

Positively Ageless

Queensland Seniors Strategy 2010–20



Tomorrow's Queensland:
strong, green, smart, healthy and fair

Toward ²
Tomorrow's Queensland



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Message from the Premier and Minister



Queensland seniors bring a wealth of contributions and experience to our state. We all benefit from the past and present efforts of older Queenslanders in the workplace, community, arts, and as carers, volunteers, neighbours, family members and friends.

It gives us great pleasure to release the *Positively Ageless — Queensland Seniors Strategy 2010–20*. The strategy and its accompanying action plan for 2010–12 identify priority areas and outline key initiatives that will benefit older Queenslanders, particularly those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged or socially isolated.



Statewide community consultation in late 2009 was critical in informing the development of the seniors strategy and action plan. There were recurring themes in many of the responses and discussions at the consultation forums, such as the ongoing need to challenge stereotypes of ageing. Some of your feedback was more focused on improving outcomes for those seniors who are most in need.

This strategy incorporates these concerns in its response to economic issues, such as supporting seniors to participate in the workforce and responding to the ageing population.

Increasing community participation and creating age-friendly communities were also considered as priorities.

The Queensland Government will focus on positive ageing to ensure that the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population are embraced by the whole community. Positive ageing means government and the community builds an age-friendly state for seniors. It means we recognise the contributions seniors make to the community, and respond to their needs to maintain health, independence and dignity.

Developing the strategy and action plan reinforced the contribution seniors have made, and will continue to make, to the social, cultural and economic life of our state. It also showed that seniors recognise the importance of tackling issues as a shared responsibility involving the Queensland Government, non-government organisations and the community.


We would like to thank everyone who participated in the consultation. We look forward to working in partnership with you to create positive changes for seniors, now and in the future.

Anna Bligh MP

Premier of Queensland

Karen Struthers MP

Minister for Community Services
and Housing and Minister for Women

A yellow geometric shape, resembling a parallelogram or a tilted rectangle, with a black outline. The text is centered within this shape.

Seniors in Queensland — greying gracefully

Everyone ages ...

Ageing is a fact of life; and while Queensland's population is growing, it's ageing too.

By 2021, there'll be just under 1 million people aged 65+ living in Queensland: that's almost twice as many as back in 2006.

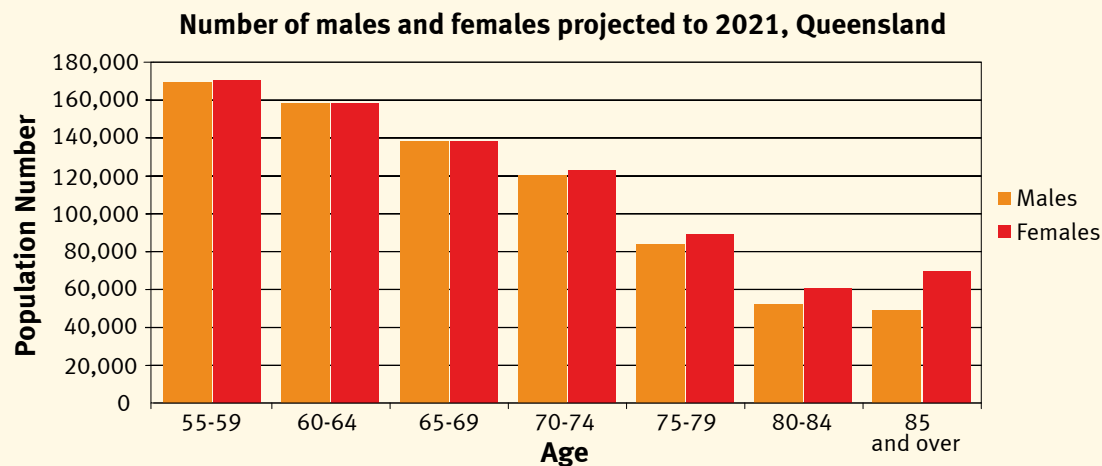
Women in Queensland outlive men and outnumber them by age 70. By 2021, there will be 118,100 women aged 85+.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

senior population is also predicted to grow. Nationally, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 55+ is projected to more than double from 40,000 in 2006 to around 86,000 in 2021.¹ The growth of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Queensland is predicted to be highest in the Brisbane area.²

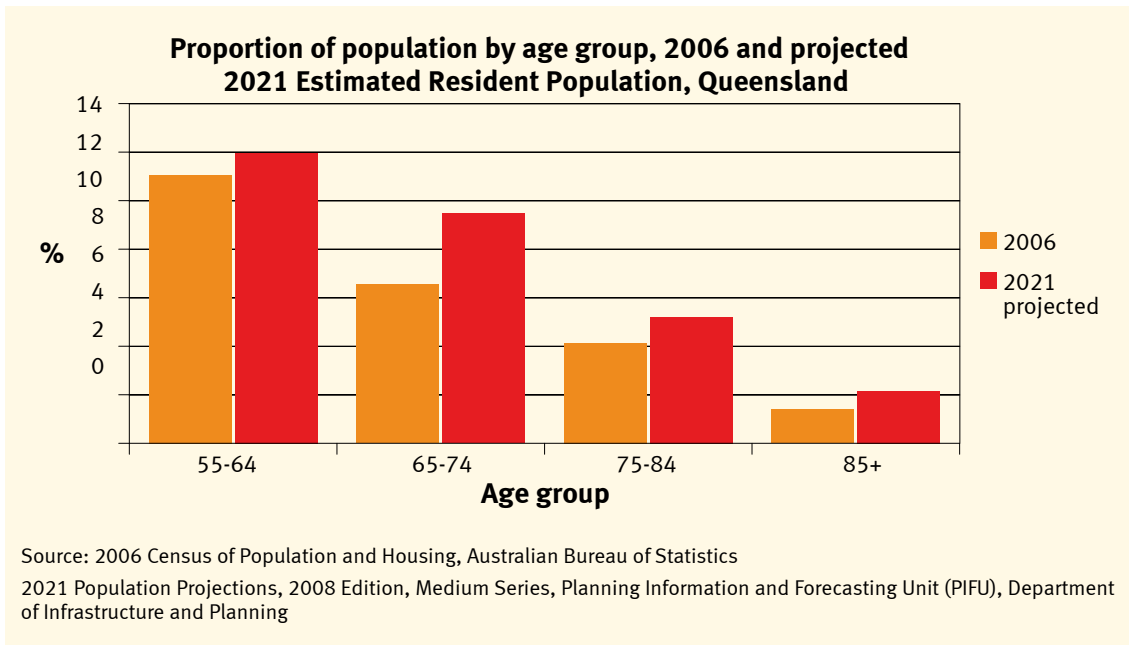
1 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021, issued 8 September 2009.

2 N. Biddle and J. Taylor, "Indigenous Population Projections, 2006-31: Planning for Growth", Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Working Paper No. 56/2009, ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, July 2009.



Source: 2006 Final Estimated Resident Population, Australian Bureau of Statistics

2021 Population Projections, Queensland, 2008 Edition, Medium Series, Males and Females by five-year age groups, Planning Information and Forecasting Unit (PIFU), Department of Infrastructure and Planning.



Most Queensland seniors are found in the state's south-east with strong numbers in regional areas like the Wide Bay-Burnett and Darling Downs, and regional hubs like Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa.

Positively Ageless — Queensland Seniors Strategy 2010–20 provides the strategic direction for the Queensland Government to respond to the challenge of meeting the changing needs of seniors and provide

support to vulnerable or disadvantaged older people.

Who's a senior?

There's no hard and fast rule: for some concessions, Commonwealth pensions and superannuation entitlements, 'senior' may apply to a 50-year-old. For others, it may be 65. In some workplaces, mature-age workers are considered to be over 45!

