



# insieme

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01/2022

# 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.



CO.AS.IT. COMMUNITY SERVICES LTD.

473 lutwyche road | lutwyche qld 4030  
po box 59 | albion bc qld 4010  
tel: 07 3624 6100 | fax: 07 3624 6185  
mail@coasit.asn.au | www.coasit.asn.au

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## LETTER FROM THE CEO



It was an honour to have been awarded Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Stella d'Italia for working alongside my community and representing them at every opportunity. I thank the Italian Consul Dott. Salvatore Napolitano and those who nominated me for this recognition.

As we approached the end of another challenging year we reflected on the things that mattered most to us. Our health and wellbeing continued to be the focus of our working day and the importance of family and work/ life balance was evaluated continuously.

Throughout the last 3 months we supported many in-home clients, provided social support services whilst still respecting Covid-19 restrictions and we continued our conversations and communication with the Government about how quickly could we have our staff vaccinated.

Weekly reporting of vaccination results requested by the Government saw a slow increase in vaccinated staff which has provided reassurance to our clients.

Due to the restrictions and usage of masks it was difficult to organise events but weekly computer classes, dancing and stay active classes continued with clients appreciating the social contact despite the restrictions.

We enjoyed meeting with clients and their friends at the community forum held in Chermiside where we provided valuable information on how to access support services.

They also appreciated conversations with our solicitor and Board member Cav. Tony Palella who spoke about

enduring power of attorney, wills, testaments and health directives.

More than 30 Italian language teachers participated in a PD session as well as being part of celebrations highlighting 700 years of Dante.

This was part of 'Settimana della Lingua Italiana' an event held around the world annually and promoted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It was an honour to have been awarded Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Stella d'Italia for working alongside my community and representing them at every opportunity.

I thank the Italian Consul Dott. Salvatore Napolitano and those who nominated me for this recognition.

With our borders now open and the numbers of Covid positive cases climbing, we hope that you are all safe and able to weather yet another storm of this debilitating virus.

Please remember that we are here if you need support of any kind.

*Dina Ranieri*

# REDUCING DISTRESS AND SERIOUS DISCOMFORT

The goal of these treatments was to help Moira continue with activities of daily living, decrease her pain, and to improve the ability to move and use the limb.



Moira\* an 84 year old lady was referred to our clinical team experiencing excessive swelling (lymphedema) to her lower limb that also had extensive areas of eczema and a developing leg ulcer which would not heal.

Swelling in limbs is usually evident when the lymph system is damaged or blocked. Fluid builds up in soft body tissues and causes swelling and lymphedema can cause long-term physical, psychological, and social problems for patients.

Needless to say, Moira was experiencing ongoing distress and serious discomfort.

The nursing team was able to liaise with the client's GP and the Lymphedema Clinic and collaboratively work together to provide medication, compression bandages and dressing supports which were monitored by our team regularly.

The goal of these treatments was to help Moira continue with activities of daily living, decrease her pain, and to improve the ability to move and use the limb.

Most importantly, we had to ensure that the compression bandages moved the fluid and kept it from building up.

Our regular treatments made such a positive change to Moira's conditions, and it was heartening to ease Moira's distress so much that her Coordinator emailed Moira's daughter stating that the combination treatments had brought about a tremendous improvement in her mother's condition.

Her eczema was reducing, the limb swelling had decreased and the wound was now healing.

*\*Name changed*



# MENTAL WELLNESS TEAM

## HOW TO POSITIVELY DEAL WITH CONFLICT

One of our many areas of expertise is in marital relationships and we wanted to highlight just a few behaviours that couples engage in when communication breaks down.

We saw this with one of our lovely clients Maria\* and her husband Michael\*, who was recently diagnosed with dementia.

When we first met the couple they were both using “conflict avoiding” to protect themselves from confrontation and reduce their stress.

They would often use tactics like changing the subject, stonewalling or withdrawing from the other person, waiting it out until the issue went away.

Short term, this often works well but long term, conflict avoidance can become toxic to the relationship as resentment builds about problems that have not been resolved.

With our support, encouragement and practical strategies we engaged them in active “conflict pursuing” where each person could express their needs, their feelings and work collaboratively to reach a compromise.

With positive behaviours such as effective listening, we soon saw major differences in their relationship.

By encouraging a “conflict- pursuing” marital dynamic where they engaged in listening and understanding their partner’s unmet needs, it wasn’t long before they recognised the paybacks. Marital dynamics where the other person is validated, appreciated and celebrated is always an outcome we love to see.

Maria and Michael have grown emotionally closer, are communicating better with each other and despite his dementia diagnosis, Michael’s awareness of self has deepened.

Michael has proactively validated Maria’s efforts and determination to be by his side, he has also demonstrated an eagerness as he puts it *“To make my wife aware that I do love her even if I don’t often tell her.”*

For us, such encouraging outcomes prove once again the healing power of “being heard” and how “effective listening” helps to resolve conflicts, build trust, and motivate people to improve their relationships.

If you would like to change the way you deal with conflict, we are only a telephone call away.

*\*Names changed*

Short term, conflict avoidance often works well but long term, conflict avoidance can become toxic to the relationship as resentment builds about problems that have not been resolved.



## EXERCISING TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

Ageing doesn't necessarily mean losing our function but this is a common side effect for many older people following accidents or surgery.

A few months ago, CHSP client Robyn who is 71 years old, was discharged from hospital with significant muscle wasting resulting in leg weakness.

This weakness affected her balance and she really struggled with her mobility despite using a 4-wheel walker indoors.

Combined with a fear of falling because her kitchen and outdoors had a few steps, Robyn's quality of life was poor, she felt constantly tired and her loss of autonomy was affecting her emotionally. Unable to drive, Robyn was becoming very isolated.

