!

Just as well that at Co.As.It. we have some pretty good lateral thinkers who with a little ingenuity make a big difference to many of our clients. Our Allied Health professionals have helped so many of our clients with the easiest of strategies.

Phyllis, (a Home Care Package client) was one of the people who benefitted from our Allied Health team's simple yet effective solution to her difficulties.

Phyllis struggled every day to get into and out of bed and her husband became essential if she was to do this safely. It was impossible without her husband, he had to support and lift her legs for her.

This not only reduced her independence, it also placed strain and responsibility on her husband. When her Community Services Coordinator saw their dilemma she called in an Occupational Therapist to see what could be done.

You are all imagining the need for a hoist or for care staff or other costly and complicated support structures. After reviewing their situation, the Occupation Therapist merely recommended they reduce the height of the bed legs.

Phyllis was able to regain her mobility without relying on her husband and the quality of life for both has been such a bonus. So simple, so user friendly and so cost effective!

Let's hope that bed was not an antique!



AGE DOES NOT MATTER

Our lovely 96 year old client Rina Venier has lived a long life, has worked hard, looked after her house and family and is still living independently at home.

Rina has endured many years of shoulder pain due to a curvature in her spine. Following a bad fall last year, she was afraid of falling again and she wanted better balance and less shoulder pain.

Although Rina's English is limited, working with one of our physiotherapists, together they designed a home exercise program that she has been following for over seven months. The change has been dramatic.

Rina says she is feeling much stronger and is now able to walk on her verandah without her walking stick. More importantly, Rina's shoulder pain is almost gone, her arms are stronger and she can now lift her kettle using only one hand.

Better still, at 96, she is saying she has more energy than she had last year. Physio has worked remarkably well for her and she is delighted with her extra autonomy!

Physio can help people of any age, you are never too old to benefit from physiotherapy, as Rina's experience shows.



L'ETÀ NON CONTA

Rina Venier, che ha raggiunto la veneranda età di 96 anni, ha lavorato sodo, ha curato la casa e la famiglia e ancora oggi vive indipendentemente a casa propria.

Rina ha purtroppo sofferto per anni dei forti dolori alla spalla, causati da una curvatura della spina dorsale. L'anno scorso ha subito una brutta caduta e ha vissuto da allora con la paura che l'incidente potesse ripetersi e sperando sempre in un migliore equilibrio e in meno dolore.

Nonostante la sua limitata padronanza dell'inglese, Rina ha lavorato con la nostra fisioterapista per creare un programma di esercizi da svolgere a casa che Rita sta seguendo ormai da più di sette mesi. I cambiamenti sono stati a dir poco incredibili.

Rina ci dice che si sente più forte e che adesso è in grado di camminare in veranda senza il bisogno del bastone. Quello che conta di più però è che il dolore è quasi del tutto sparito, le sue braccia hanno più forza e Rina può di nuovo alzare lo scaldacqua con una mano sola.

Ma meglio ancora è che Rina si sente più forte adesso rispetto ad un anno fa. Il programma di fisioterapia ha funzionato benissimo e Rina, nel pieno dei suoi 96 anni, si sta godendo appieno la sua ritrovata - e migliorata - autonomia.

La fisioterapia, come è stato dimostrato dall'esempio di Rina, funziona a qualsiasi età.



CHOKING: A HORRIBLE EXPERIENCE



Ever taken a bite of food and somehow you choke on it? It is a harrowing experience for both the sufferer and the observer. Choking happens to lots of people, one way or another, with varying degrees of severity.

Look at these startling facts on choking:

- More than 80 people die each year of choking in Australia
- Choking is the second largest cause of death in aged care
- Choking is 30 times higher risk in schizophrenic patients than in the general population
- In America it is the 4th cause of accidental death in older persons and children

(source: www.lifevac.com.au).

In Australia, nearly 11 million older people are at risk from choking due to age or condition.

This happened recently to Tommaso* one of our clients. Had it not been for a routine clinical visit from our nurse Kerrie, he might not have survived his choking episode. When Kerrie arrived she found Tommaso in the kitchen choking and unable to breathe or speak.