*Age is an issue
of mind over matter:
if you don't mind,
it doesn't matter*

— Mark Twain

With 30 or more years as a 'senior', there's plenty of living to be had. Needs and preferences can change a lot over that time. That's why *Positively Ageless — Queensland Seniors Strategy 2010–20* is so important.

The experience of ageing or being a senior is different for everyone. This is particularly so for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, where life expectancy is currently 10 years less than that of all Queenslanders.³

Positively Ageless looks beyond chronological age, to real issues such as health, social participation and independence so that Queensland seniors get the most out of living.

³ Bryan Kennedy and Karen McGill, "Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy at birth in Queensland and Australia", Health Statistics Centre, Queensland Health, May 2009

Counting seniors' contribution

Seniors have spent decades doing their bit for family, community and the economy. In latter years, they keep on contributing as:

- ✱ full-time older workers (\$59.6 billion nationally)
- ✱ carers (\$3.9 billion)
- ✱ volunteers (\$2 billion)
- ✱ carers of children (\$911 million).⁴

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors and seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds play a vital role in all these areas as well as helping to sustain the cultural and spiritual life of their communities.

This strategy, *Positively Ageless*, recognises the diversity and contribution seniors have made and provides support for those in need.

⁴ Still Putting In: Measuring the Economic and Social Contributions of Older Australians, National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre, 2009

How does *Positively Ageless* fit into the Government's broad plan?

Positively Ageless' priorities and goals connect strongly with *Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland*⁵, contributing to a strong, green, healthy and fair Queensland:

- ★ Strong — by supporting the aspirations of seniors who wish to remain in the workforce.
- ★ Green — through supporting age-friendly public transport and the development of community transport options for seniors.
- ★ Healthy — by promoting active and positive ageing, and supporting prevention and early intervention approaches to health.
- ★ Fair — through encouraging volunteering, focusing on inclusiveness and providing services to the most vulnerable seniors.

⁵ Queensland Government, "Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland", The State of Queensland (Department of the Premier and Cabinet) 2008.

In 2010–12, the Queensland Government investment in services and programs available to older people is approximately \$1.6 billion.⁶ As Queensland's senior population continues to grow, the challenges of providing responsive government and community services will require innovative and flexible approaches across government, non-government and community organisations. Due to the geographic diversity of the state, providing services in rural and remote areas poses its own challenges and must be incorporated wherever possible into program and service design.

Positively Ageless has been developed to focus on what the Queensland Government can do over the coming decade to meet the needs and respond to issues important to Queensland seniors. The strategy aims to position the Government to target investment to vulnerable and disadvantaged seniors into the future.

⁶ While most of the services included in this figure relate only to the provision of services specifically targeted for seniors, in some cases the services also include other age groups. For example, Home and Community Care (HACC) programs may include younger people with a disability; employment and skilling programs may include those who are long-term unemployed as well as those aged over 55, and so on. This figure does not include universal service such as hospitals, public transport and education.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring that Queenslanders are assisted with meeting the cost of living by providing \$1.13 billion in concessions for discounts, rebates and subsidies. Of this, an estimated \$188.9 million is directed to the:

- ✱ Electricity Rebate Scheme
- ✱ Electricity Life Support Concession Scheme
- ✱ Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme
- ✱ Rail Concession Scheme
- ✱ Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme
- ✱ Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme
- ✱ South East Queensland Pensioner Water Subsidy Scheme
- ✱ National Reciprocal Transport Scheme.

The Government will continue to review the appropriateness of concessions over the life of the strategy.

Our approach is to build on the strengths and capabilities of seniors, and also build on the strengths of the community and business and build partnerships across government. We will continue to advocate to the Commonwealth Government on

issues that are important to Queensland seniors for which the Commonwealth is responsible. In particular, the need for improved income support for grandparents raising grandchildren and greater recognition of the needs of older Queenslanders who experienced institutional and out-of-home care as children. High priority is given to better coordination of services between and within government, using a ‘no wrong door’ approach to streamline clients’ access to services. This will enable improved access to government services.

Positively Ageless also aligns with the federal government’s approach. The *Australia to 2050: future challenges — the 2010 intergenerational report*⁷ highlights the challenges of the ageing population. While this report has a national focus to 2050, it describes the economic implications of an ageing population and gives an outline of key areas for planning. *Positively Ageless* provides the framework for the Queensland Government to respond to these issues over the lifetime of the strategy.

⁷ Australian Government, “Australia to 2050: future challenges — the 2010 intergenerational report”, Commonwealth of Australia 2010.

Our vision

The Queensland Government values the significant contribution that seniors make to our communities and recognises the great diversity among seniors. We also recognise the wide variety of issues that affect seniors. We are committed to ensuring the needs, interests and concerns of seniors are heard and responded to.

The whole community — individuals, families, church groups, non-government organisations, businesses and all three levels of government — has obligations to seniors.

The Queensland Government will find ways to better connect seniors with their local communities, and assist seniors to have the support they need to live healthy, active lives in respectful and inclusive communities.

Our vision is to encourage the development of age-friendly communities that suit varying needs, choices and levels of participation, and for the right services to reach the most vulnerable and disadvantaged seniors at the right time.

This vision provides an opportunity for all of the community to participate in making Queensland an age-friendly state.

Key principles

Positively Ageless is based on the following principles:

- ✱ respecting and acknowledging seniors' valuable place in the community
- ✱ recognising the past and present contributions of seniors
- ✱ acknowledging the experience and wisdom of seniors
- ✱ ensuring seniors retain their dignity and their rights are upheld as they move through the different stages of ageing
- ✱ ensuring seniors feel safe in their homes and in the community
- ✱ supporting seniors' independence and lifestyle choices
- ✱ recognising the diversity among seniors including age, ability, cultural and linguistic background, and sexuality
- ✱ ensuring all seniors have access to appropriate services
- ✱ creating age-friendly communities.

Five priority areas for action

The Queensland Government has identified five priorities which will assist in achieving our vision of an age-friendly state:

- ✱ valuing and empowering seniors
- ✱ improving health and wellbeing
- ✱ promoting workforce participation, independence and mobility
- ✱ supporting community participation and age-friendly communities
- ✱ providing information and improving communication.



Valuing and
empowering seniors

Priority 1

Treasuring wise gems

Queensland seniors' needs vary according to many factors, including age, ability, cultural and linguistic background, and sexuality. A priority of the Queensland Government is for the community to value and respect all seniors and recognise the needs of our diverse senior population.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors, for example, are often community leaders. Seniors, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, also enrich their communities by acting as role models, community leaders and volunteers.

Empowering seniors and promoting their rights in the community, including the home and workplace, will benefit all Queenslanders now and in the future. Queensland seniors bring a wealth of wisdom, experience and skills to our state.

Seniors, especially those who are frail and vulnerable, have the right to be free from discrimination, abuse⁸ or exploitation. Unfortunately, the abuse of older people including domestic and family violence, is thought to go largely unreported due to feelings of shame, fear of retaliation, the involvement of family members and fear of institutionalisation.

It is vital that Queensland seniors are supported to enjoy life to the full and continue to participate in our communities. Many seniors are active in the workforce, either as paid mature-age workers or volunteers, and often act as carers for their children, grandchildren, partners or other relatives, either full-time or part-time.

8 Elder abuse is any act in a relationship of trust, which results in harm to an older person. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological and social abuse and neglect, as defined by The Australia Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, 1999





Our goal to 2020

Seniors' rights are protected, their diversity is recognised and their past, present and future contributions are valued.

Achieving our goal

Strategies under this priority will foster a supportive community that values and responds to the rights of seniors, and their carers. Ensuring seniors are valued for their contributions and encouraging positive attitudes toward seniors will have positive long-term effects for the whole community.

Empowering seniors helps to address issues of elder abuse. Preventing elder abuse relies on community education so that seniors, their family and friends can recognise signs of abuse and the legal implications.

Positive images and messages in the media and community contribute to seniors being valued. Celebrating the diversity of our seniors and their valuable contributions promotes positive attitudes towards older people.