When we met Robyn, a wide range of therapies were suggested to her which she gladly accepted. Her first 3 months were spent participating in weekly physiotherapy sessions where each session was different as she practiced multiple ways to complete the difficult tasks.

Robyn also committed to a daily home exercise program of strengthening her muscles, improving her balance and fostering her confidence.

In just over 4 months of hard work Robyn has regained her independence. She can now access her kitchen, get out of her home safely and has started to drive herself to local appointments. Best of all, she has regained socialising and is now visiting family and friends.

Not wishing to lose this newly regained mobility, we are happy to hear that Robyn is diligently continuing her daily exercises which she enjoys.

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## OUR PEOPLE. OUR ASSETS.

### RACHEL DAVIES, CCW

My name is Rachel Davies. I am married with 2 children and this is my story.

After nearly 20 years in a processing role for a large manufacturing company, I and 18 other workers were told we were going to be made redundant. I was so upset, I didn't know which direction my life was taking. At around the same time as becoming redundant, my mum was diagnosed with vascular dementia. I was seeing her every day and doing all of her shopping, paying bills, helping with housework, taking her to appointments and looking after my own family.

When my mum was approved for a home care package, I sourced a home care provider that I felt could look after her well and soon my mum had 2 lovely care workers mainly assisting her on the days I worked. Speaking to these care workers, I realised that this could be the path for me. I was already doing it anyway for my own mum but the real lure of flexible hours was a standout for me. In my previous job I had to wake my children up at 5.30am every morning and drop them at a day care provider so I could start work at 6.30am.

I enrolled and completed a Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) - the course was heavily subsidized by the government and my out of pocket expenses were only \$99. But I was also concerned because the training college was extremely discouraging about my desire to only work during school hours. They told me I would be overlooked for someone with more availability and as such I should reconsider my options.

I persevered and after getting my qualification, I had my first job interviews in 20 years! I was successful in another interview with another provider but I believed that Co.As.It. was a well-established company and that it could provide me with continued employment. I was so happy to have been employed as a community care worker with Co.As.It.

After initially being extremely upset about becoming redundant, I am now in a role that I much prefer and enjoy. I can work during school hours, so I am able to drop off and pick up my children before and after my shifts and I thoroughly enjoy assisting my elderly clients, so they can stay in their own homes longer. I now have job satisfaction that I never felt in my previous roles and I have a job that suits my family perfectly and gives me a strong work/family balance.

I look forward to seeing my clients and I particularly enjoy the shifts that have the most interaction because I feel that I am making a difference and improving someone's day and I treat my clients as I hope my own mother is being treated. Things couldn't be better!





## ONWARDS TO THE FINISH LINE!



Than has also taken a genuine interest in learning new skills in the kitchen and he is very imaginative cook.



Tha Toe (Than) is only 20 years old and has been a participant in our NDIS program since 2018. Than and his family migrated to Australia from Myanmar (formerly Burma) in 2008.

When we started supporting him, he was a quiet student who was unsure of what the world ahead was going to offer him. We started supporting Than once a week, his support worker would help him get involved in his community by going to community events, playing basketball and volleyball, and just getting together with people his own age.

With his support workers, Than has always displayed a natural curiosity to know things and he loves to discuss his current topics, especially if he has information he can share about his areas of interest. These discussions could range from driving a car, knowledge about animals or any new topic that ignites his inquisitiveness.

He is really motivated to learn about the Australian way of life, different cultures here and how they celebrate their traditions during the year. In the midst of his constant discussions, our team of workers are keen to provide Than with as much learning and experience as possible so that he can power along autonomously.

He is excelling in their expectations of successfully using public transport and wanting to become increasingly

independent. We are happy to say that he is well on his way to achieving this goal. Than recently got involved in work experience around the city and was super excited about using the train to get there. This was a huge achievement because in the past he would have needed to be driven by his support workers.

Than has also taken a genuine interest in learning new skills in the kitchen and he is very imaginative cook, inventing new dishes like toasted cheese, vegetables and chicken curry done with pastries, *"A delicious thing"* as his CCW Kyleigh told us.

But he isn't stopping there! Than has become more confident in learning processes, how to organise his own service requests or cancellations and he is now receiving driving lessons – because his other goal is obtaining his licence.

Possessing a sound knowledge of Queensland traffic road rules, he is in constant discussion with his workers about these rules – he is probably testing their knowledge too!

We have no doubt he will soon achieve his goal of getting a licence but we are sure that he has many other things he wants to achieve in the world and we are going to be right by his side when he does!



## CIAO PROGRAM

## IL PROGRAMMA CIAO DÀ IL BENTORNATO AL NATALE

Il Programma CIAO si centra sulle celebrazioni della cultura e tradizioni italiane per i residenti in case di cura nel comprensorio di Brisbane. Per il Natale appena trascorso la St Vincent ha invitato Padre Mauro a celebrare la Santa Messa per i residenti – a causa del Covid questo non avveniva dal 2020, quindi è possibile immaginare la gioia dei residenti.

Al termine della Messa, la responsabile del programma si è incontrata con i residenti italiani per parlare del Natale e per condividere col gruppo le tradizioni ed i ricordi di giovinezza ancora vivi nella memoria.

Si è parlato delle tradizioni famigliari, dalla festa di Santa Lucia il 13 dicembre alla costruzione di presepi molto complessi in chiese e piazze, e delle processioni per i vari santi che sfilavano per le strade del paese.

Quest'anno, la storia di Santa Lucia, raccontata dalla coordinatrice, è stato il momento più bello, culminato nella distribuzione fra i presenti di santini con l'effigie della Santa.



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Lucia di Siracusa (283-304) proveniva da una facoltosa famiglia siciliana. Rinunciando alla ricchezza e al matrimonio, Lucia decise di rimanere vergine nella tradizione di Sant'Agata.