Kerrie's timely intervention in helping to dislodge the blockage saved him from serious trouble. To avoid future risks, Tommaso has now been referred for specialist investigation into his ability to swallow.

So what should we be doing to minimise the risk of choking?

- Cut food into small pieces
- Slowly, thoroughly chew food before swallowing
- Do not laugh or talk whilst swallowing
- If you have consumed excessive alcohol, do not eat

Are you assisting an adult with feeding?

- Sit the person in an upright position, not prone
- If the person is bedridden, raise the head
- Adjust the size of the snacks and the feeding speed to the tolerance of the person
- Avoid pushing or forcing food
- Alternate between solids and liquids
- Vary the placement of food in the person's mouth, e.g. if the person has muscle weakness in the right part of the mouth, feed from the left
- Determine the density that the individual tolerates best

In the event of choking:

- Slap it out: lean the person forward and give 4 or 5 solid blows on their back between the shoulder blades
- Squeeze it out: stand behind them and wrap arms around front. Place a fist between the tummy button and chest and with the other hand pull upwards and inwards sharply 4/5 times

If this does not dislodge the blockage, call an ambulance immediately. Keep repeating back slaps and abdominal thrusting as long as needed.

**Name changed*

WANTED: AGED CARE HOME FOR A PARROT!

Did you know that pets have positive effects on our emotional and mental well-being? Many of our clients do.

Pets are stress busters, their love and devotion is tangible and they will always be there for us. Best of all, they think we are fabulous, (well, we do feed them so they may have a slight bias!)

Having an animal can help reduce stress, lower blood pressure and increase social interaction and physical activity. Pets provide other intangibles, too.

“Dogs and cats live very much in the present” says Dr. Jay P. Granat, a New Jersey-based psychotherapist. *“They don’t worry about tomorrow, which can be a very scary concept for an older person. An animal embodies that sense of here and now, and it tends to rub off on people.”* (www.aging care.com - May 2020)

It is obvious that these benefits were being enjoyed by one of our long-term clients Barry, who owns a much-loved peach faced parrot called Joe, a bird to which he is devoted. Joe is a constant companion and has provided Barry with genuine joy. Recently, after numerous falls in his home, it became evident that Barry needed extra care and could not remain living at home by himself anymore. Barry accepted his need to enter an aged care facility but he was not prepared to give up his little pet.

Our Clinical Team Leader Shaun Meakin, understood Barry’s love for Joe and set off on a mission to find an aged care home that would also accommodate a small parrot.

Thanks to Shaun’s persistence and his recognition of how important this little bird was to Barry’s well-being, both Joe and Barry have now happily moved into a wonderful facility that allows companion pets. Good sleuthing Shaun!

Stay tuned, we know our teams are creative and original, so don’t be surprised to hear about other unusual requests they solve for our clients.



You were a big help to
me and Stan from the
start to the end.

God bless you, Thank you
from our whole family.

Your thoughtfulness was
much appreciated

You are so kind and
so helpful and understanding,
Thank you for you help
on Monday, you were
so strong.

Thank you from my heart

Maria Arcic & Simic
Family

Hi Sue and Joanne

Thank you for your care, support and love
through the years. I really appreciated your help
to stay home for as long as I have and it's all
thanks to you all. Best wishes always

Jean xoxo

FEEL GOOD GOODIE BAGS



How difficult it must be for staff in aged care homes these days? With the past few months of isolation, looking for ways to help their Italian residents stay connected to family and friends must be a logistical nightmare.

Many residents do not have phones in their rooms, so calls are often short and difficult to follow if they have hearing loss.

If they live with dementia, not seeing family and visitors must be so confusing and if they lack English language skills, how do you communicate what is happening in the outside world?

There are a high number of Italian residents at Regis Aged Care Lutwyche and with the staff's help, recently, Co.As.It. was able to deliver some colourful, cheerful posters for the residents. They brought so much delight to the elderly there.