*Wrinkles:
the roadmaps
of life's
journey*

The Queensland Government will implement initiatives to recognise and support grandparents raising grandchildren. Recognising the contribution of carers, who are often an older age group themselves, is also part of this priority.

The Queensland Government will act to empower seniors and value their contributions. Our approach to valuing and protecting seniors will also include:

- ✱ providing a supportive legal framework for Queensland seniors
- ✱ providing services that assist seniors with personal safety and legal issues
- ✱ supporting grandparents and ageing carers
- ✱ supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors who have family and community responsibilities
- ✱ supporting seniors with lifelong disabilities

- ✱ acknowledging and consulting with Elders of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and culturally and linguistically diverse community leaders on elder abuse issues specific to their communities
- ✱ valuing seniors in rural and remote areas
- ✱ celebrating the achievements of seniors
- ✱ encouraging positive media messages that challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about ageing.

How will we know we are achieving our goal?

- ✱ Older people have positive interactions with members of their community.⁹

⁹ Based on data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the General Social Survey data.

Case study:

Seniors Legal and Support Service

When Elsie's husband died, her son, Bob, moved in. The 84-year-old soon found herself being abused — physically and psychologically. Bob had even stopped Elsie's daughters from coming over to visit. Elsie was increasingly concerned for her own safety and her property, until a friend referred her to the Seniors Legal and Support Service.

Through this free service, Elsie was able to obtain a Domestic Violence Order against her son and he was ordered out. The service provided short-term counselling and then also referred Elsie to ongoing counselling.

Elsie has sold the family home, downsizing to something that suits her needs and has invested her money to self-fund the life ahead of her. Elsie's now active as a volunteer, helping a number of local community organisations, and, with help from the Seniors Legal and Support Service, now sees her daughters on a regular basis.

Action plan for 2010–12

Priority 1

Highlights

Knowledge is power: seniors will have the opportunity to take part in seminars across the state to get better informed about how to take action on age discrimination.

From 2010 to 2012 the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland and the Department of Communities will talk to seniors across Queensland about their rights under anti-discrimination law. A minimum of 300 seniors are expected to benefit from this initiative.

Community awareness of what is acceptable behaviour toward older people will be increased through a public awareness campaign about elder abuse.

Seniors and their families will have more information about the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit and the Seniors Legal and Support Services.

Grandparents raising grandchildren will be recognised and supported with the implementation of a range of initiatives including:

- ✳ promoting the Grandparents Information Hotline, a community based 1300 number operated by Lifeline
- ✳ extending the Time for Grandparents Program, to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander grandparents and grandparents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ✳ improving community engagement with grandparent organisations
- ✳ introducing Grandparents Day to celebrate the contribution of grandparents and their important role in the community.

Action plan 2010–12

Valuing and empowering seniors

Actions	Lead agency
Raise awareness of elder abuse, prevention strategies and reporting mechanisms	
Deliver a comprehensive service to seniors experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, elder abuse and financial exploitation by providing over \$1.94m recurrent funding to five Seniors Legal and Support Services across Queensland.	Department of Communities
Undertake a campaign to increase awareness of elder abuse and provide a contact point for information and advice.	Department of Communities
Provide seniors who are at risk of and/or experiencing elder abuse with information and support through \$0.43m to support the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit to maintain a statewide telephone helpline.	Department of Communities
Continue the review of the <i>Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989</i> to protect seniors against all forms of abuse, including emotional and financial abuse.	Department of Communities
Promote public awareness of elder abuse, especially financial abuse, through the Public Trust Office's education and awareness raising program.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Publication of a joint discussion paper between the Public Advocate and the Queensland Law Society, to promote discussion about improving legislative responses to elder abuse in Queensland.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General

Actions	Lead agency
Promote the benefits of Enduring Power of Attorney, in partnership with the Australian Pensioners and Superannuants League Queensland.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Ensure the interests of adults with impaired decision-making capacity are protected through the appointment of substitute decision-makers under the <i>Guardianship and Administration Act 2000</i> .	Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal
Provide a supportive legal framework for Queensland seniors	
Assist older people with the resolution of complaints relating to age discrimination through the complaint handling and education functions of the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission.	Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland
Undertake a new series of seminars around the state to increase awareness among seniors about their rights under anti-discrimination law.	Anti-Discrimination Commission and the Department of Communities
Provide community education to seniors and inform them of fair trade issues including fraud and scams and raise awareness of how seniors can protect themselves.	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Provide casework assistance, the Administrative Appeals Duty Lawyer Service, the services of the Consumer Protection Unit, and general information, advice and representation to eligible seniors.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General (Legal Aid Queensland)
Improve use of current Enduring Powers of Attorneys and Advanced Health Directives forms by reviewing current forms.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General

Actions	Lead agency
Educate community stakeholders about the guardianship and administration system, and provide information on the benefits of Enduring Powers of Attorneys and Advanced Health Directives, through the ‘Planning for Life’ forums hosted by the Attorney-General and the Office of the Adult Guardian and co-presented with the Office of the Public Advocate, QCAT, Community Visitor Program and local organisations.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Establish a webpage on Enduring Powers of Attorney that consolidates all the current information about Enduring Powers of Attorney in a user-friendly manner.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Support seniors to have access to improved witnessing services in the community by providing information to registered Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations on issues relevant to seniors; and expanding the Justices of the Peace in the Community Program across Queensland.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Review the Public Trust Office service delivery processes for older people to increase seniors and retirees’ knowledge of services.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Promote the will making service of the Public Trust Office in rural and remote areas, focusing on seniors living in the community and retirement villages.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Acknowledge the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders in Murri Court, a forum where Elders, Respected Persons, Community Justice Groups and the offender’s family can be involved in the sentencing process.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Resolve disputes between retirement village residents and scheme operators under the <i>Retirement Villages Act 1999</i> .	Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

Actions	Lead agency
Support ageing carers and grandparents raising grandchildren	
Support carers by providing counselling, support and advocacy to Home and Community Care (HACC) clients as well as education, information and training for HACC service providers about carers' needs.	Department of Communities
Strengthen the capacity of older carers and family members to prepare for their transition to alternative support arrangements under the Support for Older Carers Strategy.	Department of Communities
Address the respite and accommodation needs of adult sons and daughters of older carers and strengthen the ability of families to care for their family members with a disability by providing funding of \$165m over 4 years for the Disability Assistance Package.	Department of Communities
Provide respite for grandparents caring for grandchildren full-time through the funding of places in recreational and day activities through the \$0.68m Time for Grandparents program.	Department of Communities
Provide respite through funded recreational activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander grandparents and grandparents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who are caring for grandchildren, through an extension of the Time for Grandparents program.	Department of Communities
Publicly recognise the valuable role and commitment of grandparents, including those who raise grandchildren, through the establishment of a Grandparents Day.	Department of Communities

Actions	Lead agency
Encourage information sharing and enhance community engagement and collaboration for grandparents raising grandchildren through quarterly meetings with grandparent representatives.	Department of Communities
Promote positive messages and attitudes	
Publicly recognise the valuable role and commitment of older people who volunteer through the Premier's Awards for Queensland Seniors.	Department of Communities
Promote positive ageing messages through the ongoing funding of \$0.125m for Seniors Week.	Department of Communities
Provide advice on gender analysis for the development and implementation of programs that support older women.	Department of Communities





Improving health
and wellbeing

Priority 2

Hippy hippy shake

Health and wellbeing play a big role in allowing seniors to lead active lives and stay socially connected with the community.

Our ageing population will mean more demand for health services. Finding the best ways to prevent disease, illness and injury and promote good health needs to remain central to our planning.

While our hospitals will continue to provide hospital and health care services to all Queenslanders, our focus on health and active ageing aims to improve seniors' quality of life. This focus on prevention will help seniors avoid admission to hospital or other specialised health services.