Uno spasimante ferito nell'orgoglio però la denunciò alle autorità romane, che la costrinsero a vivere in un bordello e a darsi alla prostituzione.

Secondo la leggenda, i romani fallirono nell'intento in quanto Lucia divenne praticamente inamovibile grazie alla divina provvidenza. Sempre secondo la leggenda, Lucia fu condannata al rogo, ma nemmeno le fiamme fecero effetto. La morte di Lucia arrivò quando le conficarono una spada nel collo.



# QUEENSLAND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEME

## NEW FRIENDS AND CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT



We are pleased to see she is thriving and her communication skills are improving dramatically.

Our QCSS program supports clients in reaching their goals and attaining re-ablement. We make sure that our support services are curated to match our clients' needs while we encourage them to make strong community connections that inspire inclusivity and enjoyment.

Sofia is one of our clients and her goals are participating more fully in her community and learning to speak English. In supporting Sofia in achieving these goals, her care workers help her to access shopping and other essential services, with the understanding that they all speak English to give her a chance to learn and practise her new language.

We are pleased to see she is thriving and her communication skills are improving dramatically. Sofia happily attended our Christmas social outing on the

Gold Coast where she enjoyed meeting new people and putting her learned English skills to good use!

We admit that she may have picked up some Italian too and we hope that she will continue to enjoy coming out with us often and being welcomed by her new wonderful supportive network of friends.

A lovely moment was captured of Sofia and another of our clients Fran, enjoying the festivities on the outing, and it was really rewarding to see Sofia making new friends and having a good time.

With our continued encouragement, we are going to be seeing many more photos of Sofia out and about, doing things that she enjoys, and speaking English (or maybe Italian) while she does it!



# COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT SERVICES

## FESTE GRANDI PER I NOSTRI STUDENTI

Durante lo scorso anno le attività del nostro programma sono cresciute nonostante l'ombra onnipresente del Covid. Siamo rimasti molto soddisfatti nel vedere così tanto interesse e desiderio di partecipazione da parte di così tante persone, soprattutto per quanto riguarda i frequentatori della nuova struttura del Co.As.It. a Bracken Ridge.

Nel corso dell'anno si sono tenute molte attività interessanti, come le classi settimanali di danza latino-americana e di tecnologia che si svolte in diversi centri, e abbiamo così deciso di chiudere l'anno in bellezza.

Nella prima settimana di dicembre abbiamo organizzato ben otto feste di Natale alle quali hanno partecipato gli

alunni delle classi di danza e delle classi di tecnologia. Momenti perfetti per condividere una fetta di panettone, un bicchiere di prosecco, e un buon caffè con così tanti amici e "compagni di viaggio". Ci giungono voci che i partecipanti non vedono l'ora di riprendere le attività di gruppo, e sarà nostra cura tenere informati i lettori di Insieme.

Stiamo organizzando anche una classe di danza per principianti, e vi invitiamo a contattare Cintia al 3624 6100 per informazioni e prenotazioni.

**Vi ricordiamo infine che tutte le attività una volta organizzate a Newmarket sono state spostate presso i nuovi uffici del Co.As.It. a Lutwyche.**





# COMMONWEALTH HOME SUPPORT PROGRAM

## RESPECT FOR OUR CLIENTS

We have been in the care industry for over 43 years and whilst we have to run as a business to continue to provide services, we are determined to put our clients first!

We are constantly surprised by stories of how people in the community are treated by some service providers.

We have been in the care industry for over 43 years and whilst we have to run as a business to continue to provide services, we are determined to put our clients first!

Joan, 85 years old, is one of our clients who lives alone in a retirement village and loves creating beautiful sequin art that her daughter-in-law frames for her to hang on her walls.

We have provided her with scheduled weekly domestic assistance services for the past 4 years.

During a recent review with her Coordinator she told us how eagerly she looks forward to seeing her Community Care Worker every week and that unless she has declined our assistance, we have never missed a service for her - ever.

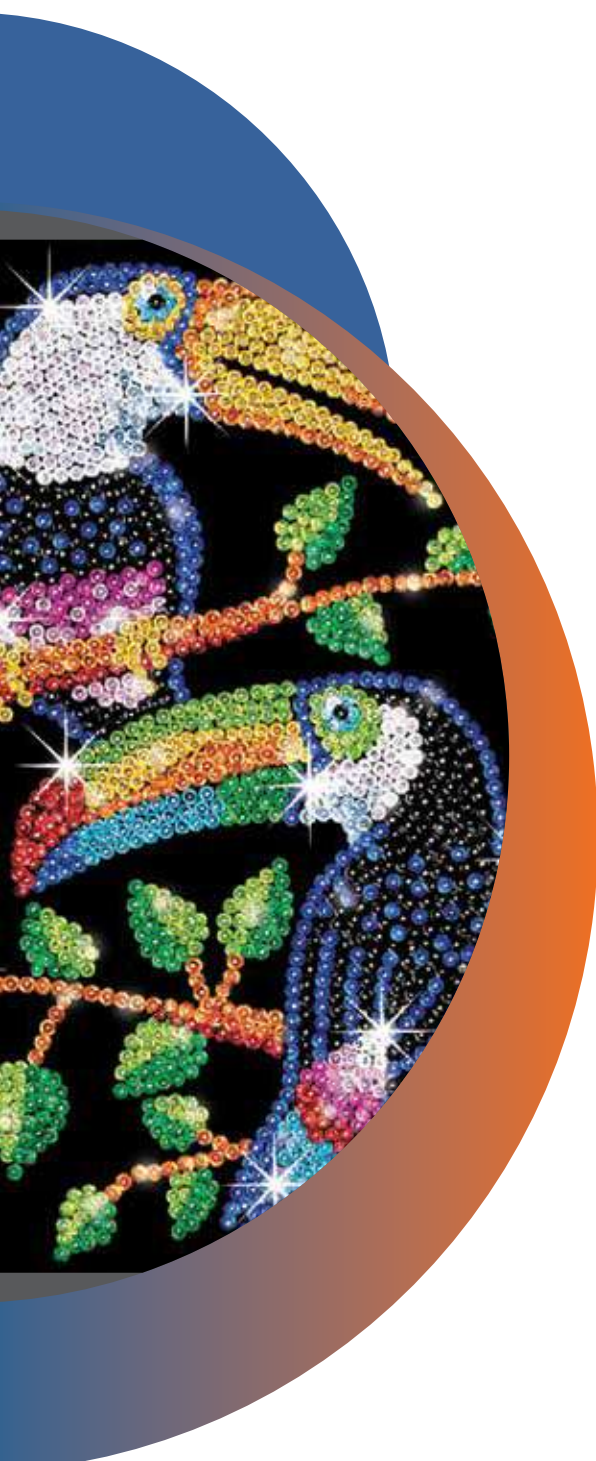
We were justifiably chuffed by her praise!