Regis was quick to reciprocate this kindness with one of their own - generously providing gift bags for Co.As.It. clients that included knitted scarves, beanies, sanitisers, games, candles, toiletries and

adult colouring books as well as notepads and mini food samples.

These goodie bags were specifically for clients on a Home Support or Home Care package who lived alone and whose support lived more than an hour's drive from them.

Clients were advised about the forthcoming gift bags and one of the clients was so keen to receive his that he was found waiting expectantly on the street for its delivery.

Delivery of the goodie bags also allowed staff to check on clients. One 94 year old lady who expressed she was concerned about falling in the shower was able to be reassured by organising a care worker to be in attendance in case she needs assistance.

The clients were thankful and delighted with the goodie bags from Regis and we thank them for their generosity.

Nothing like a free sample bag to give you a lift!

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS!



With all of the changed behaviours necessary to stay safe during this pandemic, it does make you feel a little like Alice in Wonderland - everything familiar has changed, newfangled communication is surprising our elderly and we have had to adapt to a new environment.

The CVS staff have had many meetings networking with other CVS organisations about the impact of social distancing on the elderly. Much brainstorming took place and we began to share ideas and have to think creatively for strategies to stay connected that were outside the box.

We encouraged our volunteers to write letters and cards to the elderly friend they visit as well as telephoning and where possible even video calling.

One of our volunteers, Rosa Simonetta, wrote a letter in Italian to her friend at Regis Aged Care. Luisa Ruggiero, our CVS Program Officer, made arrangements with the lifestyle coordinator for

the resident and the volunteers to see each other through a visiting window (does it remind you of Alice yet?) at the aged care home. Rosa brought along her letter and held it up on the window for the resident to read. The big smile on Antonietta Garcia's face - former CVS volunteer and now a resident at Regis Aged Care - was vibrant.

They then proceeded to speak on the phone to each other through the pane of glass.

Another of our volunteers, Teresa Faraone, commenced telephone visiting a new friend in aged care during COVID-19 - they had never met in person. This soon evolved into a looking glass meet-up when Luisa also arranged for them to see each other through the window for the first time.

In a positive way, strategizing different forms of contact has created new experiences for our elderly. Without Covid restrictions, we wouldn't have thought of looking glass visits!

VIRTUAL VISITING

With restrictions still in place, like everyone, it has been a virtual reality for CVS visitors and residents. We have continued to support our clients at home and the Italian residents in aged care facilities through a diverse range of contacts.

With the additional support of funds from the Department of Health we have been able to purchase extra tablets for our visitors to use as well as provide more hours for our coordinators to work in this new virtual environment.

It is a challenge to try and reach older people with a technology that they would have only dreamed about in their youth. What is refreshing is that with familiarity, our older generation is starting to greatly appreciate the 'cleverness' of these devices, although they may not quite grasp how this little machine seems to know 'everything'.

The tablets have been loaded with activities, resources, access to the internet, and Skype has added a face to the telephone calls.

When the clock struck midnight on 31st December 2019, not many people had heard of the Zoom app but in just over three months it has become a

household name and a main form of communication and connection for many families, friends and businesses alike.

Our very first CVS Volunteer virtual zoom information meeting was held on 27 May.

Co.As.It. Counsellor Laura Panarello spoke about topics which included 'effective telephone communications' and 'telephone call strategies' with the 14 volunteers who participated.

The volunteers were all keen to ask Laura questions in relation to changing from their physical visits to telephone calls and how these might impact on their friends.

We did miss the social café environment of our usual meetings at Dolce Saponi which included a barista coffee and delicious Italian sweets but we were all very happy to see each other on the Zoom app and to be able to connect.

Our first Zoom meeting was a success and when social distancing rules are relaxed we look forward to celebrating with a well-deserved morning tea and hopefully lots of hugs.



BRIDGET IS A SHINING STAR!



Since becoming an NDIS participant in August 2018, Bridget's life has been given a new focal point. Aimed at empowering participants, NDIS is a program that provides not only practical support but also encourages the maintenance of independence, encourages new experiences and supports clients to achieve their goals and aspirations.