Good health reduces the risk of social isolation for seniors, whereas illness, injury and complex health needs affect work, social and family life. Our priorities are to reduce the risk of long-term and chronic illness, and maintain good health. The key areas of focus are:

- ✱ prevention and management of chronic disease
- ✱ provision of more affordable and appropriate housing
- ✱ removing some of the practical housing-related difficulties experienced by seniors wishing to remain living in their home
- ✱ falls prevention
- ✱ oral health
- ✱ mental health
- ✱ active lifestyle
- ✱ nutrition support and education.



Queensland seniors have the right to access health services without experiencing age, gender, sexuality, or cultural and linguistic discrimination. Our vision is for a health system that delivers effective and relevant services to our diverse senior population.

Providing support for the lifestyle choices seniors make is a key factor in maintaining their health and wellbeing. This can include assisting with diet, exercise and in other areas which help seniors to remain living at home or ageing in place for as long as they choose. However, when health services need to be delivered away from home and community, the focus is on providing care at the right time in the most appropriate location, ageing in place.

Ageing in place also acknowledges the strong connection that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors have to home, community and land and is central to supporting their health and wellbeing. Access to health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors, including mental health and allied health services, is important for ageing in place to be effective.

Our goal to 2020

Prevention and early intervention approaches underpin improved health and wellbeing for all Queensland seniors, particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

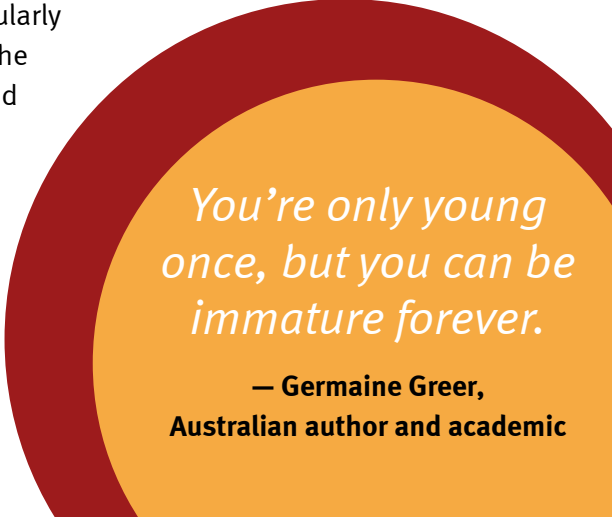
Achieving our goal

Prevention and early intervention approaches to all areas of physical and mental health are central to improving health and wellbeing for seniors.

Providing accessible information about health, wellbeing and available services will assist in achieving improved health outcomes for seniors.

Accessibility of health care and better coordination of health services can also impact on quality of life.

This is particularly the case for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors



*You're only young
once, but you can be
immature forever.*

— Germaine Greer,
Australian author and academic

who live in remote communities and who experience high levels of disease and need to travel long distances for medical treatment. Seniors will be supported to age in place with a wider range of housing options, including assistance in the area of home maintenance and modification.

The Queensland Government will support activities that improve seniors' access to health services, including better coordination between general health, mental health, disability and aged care services.¹⁰ An integrated response across services is especially important for vulnerable and disadvantaged seniors who may have multiple and complex needs.

Our approaches to improve health and wellbeing for seniors will involve:

- ✱ exploring ways to improve patient travel for health visits, particularly in rural and remote areas
- ✱ providing interpreting services

- ✱ improving access to health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors and seniors in remote communities
- ✱ promoting self-management and awareness of health and wellbeing
- ✱ encouraging sport and recreation activities
- ✱ supporting hospitals to be age-friendly, particularly in rural and remote areas
- ✱ linking prevention, early intervention and treatment services to provide a continuum of care
- ✱ exploring innovative ways to support ageing in place and providing health care at the right time in the most appropriate location
- ✱ exploring ways to assist carers in health management.

How will we know we are achieving our goal?

- ✱ Seniors assess their own health as good, very good or excellent.¹¹

¹⁰ Residential aged care services are provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

¹¹ Based on data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the National Health Survey data.

Case study:

Home and Community Care Service

After 70 years of marriage, Pearl and Tom can't imagine living any other way but together. But they're on their own in Bundaberg and since Pearl's stroke, Tom has found it harder and harder to meet his 90-year-old wife's needs and keep himself healthy too.

That was until he phoned his local Home and Community Care (HACC) service provider. That's when Tom found a whole range of HACC service that could give him a hand to keep Pearl living at home.

The HACC service provider assessed Pearl as being eligible for HACC services, and identified the types of HACC services that would help her to stay living at home.

First up, an occupational therapist assessed ways to help Pearl regain some independence. She suggested some minor modifications like grab rails in the bath and these were installed as part of the HACC service. A helper now also comes in to help Pearl shower and dress.

Good nutrition is vital to overall health: a dietician's advice was sought for Pearl who was losing weight that she didn't have to lose.

As a carer, Tom is also eligible to access HACC respite care and counselling.

With ongoing in-home support now in place, Pearl and Tom can continue to live independently in their own home, enjoying their local community.

Action plan for 2010–12

Priority 2

Highlights

Advice and training for frail aged seniors on how to maintain healthy eating will be part of a nutrition and food preparation skilling project at the Sunshine Coast, Darling Downs and South Brisbane. The project includes a number of initiatives aimed at improving the nutrition of frail aged seniors accessing Home and Community Care (HACC) services.

Improve seniors' health and independence following a hospital stay, through the Commonwealth-State funded Transition Care program.

The program provides short-term assistance to assist older people to recover from a stay in hospital. An additional 253 places in the Transition Care Program will be implemented in 2010–12.

Action plan 2010–12


Improving health and wellbeing

Actions	Lead agency
Promote a prevention and early intervention approach to health and wellbeing	
Support healthy active ageing through the promotion of positive mental health, healthy eating and staying active across the lifespan.	Queensland Health
Reduce falls and harm from falls among older people through the Queensland Stay On Your Feet® Program.	Queensland Health
Support older people to develop and manage healthy ageing programs in their own communities by providing \$1.2m for the twenty 60 and Better services across Queensland.	Department of Communities
Address risk factors that impact on the mental health of older men through \$0.13m funding for Older Men's Groups in Hervey Bay and Toowoomba.	Department of Communities
Remove some of the practical housing-related difficulties experienced by seniors wishing to remain living in their home through the Home Assist Secure program.	Department of Communities
Provide seniors in need with more appropriate housing through the Social Housing Program.	Department of Communities
Promote fire and general safety information to seniors groups through the delivery of presentations of 'Seniors Fire Ed' to approximately 11,000 participants per annum.	Department of Community Safety
Distribute the <i>Senior and Safer — Practical tips for a safer home</i> booklet, providing fire and general safety advice about how seniors can decrease their risk of injury, and prepare for and respond to, emergencies.	Department of Community Safety

Actions	Lead agency
Support a reduction in damage, injury and loss of life in homes of deaf and hearing impaired people through the provision of \$150,000 annually for the Smoke Alarm Subsidy Scheme for Deaf and Hearing Impaired People.	Department of Community Safety
Promote essential fire and general home safety advice through the Safehome Program with funding of \$0.1m annually with the aim of reaching seniors in 40 per cent of Safehome home visits.	Department of Community Safety
Support seniors to access available health services	
Identify key successes and future directions for older people's health through the review of <i>Queensland Health's Directions for Aged Care 2004–11</i> .	Queensland Health
Increase access to sub acute services for people aged 65 years and over, particularly in regional Queensland, through the increased provision of rehabilitation services and the introduction of online geriatric assessments.	Queensland Health
Manage and implement the Commonwealth-State funded Aged Care Assessment Program to promote timely assessments for older people, which enables access to Commonwealth-funded aged care services.	Queensland Health
Provide direct assistance to patients, and in some cases their carers, to enable access to specialist medical services from which they are isolated, through the operation of the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme.	Queensland Health
Implement the <i>Queensland Health Dementia Framework 2010–14</i> to improve dementia care and services.	Queensland Health