Regrettably, she told our Coordinator that her neighbour who is with another provider is never informed when her worker cannot attend and sometimes can go for months without getting any assistance nor any explanation.

These are actions that disregard the needs and ongoing care of older people and put the client's well-being at greater risk.

We take great pride in treating clients like we would our own family.

If you are aware of any person who is being treated like this by their service provider, do not hesitate to refer them on to someone else.



## AGED CARE SERVICES

### WHEN GETTING A CHRISTMAS HAMPER IS THE HIGHLIGHT OF YOUR YEAR



We wanted Robyn to have something that was finally uplifting so we arranged for her care worker Melinda to deliver a special Christmas hamper that was a lovely surprise.

We're always saddened to witness the difficulties that some people face in our community. It's even more surprising to see that the challenges that they encounter don't make them bitter or angry: they just get on with it as another obstacle they strive to overcome every day.

Robyn is a wonderful human being who cared for her mother all her life. After her mother died a few years ago, Robyn's sister unceremoniously evicted her from her forever home, forcing Robyn to rent a home for the first time in her life. We can only imagine the sorrow of not only losing her mother, but then also losing her familiar home.

Robyn tried to pick up the pieces of her life by renting in Cleveland for 12 months but this too ceased when the owners of the house put it on the market and she could not renew her lease.

Despite numerous applications, she could not find anything close by and the only place that accepted her rental application was in Coalfalls, Ipswich. Having found another home didn't mean she could finally rest easy. Robyn became our client just after her move

to Ipswich. When we first met Robyn, we saw new challenges facing her. The house has old smelly carpets and was surrounded by a paddock with long grass that was overridden with fleas. Added to those conditions, a bowed patio ceiling threatened to drop a ton of water onto her head whenever it rained heavily.

Since then, her worker Melinda has advocated to the real estate on her behalf, requesting that carpets be cleaned, pest control arranged, TV antenna fixed and that the risk of injury from the bowing patio ceiling be resolved as soon as possible, as well as having the out of control paddock grass mowed. We're happy to say that her living conditions have somewhat improved.

We wanted Robyn to have something that was finally uplifting so we arranged for her care worker Melinda to deliver a special Christmas hamper that was a lovely surprise.

With her care worker's advocacy, we aim to help Robyn enjoy life without anxiety and complications and you can be sure we will continue to try to make her life easier.



## HOME CARE PACKAGES

### HOW TO BE AN OUTSTANDING SUPPORT WORKER



Tina also used her initiative to think about activities that Barbara could undertake that were achievable and engaging for her.

Our lovely client Barbara has frontal lobe dementia which affects her behaviour and makes supporting and managing her needs very difficult at times. We have care staff however, who are absolutely devoted to providing best care for our clients, regardless of how challenging they may be when providing support for them.

Our support worker Tina thought it best to get to know Barbara well, to see what interests she had, find out about her life experiences and discover what she enjoyed doing.

Tina has been a positive influence on Barbara and her enjoyment of life has been amplified by Tina's efforts in providing activities that are fulfilling for Barbara.

Using de-escalating and distracting strategies to manage Barbara's behaviours, Tina also used her initiative to think about activities that Barbara could undertake that were achievable and engaging for her.

Barbara's grandson was turning 16, so Tina decided to gather some of her own craft supplies

to see if Barbara wanted to be involved in making a birthday card for him.

Surprisingly, Barbara became focused and concentrated on the tasks and genuinely enjoyed making the card and even made wrapping paper for his gift!

Tina sent photos of the activity to Barbara's Coordinator to let her know about Barbara's response and engagement and how the activity transformed her client's behaviour.

Since then, more craft supplies have been purchased with Barbara's Home Care Package funds and Barbara is enjoying different craft activities all the time.

Using photos of her family she is making cards, family books, doing paintings, creating Christmas decorations, designing her own jewellery, knitting, sewing, painting fingernails and toes and her list of creative achievements goes on.

Tina's willingness to see her client through her own eyes has made a huge difference to Barbara's well-being and her family is delighted in seeing Barbara so happy.



# COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME

## AN AMAZING CONCERT

We have many Italian residents living in aged care homes on the South Coast and we are always looking for ways to engage them in their Italian language and culture.

Estia Aged Care recently had a beautiful concert held by CVS volunteer Willem Fehres who entertained the residents for 2 hours with his great personality and skilful musicianship!

One Italian resident had been admitted to the facility only the day before and she was up and dancing with such excitement and rhythm in her steps that she delighted everyone in the room.