With the support of her long-time worker Lucy, Bridget has been achieving her personal goals with completing everyday tasks. Bridget and Lucy rummage through recipes from the Better Homes and Gardens books, looking for inspiring meals they can make together. This is quite easy Bridget tells us, as *"Lucy is a great cook!"*

They check ingredients and then go shopping for whatever is missing so that they don't lose too much time getting home to try their new recipes.

During recent isolation restrictions, Bridget was looking for a new project to do. Knowing she had studied art, Lucy showed Bridget some samples of diamond beading which she really liked.

They were soon off to the art supply store to buy the required materials and after Lucy showed her the technique Bridget was so taken by her new project that she spent 25 hours completing a

beautiful fairy which she has proudly put in a frame and displays in her home. She is eagerly looking forward to starting a picture of a wolf next.

Bridget has praised her worker Lucy as a huge contributor to her current level of independence and knowledge.

"Lucy shares her knowledge with me, she teaches me how to do things and to find what I need in the right places."

Bridget is also grateful that through NDIS, she now has a new titanium prosthetic leg and foot that no longer causes her wounds and that has allowed her to return to hydrotherapy.

She is particularly excited that her new foot has a 360 rotation ankle joint which allows her to drive and move about without accidents.

The premise of the NDIS scheme is to encourage widespread inclusion of people with a disability in society, Bridget is certainly enjoying this greater participation. With support through NDIS and Co.As.It. staff, she has been empowered to transform her life and she looks forward to continuing to achieve her goals in the future.

GETTING READY..

The social activity staff in Brisbane have been busy getting organised for when the groups reopen again.

Training for staff has seen them learn about the different stages of the grieving process and how to offer support to staff and clients when a long term client passes away.

Since isolation, many of our clients obviously have not had much contact with friends, families or staff so the telephone has not seen such a renaissance revival since the phone was introduced back in the 1870s!

Coordinators have been making frequent welfare checks through phone calls to clients, effectively maintaining social connections but

more importantly checking our clients' emotional, spiritual and mental well-being.

Over the past few weeks there have been more than 1800 telephone calls logged and we have found that people do like to talk.

These calls have also screened client needs and have successfully introduced new services or increased existing services to match people's needs, have identified clients at risk of depression or anxiety and have ensured that clients know we are still in the community caring for frail and vulnerable people.

We are looking forward to having the activity groups restart - even for a small number of clients.



STAY ACTIVE WITH A COVID PLAN IN PLACE



In our last magazine, you may recall that we had started gentle exercise classes with our Physiotherapist Leonie Poole at Kalinga.

The classes were very popular and participants were really happy to be able to join an exercise group that catered specifically for their age and ability. Regrettably, the exercise group had to be stopped because of Covid.

Even though the exercises continued in their homes (at least we hope they did), our participants were delighted to hear that once restrictions were eased, we were able to restart the group class.

Following requests from our clients and the community on Brisbane's south, we also initiated a

new exercise group at the Coorparoo School of Arts which runs on a Friday afternoon.

Thanks to the support of the local Councillor Mr. Joe Kelly and the facility committee, we have been able to use the facility at an affordable price.

However, we have had to be stringent with our Covid safety precautions at both sites.

With well over 20 keen exercisers attending each class and a long waiting list of people wishing to come along, we need to ensure that our screening of attendees is practiced diligently at every session.

We wish to thank all of our exercise participants for their understanding and their patience as we



ask them the same questions about Covid every week, as we screen their previous week's activities, measure their temperature each time and record their names and contact details.

It is a necessary but lengthy process.

Thanks to the willingness of one of our CVS volunteers John Mazza, we have been able to engage his energy and support in helping to organize the running of the Coorparoo group.

John assists Leonie in setting up the exercise equipment, putting it away and generally helping Leonie disinfect every surface that is touched at the end of the group, including taps, door handles, exercise equipment chairs etc.

We wish there was another volunteer like John at Kalinga to do the same!

The groups are still running at the moment but we keep tuned into the Covid situation and should there be any increased risk we will advise the members.