Actions	Lead agency
Assist seniors being abused, or those at risk of abuse, by increasing the understanding of paramedics and communications centre staff to enable them to assist vulnerable clients, through the provision of more than \$0.8m for the 2009–11 period under the Vulnerable Clients Program Initiative.	Department of Community Safety
Recognise the critical role of mental health services	
Improve access to quality mental health care with the implementation of the <i>Queensland Plan for Mental Health 2007–17</i> .	Queensland Health
Develop a best practice model of service for the Older Persons Mental Health services.	Queensland Health
Increase the capacity of individuals and the community to recognise and respond to the risk of suicide for older men through \$0.1m funding for the Older Men in Rural and Remote Areas Suicide Prevention Initiative.	Department of Communities and Queensland Health
Promote mental health for Queenslanders over 65 years through provision of sustainable training, resources and support to Home and Community Care (HACC) workers under the Older Persons Mental Health and Emotional Well Being project.	Department of Communities
Support HACC eligible people in rural and remote communities living with dementia to access information, counselling and advocacy services through the establishment of seven regional HACC Dementia Advisory and Support services across Queensland.	Department of Communities
Support the provision of care in the most appropriate location	
Support older people with short-term assistance that will help them to move from hospital to home through the Commonwealth-State funded Transition Care Program, including the implementation of an additional 253 places in 2010–12.	Queensland Health

Actions	Lead agency
Provide high level residential aged care through Queensland Health's Commonwealth-approved residential aged care facilities.	Queensland Health
Support frail older people and younger people with a disability and their carers with basic support and maintenance services. Provide funding of \$473.5m in 2010–11, to enable them to remain in their own homes and involved in their community for as long as possible. Services are delivered through more than 700 service providers — including 62 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service providers — across Queensland. These services include home support services, coordinated care, clinical and specialist care, centre-based day care, home modifications, meals, transport and information and education.	Department of Communities
Improve access to continence management services for HACC eligible clients with incontinence through the operation of the HACC Continence Management Strategy, including HACC eligible frail older people who have an ongoing functional disability.	Department of Communities
Improve the nutritional status of frail older HACC eligible clients by undertaking initiatives to improve their nutrition.	Department of Communities
Support HACC eligible people who are homeless or in marginal housing to access services through the HACC Homeless Support Services initiative, targeting frail older people with an ongoing functional disability.	Department of Communities
Provide appropriately located social housing for older people.	Department of Communities
Contribute to the development of a skilled HACC services workforce that will support the community and enhance quality delivery through the Community Services Skilling Plan.	Department of Education and Training and Department of Communities



Promoting workforce
participation,
independence
and mobility

Priority 3

Willing and able

Independence and mobility are essential for seniors to maintain their dignity and freedom of choice while moving through the various stages of ageing. For seniors, independence and mobility are strongly linked with workforce participation, housing and transport.

In the workplace, mature-age workers can bring experience, maturity, commitment, reliability and loyalty. Many people choose to continue to work beyond the traditional retirement age or, for financial reasons, need to stay in employment until they can afford to retire. However in the future, a sustainable workforce will rely even more on the participation of older people. Support for older people to stay active in the workforce means encouraging workplaces to adopt age-friendly recruitment, training and retention strategies and offer flexible work options. Flexible work options are particularly important to allow older workers who may have caring responsibilities to remain engaged in the workforce, and recognise that many older people will want to work part-time, as well as continue in full-time work.

Housing for seniors also needs to respond to needs and reflect the diversity of seniors. Over the next decade, the number of people

in low income rental households is likely to increase as will the demand for housing and support for older people. The Queensland Government is responding to this increased demand by both increasing supply and prioritising access to existing social housing stock. Through the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan — Social Housing Initiative, approximately 4000 new dwellings will be built in Queensland by June 2012. Many of these will go to seniors in high need.

The Queensland Government has been an active participant in the National Rental Affordability Scheme, which delivers rental properties for low to moderate income earners, including retirees, at a minimum of 20 per cent below market rent. As of 31 March 2010, 2441 dwellings have been approved for Queensland under this Australian Government initiative.

The Queensland Government also has a range of private housing initiatives to assist eligible seniors to access or retain appropriate accommodation. These include the Home Assist Secure scheme which removes some of the practical housing-related difficulties experienced by seniors and people with a disability who wish to remain living in their home. The scheme is currently being reviewed with an aim to increase its effectiveness in assisting those in the highest need stay in their home.

Seniors raising grandchildren, seniors who live alone, seniors who have carers staying with them and seniors with a disability — all have different housing requirements. An availability of secure and age-appropriate housing close to public transport is critical to seniors achieving independence, comfort and greater lifestyle freedom.

To maintain workforce and social connections, appropriate transport is essential for seniors and their carers. Public transport is considered appropriate when it meets the access and mobility needs of seniors.

The Queensland Government, non-government organisations, businesses and the community need to work together to prevent homelessness, and provide age-friendly work options, housing and transport. This will help create a state where seniors experience independence and mobility in an environment with dignity and choice.

Our goal to 2020

Seniors are supported to live independently, including having access to flexible age-friendly workplaces, secure housing and appropriate transport options.

Achieving our goal

Promoting independence involves considering services and lifestyle factors that impact on seniors. This will include exploring ways to improve community-based transport, and considering alternative housing options to help seniors maintain their independence for as long as they choose.

Providing appropriate services is a particular challenge to seniors' independence and mobility in rural and remote areas. The Queensland Government is committed to enhancing assistance for seniors in these areas.

Building on the Queensland Government's *Experience Pays Awareness Strategy*, employers and the community will be encouraged to value and support older workers who choose to remain in the workforce. Industry liaison officers will provide education for employers about age-friendly workplaces. Supporting materials and resources specifically developed to assist employers manage an ageing workforce and adopt age-friendly work practices will also be provided.

Seniors who decide to re-enter the workforce will be encouraged through appropriate employment programs providing work-readiness and accredited

training. Seniors will be able to update their skills, becoming better equipped to re-enter the workforce.

Seniors already in the workforce will also have access to accredited training that enables them to update skills and qualifications and to train others, passing on their skills and knowledge. Through ongoing and increasing participation in the workforce, seniors can continue to enjoy their financial independence.

Some of the ways to achieve our goal will include:

- ✱ supporting workforce participation and employment for mature-age workers through employment programs
- ✱ exploring how older people may be encouraged to participate in full-time and part-time work
- ✱ promoting and distributing information resources for employers that support the employment of older workers and the adoption of age-friendly work practices
- ✱ supporting community and employer education programs to challenge negative perceptions of older workers, especially toward those who are choosing to re-enter the workforce

- ✱ providing opportunities for seniors to learn new workplace skills such as technology training
- ✱ exploring housing strategies to prevent homelessness and support the diversity of seniors' needs, including finding innovative ways to connect seniors with appropriate housing
- ✱ exploring age-friendly housing design
- ✱ consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders on ways to meet the workforce, housing and transport needs in their communities
- ✱ ensuring public transport meets the required accessibility standards for seniors.

How do we know we are achieving our goal?

- ✱ Seniors are active in the labour force as mature-age workers.¹²
- ✱ Seniors are satisfied with their current housing.¹³
- ✱ Seniors are able to access transport when they need it.¹⁴

¹² Based on data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the Education and Work Survey

¹³ Based on data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the Survey of Income and Housing

¹⁴ Based on data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the General Social Survey

Case study:

Skilling Solutions Queensland

George, 55, resettled from South Africa in 2009. Although he had decades of business management experience in the farming industry, he did not have a formal qualification and could not find a job.

A friend's recommendation prompted George to make an appointment with Skilling Solutions Queensland.