Her concerned son arrived half way through the concert to see his mother dancing and clapping and singing to the music when he had expected her to be sadly sitting

in her room wanting to be taken home! He was elated that she was adjusting to her new home well.

The happiness that Willem produced was obvious, especially with residents like the gentleman in a regency chair who was swinging his hand with vigour in time to the music even though he has limited movement.

We were so proud to see the residents clapping and cheering and we thank our lucky stars that Willem is our volunteer because his contributions to enriching the day for these residents was thrilling.

The facility's Activity Officer Ulike presented him with a hand-made flower pot that the residents had lovingly made for him but we know that he derives profound pleasure from seeing the joy his music brings.

Thank you Willem!



# COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH WITH OUR VOLUNTEERS

Anna Domaneschi, Paola Greco and Renza Nave have inspired us with their staying power which is no doubt fuelled by their love of caring for others.



We have been blessed to have volunteers in our CVS program who have stayed with the program through thick and thin, feast and famine, Covid and bewildering technology and we're sure they would not quiver even under alien attack!

Three volunteers have been staunch in their role as visitor friends for 10 years! Anna Domaneschi, Paola Greco and Renza Nave have inspired us with their staying power which is no doubt fuelled by their love of caring for others.

Five other volunteers are well on their way to achieving outstanding commitment too – Eileen Lynch, Myriam Birch, Lucy Vecchio, Daniela Bensen, Maria Croft and Phay De Gasperi have achieved 5 years continued service as volunteers and it is difficult to express how much we appreciate them. However, we did try!

At the recent end of year Christmas luncheon, CVS Coordinators Sarina and Luisa presented each volunteer with an Award Certificate and gift.

Paola, 81, visits aged care residents in her local area, some of whom are younger than she is! Paola states her secret to staying young is *"keeping active and having a purpose in life"*.

Paola enjoys connecting with people and providing social support, the key requirements of her volunteer role.

Eileen Lynch, one of the recipients of a 5 years-of-service award said *"I feel very cherished as a volunteer at Co.As.It."* (We hope that our other volunteers also feel this way.)



We are always looking for new volunteers to join us in making an older person's life more fulfilling.

If you are interested in donating your time or require more information on our CVS program, contact the office on 3624 6100 or send us an email ([mail@coasit.asn.au](mailto:mail@coasit.asn.au))





## **8 WEEK YOGA COURSE FOR SENIORS**

**Fridays 9.00am to 10.30am  
14 January - 4 March**

**Improve mobility, stability and strength.  
Increase bone density and boost your immune system.  
Low impact movement ideal for seniors.**

**BYO : Yoga mat and towel  
WEAR: Loose comfortable clothing**



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No Walk-Ins  
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mail@coasit.asn.au**

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## THINGS WE DO AT THE CENTRES

### **Melbourne Cup:**

Fashions on the field, horse racing games and high tea. The track was lined by eager punters, or at least spectators!

### **Hawaiian week:**

We couldn't do the traditional 'luau' baking food in the ground (our CEO would have had something to say about craters on our lawns!) but we certainly got the décor and the spirit going!

Centres were colourfully decorated with palm trees, pineapples, flowers, and colourful table décor and of course lots of hula dancing.

Clients received a lei on entering the centres and clients wore floral or Hawaiian shirts before enjoying a lunch of coconut curry with rice, pineapple upside down cake and trifle for dessert.

### **Spanish week:**

There was a lot of effort put into this activity by coordinators and staff. All of our centres were decorated in Spanish theme colours, and colourful handmade fans (which the clients made).

Even Zorro made a guest appearance, minus his horse that was isolating apparently. Special guests performed in beautiful colourful costumes to entertain the clients and with a menu of quesadillas, tortillas, and churros for dessert this was indeed a memorable day.

### **Halloween:**

The spooks came out to play for Halloween and they felt right at home with the centres decorated in hairy spiders, spider webs, pumpkins, witches hats and lollies.

Themed food included spider cupcakes, eyeball soup and frog jelly.

And lots of great costumes!









## AGED CARE BRISBANE | SOCIAL ACTIVITY GROUPS







## SAVING THE DAY: TARABORRELLI STYLE!

All of the festive celebrations at our social groups in Brisbane and on the South Coast were wonderful events but we did have a minor hiccup at Casa Serena that was thankfully rectified by Livio and Domenic Taraborrelli.

The two brothers had come along to the family day for their mum Maria who is a regular group member.

A last minute cancellation by the Tumble Tots Kindy due to a head lice break-out had the Centre lose their star attraction.

The brothers learnt of the cancellation and luckily that Domenic carries his piano accordion in his car or we really might have been left without music or entertainment.

It was even luckier that Coordinator Helena had her guitar at the centre and Livio was able to use that.

They really entertained everyone and it was a joyous afternoon for lots of family members including grandchildren, sons and daughters.

Thank you gentlemen for saving the day.





## CHRISTMAS WITH FRIENDS



The South Coast social activity groups were very happy to have celebrated Christmas with all of their friends after Covid that put everyone's lives on stand-by.

Our staff put in 100% effort to prepare this special event with decorations and ensure our famous Teddy Bear Collection shone brightly to introduce a new member to its current live-in residents!

The Dante Alighieri choir came and make us all emotional with their beautiful voices and familiar songs and all of the clients were excited to be able to share this festive season with laughter, joy, dancing and of course panettone, the traditional Italian sweet.

(Special thanks to the inventors of these delectable cakes!)

As everyone dressed up in appropriate Christmas attire, we expressed our wishes that the new year would bring hope and safety to everyone.









### HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY DARYUSH!

We are so delighted to congratulate our client Daryush who recently turned 100 years old. Daryush and his 92yr old wife Farah live together in their own house, and both have a Home Care Package.