If you are wishing to join, please call Eden on 3624 6100 to place your name on the list.

We look forward to getting into better shape with you!

THE WAY WE WERE



After closing our South Coast Activity Centre in mid-March due to the pandemic, a little peek at the last activities we did reminds us how vital these social get togethers were for our clients.

There was never a day that something interesting wasn't happening.

Among some of our more memorable ones we had the Japanese ladies who danced the 'Hula' for us and performances by the Trembling Trio who shone on stage singing Australian ditties and Slim Dusty songs, to outing, picnics and bowling competitions.

There was always something to look forward to and our frequent contact with our clients by phone told us they eagerly awaited the lifting of restrictions so they could return.

Instead of regretting the closure of our groups, we have taken a positive attitude and incorporated training on the new Covid safety measures and we have been busy renovating the centre so that when groups resume they will be delighted with the refreshed bathrooms and an upgrading of the kitchen area. These have been completed now and they look lovely!

In compliance with the COVID-19 roadmap for Queensland we reopened our Centre in mid July, adopting all of the recommended COVID safe precautions.

The clients did indeed love the renovations! These recommendations included displaying COVID-19 posters, 1.5m distancing, floor decals, and non-contact hand sanitisers everywhere.



Additionally, we adopted intensive cleaning and sanitising practices for our Centre and buses.

Before clients enter the centre, we complete pre-entry screening questionnaires and use non-touch thermometers to take the clients' temperatures.

We have also integrated new procedures for staff. All staff had to receive the flu vaccination and complete the COVID safe online training with special online training for any care workers transporting clients by bus.

Our staff was also trained on individually serving food and drinks and the removal of share platters, water jugs, seasonings etc. Where possible, clients download the Covid app and we ensure there are only a limited number of clients inside the Centre.

The social groups function quite differently now, we have had to half the number of participants due to space restrictions and the groups run once a fortnight instead of weekly, but they still provide much needed social and recreational contact for our clients. This is particularly true for our clients with cognitive impairment, many of whom cannot understand why they are unable to hug or touch people they have missed.

They do not always understand why a distance needs to be maintained and whilst it was not easy in the beginning, clients now understand we are maintaining these restrictions for everyone's safety and wellbeing. They are appreciative of our efforts and happy they can socialise, even though it is with different rules.

THE REAL POWER OF AN ENDURING POWER OF ATTORNEY

When our South Coast Manager Mariel Fluttert met Elfrieda in 2017, she was 90 years of age and had just defiantly marched out of an aged care facility where, without her consent, she had apparently been assigned a room.

As soon as Elfrieda realised that she had been expected to move in on a permanent basis, her fierce independent spirit came to the fore. Although very frightened, she contacted the Police to ensure she would not be forced to go back to the facility.

Elfrieda's solicitor has an Enduring Power of Attorney (EPOA) and following recommendations from medical staff, he was acting in what he considered to be her best interest by placing her in a nursing home. While a little frail, Elfrieda had no cognitive impairment, was still mobile and even able to use public transport on her own.

Elfrieda had no intention of going into aged care. However, she was very worried that her solicitor could force her to do so, something that the Police assured her could not happen because she had full capacity to make her own decisions. In other words as long as she was mentally able to function well, the EPOA couldn't be enforced.

With our support through her Home Care Package, Elfrieda was able to remain at home where she still lives today. We now provide support 6 days a week with medication management, domestic assistance, shopping and meal preparation. When her solicitor

tried to change over her provider recently, this spritely 93 year old firmly advised she was not swapping her Co.As.It. care staff for anyone.

On occasion, Elfrieda still uses the bus to do her shopping and all of the shop assistants know her. Despite her age she still loves being a social butterfly!

NB: Two important things to note are that a General Power of Attorney ceases to operate if the principal dies or loses the mental capacity to make their own decisions and a General Power of Attorney does not authorise the attorney to make health or lifestyle decisions for the principal. In contrast with a General Power of Attorney, an Enduring Power of Attorney continues to operate after the principal has lost the mental capacity to make her or his own decisions.