During his free interview with Skilling Solutions Queensland, George was shown how his business management skills could be converted into a formal qualification through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), a move which could improve his work prospects. After his interview, George pursued the RPL process with a local training provider contracted with Skilling Solutions Queensland and gained a Diploma in Business Management in just two weeks!

A local employer readily hired George. George is now studying a Certificate IV Training and Assessment to further enhance his skills.

Action plan for 2010–12

Priority 3

Highlights

Seniors in social housing will contribute to the redevelopment of the Tenant Participation Program.

This will provide social participation and intergenerational mentoring opportunities for seniors, as well as helping other tenants to access services.

Seniors will have ongoing and increasing participation in the workforce, by updating their skills and qualifications and through community and employer education.

From 2010 to 2012, 25 per cent of disadvantaged job seekers assisted through the Queensland Government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative will be mature-age.

Action plan 2010–12

Promoting workforce participation, independence and mobility

Actions	Lead agency
Support workforce participation and economic independence	
Conduct research on labour supply factors and older people through an Australian Research Council Linkage Project with Monash University, <i>Working late and the spectre of uselessness: Sustaining labour supply in a globalising economy</i> .	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Conduct research on workforce programs for older people and influence policy by collaborating with Griffith University to develop a project, addressing ageing productively, and strengthening Australia's social and economic fabric.	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Support disadvantaged job seekers and lower skilled workers, including mature-age job seekers, to develop confidence and skills to enter the workforce through the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program with funding of \$101m annually.	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Partner with the transport and logistics industry and the tourism industries to attract and retain older workers. The strategies will include industry liaison officers working with industry to promote training, flexible work options, on-the-job mentoring and age-friendly work practices.	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Promote and distribute 'Experience Pays' support materials to employers via the DEEDI website to help develop age-friendly work practices including adapting flexible work options, job redesign, and addressing health and wellbeing issues and manage their ageing workforces.	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation

Actions	Lead agency
Support older workers to remain in or re-enter the workforce by providing 'Experience Pays' information resources via the DEEDI website about options for working beyond retirement age, including access to employment programs and skills training.	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Assist people aged 55 years and over to attain qualifications to support their re-entry to the workforce by providing career information, training and recognition of prior learning through the Skilling Solutions Queensland initiative.	Department of Education and Training
Support Adult Community Education providers to increase delivery of education and training to all Queenslanders, including seniors.	Department of Education and Training
Support retired registered teachers to access short-term teaching and volunteering opportunities in regional and rural schools throughout Queensland, through the Grey Nomad Teacher Employment Strategy.	Department of Education and Training
Encourage all Queenslanders, including mature-aged workers with technical, professional and trades skills to share their knowledge and skills with others through Skills Treasury, a TAFE Queensland register for individuals interested sharing their skills with the next generation through TAFE Teaching.	Department of Education and Training
Promote women's workforce participation and economic security by working with the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation to identify barriers and solutions to older women's participation.	Department of Communities
Communicate with key superannuation bodies and banks in Queensland to audit financial literacy programs targeting women.	Department of Communities

Actions	Lead agency
Support the retention of mature-age workers through implementation of the Work-life Balance Strategy, offering the public and private sector information, education and practical tools to implement work-life balance options.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Develop, implement and distribute existing guides, including the Alumni Guide, to support mature-aged workers.	Public Service Commission
Encourage the retention of older workers by promoting and distributing the booklet <i>Valuing Older People: preparing your business for an ageing workforce</i> and providing information on mature-aged employment in Queensland.	Department of Justice and the Attorney-General
Increase the growth of the Seniors Business Discount Card initiative through the promotion of the scheme's financial benefits to eligible Queensland seniors.	Department of Public Works
Support the development of transport options	
Improve access to community transport options in regional Queensland through coordination of local reference groups and mapping of existing community transport resources.	Department of Communities, Queensland Health and Department of Transport and Main Roads
Monitor and review the <i>Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> and work with transport operators and providers to ensure compliance with Transport Standards.	Department of Transport and Main Roads
Support the provision of affordable and accessible public transport for seniors in South-East Queensland through the development and operation of appropriate ticketing.	TransLink
Support seniors to increasingly access public transport, particularly in South-East Queensland, through the integration of the Seniors Card and the go card.	TransLink and Department of Communities

Actions	Lead agency
Identify specific interventions to improve road safety through the review of the Austroads research project, Improving Older Driver Safety.	Department of Transport and Main Roads
Support Seniors Card holders by providing reciprocal Seniors Card concessions on urban and long distance public transport networks throughout Australia through the implementation of the Affordable Transport — National Seniors Transport Scheme.	Department of Transport and Main Roads
Support community-based transport options and improve access to transport through the Community Based Transport do-it-yourself kit for workers, groups and local governments particularly targeting rural and remote areas.	Department of Transport and Main Roads
Develop a road safety handbook to provide information and practical advice to assist older drivers to drive as safely as possible.	Department of Transport and Main Roads
Provide information and advice on the safe use of motorised wheelchairs, including information about the laws relating to the use of footpaths and sharing paths.	Department of Transport and Main Roads
Support affordable transport options through the operation of the Taxi Subsidy Scheme, Vision Impairment Travel Pass and the Disability Parking Permit Scheme to improve access to transport for people with a disability, including older people.	Department of Transport and Main Roads
Support seniors to access enhanced community transport options through the Northern Beaches Community Transport Options working group. This group is focused on Townsville's Northern Beaches, in partnership with Townsville City Council, and the Department of Transport and Main Roads.	Department of Communities
Promote local transport through funding for the North Queensland Community Transport Scheme (previously TOTTS), providing affordable transport to seniors, people with disabilities and the disadvantaged.	Department of Communities

Actions	Lead agency
Promote the availability of housing options	
In cooperation with the private sector and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, assist low-income seniors to access or retain more appropriate and accessible housing in the private housing market.	Department of Communities
Review the Tenant Participation Program to support intergenerational activities for seniors to get involved with social housing tenants throughout Queensland.	Department of Communities
Assist high needs seniors with social housing, including those with physical, cultural and other needs. As of June 30 2009, 29,585 seniors aged 55 years and over were in Government Managed Social Housing, including 1452 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There were 10,478 dedicated seniors' dwellings.	Department of Communities
Provide a range of private housing initiatives to eligible seniors to access or retain appropriate accommodation. These initiatives include the National Rental Affordability Scheme and the Home Assist Secure program. Other initiatives include the Bond Loan, RentConnect and Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (Queensland) programs.	Department of Communities
Provide a range of homelessness initiatives including supportive long-term accommodation for people who are chronically homeless, outreach teams, support for people at risk of becoming homeless, and enhanced crisis accommodation services for single adults in 10 locations across Queensland.	Department of Communities
Undertake a pilot, in collaboration with Queensland Health, to explore assistive technologies to support seniors in social housing. ¹⁵	Department of Communities

15 Assistive Technology is an umbrella term for any device or system that allows an individual to perform a task they otherwise would be unable to do, or increases the ease or safety with which the task can be performed.

Actions	Lead agency
Improve quality of life for Home and Community Care (HACC) eligible people who are frail aged and living in private residential services such as hostels, boarding houses and aged care rental accommodation facilities that are regulated by the <i>Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002</i> . Services include lifestyle support services, including key support workers to support socially isolated people, undertake community linking activities and provide personal care services.	Department of Communities
Assist HACC eligible clients to maintain independence, improve quality of life and delay admission to long-term residential care (Functional Independence Initiative).	Department of Communities
Establish pilot projects which use technology to assist seniors to live independently under HACC's Assistive Technology Initiative.	Department of Communities
Provide a range of concessions to eligible seniors	
Promote the benefits of the Seniors Card scheme to eligible Queensland seniors, with card holders to receive access to a broad range of state government concessions, including public transport.	Department of Public Works
Reduce the cost of travel and motor vehicle registration for seniors through the travel and motor vehicle registration concessions for eligible concession card holders.	Department of Transport and Main Roads
Provide concessions to pensioners, seniors and veterans for purchasing or accessing essential household services. The concessions, totalling more than \$188.9m, include the Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme; Pensioner Water Subsidy Scheme; Electricity Rebate Scheme; Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme; Electricity Life Support Concession Scheme; the Queensland Solar Hot Water Program; the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme; and the Rail Concession Scheme.	Department of Communities and Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation



Supporting community
participation and
age-friendly
communities

Priority 4

In the thick of things

Encouraging active ageing and supporting participation in the community are crucial to enhancing seniors' quality of life. For seniors, participation may include volunteering, education and training, as well as a broad range of social, cultural and recreational activities.