When we met the family, Daryush had high care needs that could not be managed at home by his wife and daughter. They thought that the only option was to place him in permanent residential care.

His wife and daughter used to visit him every day at the facility to make sure he was eating properly and receiving the right care but Covid 19 pandemic lockdowns at the aged care home caused deep frustration and anxiety for Farah who fretted that she wasn't able to see her husband regularly.

Following weeks and weeks of not being allowed to visit him at the nursing home, Farah and her daughter decided to take Daryush home.

Daryush had complex health conditions and no-one was certain that a Home Care Package would work. But our Coordinator met with Farah and her family to organise a care plan to ensure Daryush would have the right care to meet his special needs.

Everyone in the family understood that it was a trial, assessing whether it would be manageable to keep Daryush at home.

That was in December 2020, since then, we have worked collaboratively with Daryush and his family and

his needs are met more than satisfactorily by sharing tasks between our care staff and his family.

This smooth synergy has enabled Daryush to enjoy being at home, and doing the little things that bring him enjoyment. Farah is very happy that she is able to be around her husband without worrying about the pandemic or his care.

Daryush celebrated his 100th birthday with family and friends. One of our staff members, Rosario, visited Daryush on his birthday. Presenting him with a gift of his favourite chocolates, he asked the secret to his longevity.

The centenarian was quite clear on the things he thought were important.

He told Rosario that he "loves people" always welcoming guests into his home, he doesn't deny himself his favourite chocolates and he has a very peaceful and benevolent spirit.

It seems to be working very effectively for him, so Happy 100th Birthday Daryush!

Perhaps we need to find some of those delectable chocolates and start our own journey to longevity.

Don't know where to start?

We have provided you with some valuable secrets on the following page.





# HOW TO LIVE TO BE 100



Apparently there are some 'blue zones' of longevity worldwide:

- The Sardinian region of Barbagia has the world's highest concentration of male centenarians
- Ikaria, Greece has the lowest rates of middle age mortality and the lowest rates of dementia
- The Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica has the second highest concentration of male centenarians
- Okinawa, Japan has the longest-lived population in the world of females over 70yrs

Dan Buettner and his research team identified nine secrets to longevity by interviewing over 260 centenarians. (They seem to be more common sense than secret!)

**#1 Move naturally.** The world's longest-lived people live in environments that constantly nudge them into moving without thinking about it. They grow gardens, walk to friends and family and don't have mechanical conveniences for house and yard work.

**#2 Purpose.** Getting up in the morning and knowing your sense of purpose is worth up to seven years of extra life expectancy!

**#3 Down shift.** What the world's longest-lived people have that many don't are routines to shed stress. Okinawans take a few moments each day to remember their ancestors, Ikarians take a nap and Sardinians do happy hour.

**#4 80% Rule.** "Hara hachi bu" – the Okinawan, 2500-year old Confucian mantra said before meals reminds them to stop eating when their stomachs are 80 percent full. People in the Blue Zones eat their smallest meal in

the late afternoon or early evening and then they don't eat any more the rest of the day.

**#5 Eat plants.** Beans, including fava, black, soy and lentils, are the cornerstone of most centenarian diets. Meat—mostly pork—is eaten on average only five times per month. Serving sizes about the size of deck or cards.

**#6 Drink wine.** People in all of the zones drank wine moderately and regularly. Moderate drinkers outlive non-drinkers. The trick is to drink one to two glasses per day, with friends and/or with food. And no, you can't save up all weekend and have 14 drinks on Saturday!!

**#7 Belong.** All but five of the 263 centenarians interviewed belonged to some faith-based community. Denomination didn't seem to matter. Research shows that attending faith-based services four times per month will add 4-14 years of life expectancy.

**#8 Loved ones first.** Successful centenarians in the Blue Zones put their families first. This means keeping aging parents and grandparents nearby or in the home. (It lowers disease and mortality rates and invest in their children with time and love. They'll be more likely to care for you when the time comes.)

**#9 Right tribe.** The world's longest lived people chose, or were born into, social circles that supported healthy behaviours. The Okinawans created "moais"—groups of five friends that committed to each other for life. Research shows that smoking, obesity, happiness, and even loneliness are contagious, so the social networks are vital. So, who wants to be in a moai?

### WHEN THE CCW NEEDS HELP



Margaret, one of our South Coast care workers has been making meals for one of our clients for some time now.

We've come to learn though that Reg likes to see what's cooking so to speak so he is in there preparing, cutting, mixing, frying, taste testing and supervising his 'cook at home chef' to make sure she is up to the task.

The last time we caught up with these two, Margaret was making scones – with the greatest approval from Reg. Was he happy with her efforts? Well he tells us, *"It's hard to improve on perfection."*

We know Reg likes to share his meals with his neighbours, but we're wondering if he decided to keep all these perfect little scones out of reach.

Our perfect day in the office is getting to see photos of Reg and his enjoyment and involvement in preparing meals.

We can't wait to see what they're cooking next time. Maybe one of them could drop off a sample or (15)?





# HOME CARE PACKAGES | SOUTH COAST

## MEET TONY



Anthony (Tony) Fitzgerald has only been our client since October 2021 when he was approved for a level 4 Home Care Package.

Tony was a jockey in Melbourne but has been living on the Gold Coast with his son Damien, daughter-in-law Samantha and 2 grandsons Deagon and Carlton.

Damien has been caring for Tony for the past 30+ years.

Tony started his riding career as an apprentice at the age of 13yrs but after a riding accident in 1987, Tony was incapacitated and now lives with incomplete quadriplegia which involves weakness or paralysis of all four limbs.

In the last 12 months, Tony spent considerable time in hospital after having a stroke and contracting pneumonia.

We've derived genuine satisfaction in being able to improve Tony's quality of life. Through regular physiotherapy sessions twice a week, aimed at

improving his functional capacity, strength and mobility, we are seeing some inspiring improvements.