SHIRLEY



Our client Shirley has endured many issues with her sight during her lifetime, and being legally blind, she struggles to do many tasks independently.

However, she is always searching for new options to assist her in managing her vision impairment and improving her quality of life. Her limited sight affects her in many small yet challenging ways.

Making a telephone call, writing text messages or finding contacts on her mobile was frustratingly difficult for her and she often required her husband's help for reading.

A few weeks ago Shirley found a device that she felt would be of great benefit to her and she shared her idea with her Home Care Package Coordinator.

She was concerned though that the cost of this expensive technology was not easily affordable for her. When the Coordinator heard about her new idea, she advised her that since this technology was

going to benefit her day to day living, it could be purchased through her Home Care Package funds. Shirley was elated.

It wasn't long before a voice-activated smart hub and mobile phone for vision impaired people were installed in her home. These have literally changed her life. Working on voice recognition, the device provides access to all forms of communication, such as text messages, emails, finding contacts, making phone calls and many others functions that she is discovering day by day.

Shirley is now able to socialise, communicate and network with family and friends whenever she wants and does not have to rely on her husband.

With our support and through her Home Care Package, Shirley is enjoying the benefits this technology has brought to her and has confidence in undertaking many more administrative tasks on her own.

RICCIOLI D'ORO E LA BELLA LINGUA

The After School Italian classes enjoyed an end-of-semester celebration. Teachers Franca Cerniglia and Paola Giannini taught “la bella lingua” through the theme “Riccioli d’oro” (Goldilocks).

During the last lesson, parents were invited to a small performance showcasing the songs students learned during semester 1.

Displaying their “orsi” masks, students delighted the assembled audience with their action songs.

Certificates and mementoes created by Cintia Paolino were handed out to proud students.



BOOK CLUB ITALIANO EVER MORE POPULAR

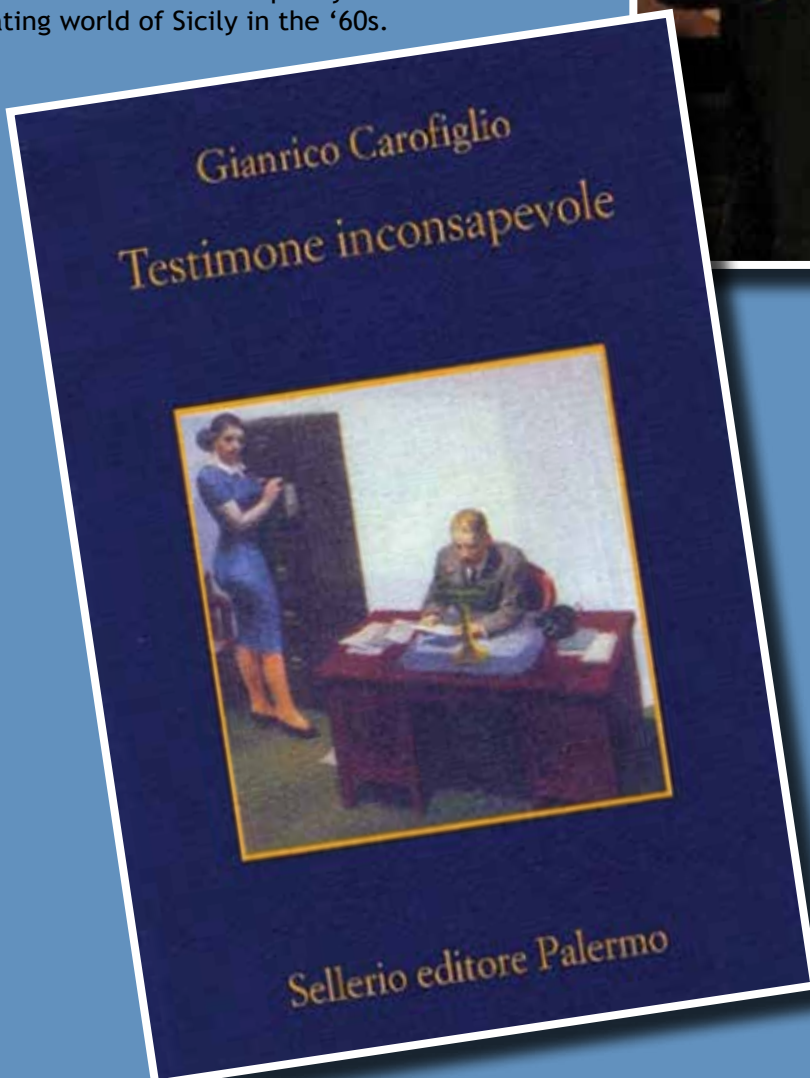
Attending Book Club Italiano is a fine way to improve mastery of “la bella lingua”.