An age-friendly community means seniors can participate in their chosen activities in a safe environment. Planning for an age-friendly community needs to occur across all levels of government, and engage individuals and the community, to ensure appropriate housing, infrastructure and urban development.

Most seniors already enjoy a wide range of sports, arts, education and other recreational activities. While this strategy looks at ways to assist all seniors to participate in the community, its focus is on those people who are most at risk of becoming isolated from their communities.

Social isolation involves a low level of social interaction and the experience of loneliness. The *Positively Ageless* consultation showed the seniors most at risk of social isolation are those living in rural and remote areas, seniors who are single and living alone, older women, carers, people with physical and mental health conditions, people in the upper tiers of ageing and people with a disability. Grandparents raising grandchildren may also experience a sense of isolation from their community and peers.





Our goal

Social isolation is reduced for seniors through increased community participation in an inclusive and age-friendly community.

Achieving our goal

Seniors who volunteer often benefit from strong social and support networks and, as such, volunteering plays an important role in achieving the goal of an age-friendly community.

Volunteer organisations and the wider community also benefit greatly from seniors' experience and knowledge. In Queensland, seniors make a strong contribution to the volunteer workforce, with 36 per cent of people aged 55–64 and 27 per cent of people over 65 years volunteering.

Under this strategy, the Government will explore ways to encourage seniors from all walks of life to participate in volunteering and enrich the diversity of the volunteer workforce.

Intergenerational activities can also promote positive attitudes toward ageing, strengthen the community and enhance positive interactions between older and younger generations.

*Growing old is
mandatory: growing
up is optional!*

— Chili Davis,
baseball player

Our approach to supporting community participation and building age-friendly communities includes:

- ✱ developing communication strategies across government to increase awareness of services and opportunities for social participation
- ✱ exploring innovative, age-friendly urban and building design in consultation with seniors and their representatives
- ✱ developing ideas for age-friendly rural areas, including encouraging grey nomads to get involved in the communities they visit¹⁶
- ✱ supporting culturally appropriate service delivery
- ✱ encouraging lifelong learning
- ✱ enhancing neighbourhood level communication to connect seniors with their community

16 Note: a Parliamentary Inquiry into developing Queensland's rural and regional communities through grey nomad tourism commenced in April 2010 and is expected to report in late 2010.

- ✱ consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders about ways to prevent social isolation
- ✱ finding ways to address cultural and language barriers to social participation
- ✱ exploring innovative ways for seniors to participate in activities while living at home
- ✱ developing ways to identify socially isolated seniors and connect them with appropriate assistance
- ✱ exploring ways to address seniors' safety concerns
- ✱ promoting community activities that encourage seniors to participate
- ✱ promoting opportunities for seniors to volunteer in sport and recreation.

How will we know we are achieving our goal?

Seniors are involved in volunteering and community groups in their local areas.¹⁷

17 Based on data collected by the Annual Volunteering Survey, Department of Communities Queensland and Australian Bureau of Statistics in the Voluntary Work Survey data.

Case study:
Safe and Confident Living

A small group of interested seniors in Central Queensland have high praise for the Safe and Confident Living program which encourages socialisation in a safe environment.

After attending an awareness raising session on reducing social isolation and fear of crime, the group decided to hold an outdoor event.

They held a ‘Damper at the Dam’ outdoor gathering on a Saturday afternoon: 55 people turned up. Many dampers and cups of tea were made and shared, with lots of singing and toe tapping.

“It was a beautiful afternoon,” said Joyce. “We should come out to the dam more often.”

Action plan for 2010–12

Priority 4

Highlights

Seniors in regional Queensland will have opportunities for volunteering and social participation and improve their online skills.

In 2010, U3A will provide at least 50 seniors in regional Queensland with opportunities for online social participation activities.

More seniors will be involved in volunteering activities in Queensland schools. Volunteering Queensland will work with the Queensland Government to ensure older people are included as volunteers in the Queensland Ready Readers Program in 2010–12.

Action plan 2010–12

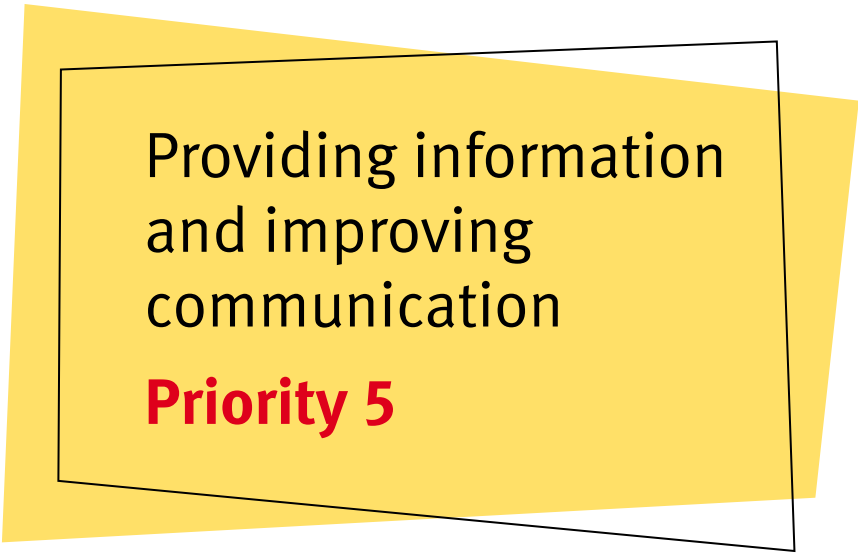
Supporting community participation and age-friendly communities

Actions	Lead agency
Encourage older people to actively participate in their communities	
Support the implementation of <i>Positively Ageless</i> — <i>Queensland Seniors Strategy Action Plan 2010–12</i> through new regional resources developed under the Community Participation Program.	Department of Communities
Increase intergenerational interaction between seniors and young people by supporting the Granfriends programs which utilises volunteers to teach craft and other skills to children in schools.	Department of Communities
Reduce social isolation and support participation and volunteering in the community by seniors and provide online learning opportunities through the establishment of U3A branches in regional Queensland.	Department of Communities
Increase seniors' participation in the community and sense of security as well as encourage healthy ageing with funding of \$1.28m for 20 current Older People's Action Program services.	Department of Communities
Encourage older people to use their skills and knowledge to volunteer with community organisations through the Golden Gurus project.	Department of Communities

Actions	Lead agency
Increase the number of seniors who volunteer with sport and recreation organisations, by researching, identifying and communicating ways that will encourage seniors to consider volunteering to support sport and recreation organisations.	Department of Communities
Increase the number of seniors who volunteer and access volunteer training through Volunteering Queensland.	Department of Communities
Support community organisations with resources to recruit and retain older people as volunteers, including the distribution of <i>Involving over 50s as volunteers</i> and <i>Is your organisation volunteer-friendly?</i>	Department of Communities
Develop a sustainable volunteering program which connects retired and semi-retired seniors with rural communities through a research project in partnership with QUT and La Trobe University.	Department of Communities
Encourage older people to volunteer in the Queensland Ready Readers Program (in participation with Volunteering Queensland).	Department of Education and Training
Develop an arts and cultural diversity statement that promotes the contribution of seniors to the cultural life of the state, and encourages active participation in arts and cultural activities.	Arts Queensland
Provide a range of public programs for visitors to gain knowledge, including regular talks, short courses and special events relating to the Queensland Art Gallery's exhibitions and collection through 'My Gen 50+', for people aged over 50.	Queensland Art Gallery