He also receives some respiratory management and chest physiotherapy to minimise the risk of developing another case of pneumonia which will put him back in hospital.

Tony looks forward to his physiotherapy sessions and has worked diligently at his exercises to achieve better management of his mobility. What we really liked hearing was Tony telling us that the sessions have increased his strength in a short period of time, but we're sure it's his dedication to his exercises that has made the difference.

Since being approved for this package, the funds have come into very good use. We have been able to buy Tony a new dual motor lift chair which he is delighted with, in addition to other assistive pieces of equipment that make showering, sitting and having meals a little easier.

# ITALIAN LANGUAGE TEACHING

## AN END IN CELEBRATORY STYLE FOR 2021

ILC had much to celebrate as 2021 drew to a close. Although Covid 19 safety protocols had to be followed throughout the year, the two semesters went by smoothly with all classes taking place face-to-face and not affected by lockdowns.

As semester 2 finished, it was decided to end the year in style with a Cena di fine semester held at Lava Restaurant in Teneriffe.

Guest of honour, CEO Cav Dina Ranieri, mingled with teachers and students while enjoying a welcome glass of chilled Prosecco generously offered by Co.As.It.

A delicious dinner followed with antipasto (calamari fritti, insalata caprese), fusilli con funghi e speck, a choice of two pizzas and finally, mouth-watering mini cannoli and Sicilian biscotti.

Those students present who diligently attended every single lesson through the semester with no absences were awarded prizes and certificates for their fine efforts!

Finally, the evening ended with the song 'Andiamo in Italia' with each table performing a verse with actions. Judges Dina and Basil Ranieri chose teacher Francesca's group as the best voices and actions and awarded the table a bottle of Prosecco.

Celebrations did not only happen for adult students, but for Playgroup and After School classes as well. During the final lesson, each group performed songs and Christmas carols in Italian for delighted nonni, parents and friends who were invited to the 'Concerto di Natale'.

There was also a special surprise in store when Babbo Natale arrived (thank you to Antonio and Omar from Co.As.It.). The children were delighted to receive 'auguri' and a little gift from the jolly Santas!





# ITALIAN LANGUAGE TEACHING

## 27 ANNI DI STUDITALIA

Nel mese di ottobre a Brisbane, cinque studenti australiani sono stati premiati con il Premio Studitalia, l'iniziativa giunta alla sua ventisettesima edizione e rivolta agli studenti d'italiano dell'ultimo anno di scuole superiori (Year 12 secondo il sistema scolastico locale) del Queensland.

La cerimonia di premiazione è avvenuta presso il Dipartimento d'Istruzione del Queensland alla presenza del ministro dell'Istruzione e delle Relazioni industriali, Grace Grace, e del console d'Italia a Brisbane, Salvatore Napolitano.

Grande protagonista di questa edizione di Studitalia è stato Dante Alighieri in occasione del settecentesimo anniversario dalla scomparsa del sommo poeta, ricordato anche attraverso una mostra ideata dall'Istituto italiano di Cultura di Sydney esposta durante la cerimonia di premiazione.

I giovani studenti vincitori, che durante il processo di selezione hanno realizzato un progetto di approfondimento sui personaggi della Divina Commedia, hanno ricevuto una borsa di studio per realizzare una esperienza formativa in Italia entro il 2025.

Nel corso della cerimonia, Anna Tafani, studentessa del quarto anno di Conservatorio del Queensland, ha interpretato la "Storiella d'amore" di Giacomo Puccini.

*"Studitalia è senza dubbio il programma simbolo della cooperazione tra Italia e Queensland, fondato su solide basi e proiettata verso un futuro di relazioni ancora più approfondite, cui contribuiranno tutti gli studenti che hanno partecipato a Studitalia nel corso di questi 27 anni"* ha dichiarato il console Napolitano, il quale ha aggiunto: *"L'interesse per lo studio e l'apprendimento della lingua italiana in Queensland continua a crescere, grazie ad un'azione efficace del governo italiano, che ha disposto da ultimo con un cospicuo sostegno alle cattedre d'italiano nelle scuole di Cairns, Stanthorpe e anche a Darwin nel Northern Territory"*.

Il console ha anche ringraziato la responsabile dei corsi d'italiano alla Griffith University, Sara Visocnik, presente alla cerimonia, per aver lavorato in stretto raccordo con il consolato per mantenere l'insegnamento dell'italiano all'università che prende il nome da Sir Samuel Griffith, grande statista e giurista del Queensland e primo traduttore australiano della "Divina Commedia".

Studitalia si basa sulla consolidata collaborazione tra il consolato d'Italia a Brisbane ed il Queensland Department of Education ed è sostenuto dai contributi volontari delle associazioni della comunità italiana.

Del Comitato organizzatore fanno anche parte il Com. It.Es. Queensland e Northern Territory, il Co.As.It. di Brisbane, l'Italian Language Centre (ILC), la Società Dante Alighieri di Brisbane, e la Griffith University.



# DANTE ALIGHIERI AND THE “SETTIMANA DELLA LINGUA ITALIANA NEL MONDO” - 21 YEARS LATER



Twenty one years ago the Italian Ministry of Foreign affairs MAECI (Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale) thought up a promotional campaign to celebrate the Italian language.

Since then, during the third week of October each year, hundreds of events take place worldwide to applaud Italian language and culture.

March 2021 marked the 700th anniversary of the demise of Dante Alighieri, also known as the ‘father of the Italian language’.

This year’s XXI Settimana della lingua italiana nel mondo has as its theme: *‘Dante, l’italiano’*.

At the Italian Language Centre in Brisbane, ‘la settimana della lingua’ kicked off on 16 October with a seminar at the new Co.As.It.-ILC premises in Lutwyche.