Members of ILC’s Book Club Italiano have been improving their Italian this last semester, meeting fortnightly in Term 1 to discuss “La Relazione” by Andrea Camilleri.

With lockdown, Term 2 Book Club Italiano resumed via Zoom with the novel “Testimone inconsapevole” by Gianfranco Carofiglio.

Since the easing of restrictions, Term 3 Book Club Italiano meetings will return face-to-face. The book to be discussed is a graphic novel “La Mennulara” by Simonetta Agnello Hornby, beautifully illustrated by Massimo Fenati.

Join the September meetings to read, discuss and enjoy the expressive dialogue and richly detailed illustrations which will transport you to the fascinating world of Sicily in the ‘60s.



ILC
ITALIAN
LANGUAGE
CENTRE

MARKING THE END OF SEMESTER 1

ILC ends the semester in celebratory style! It has been a momentous Semester 1 at ILC with classes commencing face-to-face in February and then having to change to online via Zoom and finally back face-to-face when distancing measures were relaxed.

Due to the ongoing distancing measures however, ILC could not celebrate end-of-semester in the customary style with a “cena di fine semestre” at an Italian restaurant. Instead, in the final week 22-26 June, each morning and evening class enjoyed prosecco and “pasticcini” generously offered by management.

Certificates were awarded to deserving students and prizes to those with an unblemished attendance record!



A NEW WEBSITE FOR ILC!

The Italian Language Centre has a new website, one that allows students to peruse all Italian classes available, enrol and pay online!

Our ILC staff are delighted with the smooth transition of online enrolments, facilitating easier class organisation, resources and timetabling.

We are even happier to hear student feedback telling us that the new website is very user friendly, informative and visually appealing.

Have a look at the new website here:
<https://www.italianlanguagecentre.org/>



FOR THE LATEST UPDATE ON COVID-19 PLEASE VISIT OUR [CORONAVIRUS PAGE](#) - ILC IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS.

ILC ITALIAN LANGUAGE CENTRE

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LEARN ITALIAN AFTER SCHOOL ITALIAN GIROTONDO ITALIAN PLAYGROUP BRISBANE CORPORATE LANGUAGE TRAINING LANGUAGE IN SCHOOLS

LEARN ITALIAN FROM BEGINNER TO ADVANCED

Semester 2 has just started! A few spots left in some classes. Phone ILC on 3356 9764 to check availability

[VIEW ITALIAN CLASSES](#)

Servizi comunitari per anziani e giovani bisognosi di sostegno.

**Avete bisogno di aiuto nei lavori domestici?
Avete bisogno di aiuto per cucinare?
Volete incontrare nuovi amici?
Assistete qualcuno a domicilio e
avete bisogno di aiuto?**

Il Co.As.It. Community Services fornisce assistenza alle persone anziane e ai giovani dal 1987 e il nostro personale esperto e qualificato è capace di prestare un servizio culturalmente e linguisticamente adeguato.

La maggioranza del nostro personale è bilingue e capace di assistervi nel vostro ambiente familiare in casa vostra.

I nostri gruppi sociali offrono un pasto casalingo e la possibilità di incontrarsi con gli amici e chiacchierare dei tempi andati.

Attività di arti manuali, canzoni e balli, tombola e gite fanno parte del nostro programma giornaliero.



Contattate il nostro centro al

3624 6100

per ulteriori informazioni



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