Co.As.It. CEO, Dina Ranieri, opened the proceedings, welcoming teachers of Italian, students of Italian and people simply interested in ‘la bella lingua’.

Entitled *‘Sette secoli di Dante – brillante! .....e sempre affascinante.’*, the presentation by Dott.ssa Giovanna Amatruda took the audience on an exciting journey.

Although seven centuries have passed since his death, the influence of Dante Alighieri remains relevant.

This is reflected in modern Italian spoken every day; in the poetic canti of the Divina Commedia put to music by pop artists, in the use of Dante’s iconic image in product branding to denote unwavering quality.

Teachers came away brimming with ideas on how to introduce Dante Alighieri into primary classrooms in an engaging and meaningful way.

A few days later, on 22 October, the Brisbane Dante Alighieri Society presented a lecture by Mario Bono entitled ‘Dante and the Judge’.

The lecture revealed a little known fact regarding the connection between Sir Samuel Walker Griffith (politician, Qld premier, first Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia) and il ‘sommo poeta’, Dante Alighieri.

It was intriguing to learn that Sir Samuel Griffith spoke fluent Italian and in his spare time, ‘relaxed’ by translating Dante’s ‘Inferno’ into English (published in 1919).

At his family home called ‘Merthyr House’ built in 1880 on a block in New Farm, it is said Sir Samuel could often be seen wandering around his garden quietly spouting verses from the Divina Commedia.

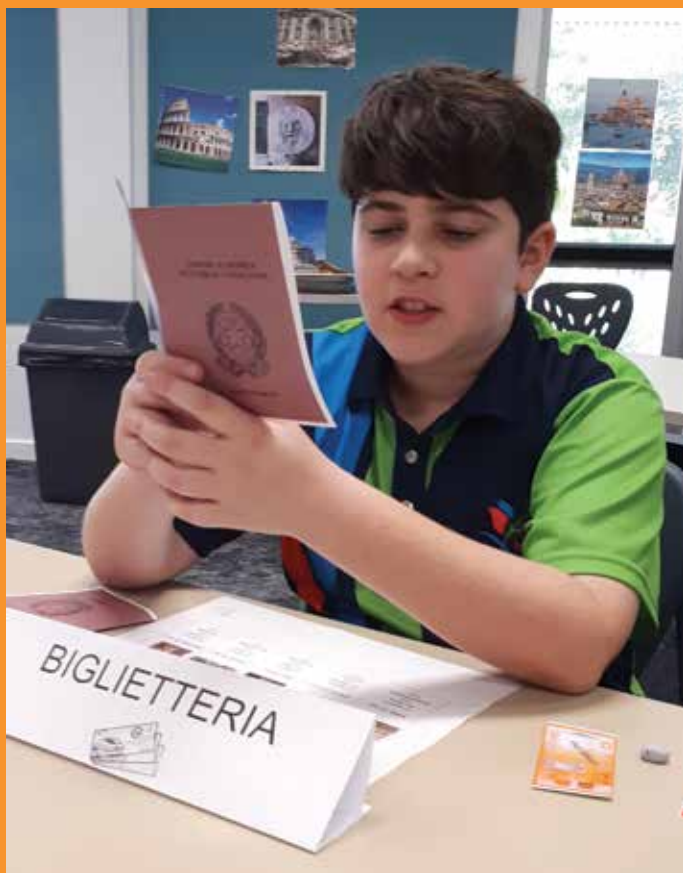
The XXI settimana della lingua italiana nel mondo was brought to a close by the 6th National Conference for Australian Teachers of Italian on 23 October.

Organised by Sydney’s Co.As.It. and the Istituto Italiano di Cultura under the patronage of the Italian Embassy in Australia, the conference was delivered via Zoom to teachers of Italian across all the Australian states and territories.



# ITALIAN LANGUAGE TEACHING

## IMMERSION DAY AT MANGO HILL STATE SCHOOL



On Friday 26 November the Italian excellence class (year 5 and 6 students) at Mango Hill State School was lucky enough to travel to Italy without leaving their school grounds.

A little event made possible by their passionate teacher Connie Lammertsma who invited ILC's Language Program Liaison Officers Giovanna Amatruda and Sonia Baldissera to help the children organise their 'overseas' trip.

The students were busy all day preparing their own passports, deciding which cities to visit, purchasing their tickets and learning more about iconic Italian places.

*"Why does Venice flood so often?" "Why doesn't the leaning Tower of Pisa fall over?" "Why shouldn't you put your hand in the Mouth of the Truth if you tend to tell lies?"*

These and many other questions were answered during an activity-packed day.

Even a special session of "The Voice- Italy" took place. The students in their capacity as judges listened to some Italian singers and scored their voices. It was not easy to make a decision but eventually the rock band Måneskin was proclaimed winner of the song contest (yes, they also won Eurovision this year!)

At the end of a busy morning, the students were ready to order their food in Italian.

Lasagne were served on special placemats made for the occasion by the Italian Language Centre and featuring the Italian words and pictures for cutlery.

This helped the students to use our bella lingua during their break. After lunch, energy was restored so everyone stood up and danced the 'pizzica', the traditional dance from Salento.

Dancing together was a great experience but on such a hot afternoon the gelato that followed was even better!!

Sadly, all good things come to an end. It was soon time to say goodbye to the year 6 students while for everyone else, it was an *Arrivederci alla prossima!*

The feedback received from Italian teacher Connie Lammertsma reinforced ILC's belief that learning another language takes you on a journey, even when travelling is not possible: *"The students enjoyed every moment and many believed and felt they were in Italy. Complimenti a voi per una giornata piena di energia, divertimento e esperienze nuove".*

# 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



Australian Government  
Department of Health