Actions	Lead agency
Improve electoral processes to support seniors to vote, including increasing access to voting options and providing age-friendly procedures and equipment.	Electoral Commission of Queensland
Provide opportunities for community involvement and recognise and support the needs of community groups, including seniors, in community planning processes such as Qplan, the <i>Sustainable Planning Act 2009</i> , <i>Queensland Planning Provisions</i> , the <i>State Planning Policy for Housing and Residential Development</i> , draft <i>Premises Standard and Australian Building Codes</i> .	Department of Infrastructure and Planning
Address community safety concerns	
Contribute to safer communities and address crime and fear of crime through bi-annual Seniors Forums where representatives of the Queensland Police Service, Department of Communities and community organisations discuss and implement relevant strategies.	Queensland Police Service
Provide crime prevention information for seniors and reduce incidence and impact of crime against seniors by continuing to distribute the <i>Confident, Safe & Secure</i> handbook and the <i>Senior, Wiser, Safer</i> directory.	Queensland Police Service
Provide seniors with general information on personal safety strategies while in the home, community and travelling, through the development and distribution of seniors safety resources.	Queensland Police Service

Actions	Lead agency
Assess the trial initiative Project Unit Watch aimed at reducing social isolation of seniors and residential crime in units and improving personal safety and unit security with a view to inclusion in the Neighbourhood Watch program.	Queensland Police Service
Promote effective communication strategies between police and seniors, improve interactions and manage calls for service in a professional and responsive manner, by distributing the Police Training DVD across Queensland.	Queensland Police Service
Increase participation of Indigenous Elders in the youth justice conferencing process through \$0.06m annual funding to cover the out-of-pocket expenses of Elders.	Department of Communities
Support organisations to reduce social isolation	
Assist service providers, government agencies and community groups in designing, implementing and evaluating projects to reduce social isolation of seniors through distribution of the best practice guidelines.	Department of Communities
Research ageing and seniors issues through annual funding of \$0.064m to the Institute of Social Science Research University of Queensland.	Department of Communities



Providing information
and improving
communication

Priority 5

From inkwell to email

Access to up-to-date information is important for seniors to find services and be able to participate fully in the community.

Information that is useful to seniors can cover a wide range of topics such as transport, legal issues, concessions, home and community care, health and recreation.

Seniors access information in a variety of ways, including online searches. While most seniors source the information they need, other seniors may find locating information complex and time consuming.

We need to support all seniors to access the right information at the right time. A priority is to improve access to information so seniors can be fully informed about services and issues that affect their lives.

The way information is communicated determines whether it reaches those who need it. Making information accessible for people of all abilities, including seniors with sensory and communication impairments, will improve the channels of communication.

In addition, improving communication across government, service providers and the community will result in a coordinated approach in service delivery to seniors.

All levels of government, non-government organisations and individuals in the community can work together to facilitate the right information about services, delivered in accessible formats, to reach those who need it most.





Our goal

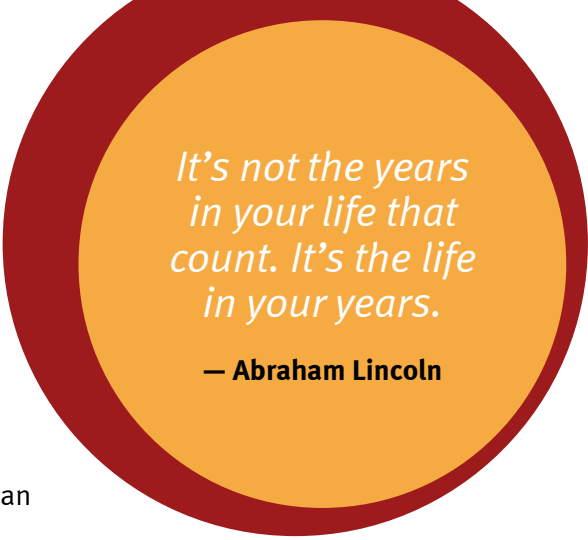
Access to comprehensive information is improved so seniors, especially those who are most vulnerable, can locate support and services.

Achieving our goal

As well as the Queensland Government streamlining information, the whole community can also be involved as many seniors find information through informal networks and face-to-face communication. To support informal channels of communication, we need to develop more strategies to increase awareness of services.

Coordinating information sharing between government agencies and service providers is an important step to improve communication. Links within government can be strengthened to allow seniors to access information without having to contact a number of different agencies.

Our diverse senior population needs to be reflected in the way information materials are developed, for example, through the use of culturally appropriate materials and a variety of formats, such as large print for people who are visually impaired. We need to reach seniors through a range of communication channels, such as radio, newspapers and community education programs, and support seniors to learn how to use new technologies.



*It's not the years
in your life that
count. It's the life
in your years.*

— **Abraham Lincoln**

The approach to providing better information and communication to seniors includes:

- ✱ providing access to interpreting services when using government services
- ✱ ensuring seniors in rural and remote areas can access the information they need
- ✱ providing culturally appropriate information to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors
- ✱ exploring ways to coordinate services
- ✱ investigating new ways to promote services
- ✱ providing assistance to learn how to use new technologies
- ✱ continuing research and building our evidence base
- ✱ providing adaptive communication for seniors with communication difficulties.

How will we know we are achieving our goal?

- ✱ Seniors are accessing information online.¹⁸

18 Based on data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the General Social Survey data.

Case study: Seniors Enquiry Line

The Seniors Enquiry Line is a statewide information and referral phone service operated by Lifeline that — for the cost of a local call — answers all sorts of questions on issues of interest to older Queenslanders. Like:

Jim wanted to know about social activities available in his suburb. With the exception of going out for groceries and medical appointments, Jim had barely left his home for years. He wanted to meet people his own age and make new friends; but how? Not only could the information officer suggest where Jim could go, he was able to arrange volunteer transport to get Jim to the meetings.

Denise was six months away from retiring when she called the Seniors Enquiry Line seeking information about financial planning. She wanted to know how best to invest her superannuation and savings, and any tax implications. Denise was given information about financial planning services as well as a guide to financial planning and a checklist guide for choosing a financial planner. Eligibility requirements for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card and concessions were also explained.

Luisa called, seeking a Spanish-speaking physiotherapist for her elderly mother. A Seniors Enquiry Line information officer was able to put Luisa in touch with a health centre that employed a Spanish-speaking physio and Luisa's mum, Maria, has felt comfortable and secure receiving treatment while conversing in her own language.

Action plan for 2010–12

Priority 5

Highlights

Seniors will be able to find out about relevant services through a single website that brings together information from across government.

One call will put seniors in touch with information on concessions, social activities, household assistance, retirement accommodation, financial and legal matters, health, education, transport and many other issues.

In 2010–11, the Seniors Enquiry Line, a community-based 1300 number operated by Lifeline, will be promoted across Queensland.

Action plan 2010–12

Providing information and improving communication

Actions	Lead agency
Enhance awareness of available services for seniors and raise awareness of seniors issues	
Provide information on concessions, social activities, independent living, health, finance, retirement and support services for seniors by providing \$0.3m funding to the Seniors Enquiry Line, a statewide telephone and referral service operated by Lifeline.	Department of Communities
Improve provision of information about existing seniors services by promoting the Seniors Enquiry Line, a statewide telephone and referral service operated by Lifeline.	Department of Communities
Promote the Grandparent Information Hotline to improve awareness of services and provide information to grandparents.	Department of Communities
Provide information and advocacy support, especially for low-income seniors, through annual funding of \$0.11m to Australian Pensioners and Superannuants League Qld Inc, a statewide peak organisation for self-funded retirees and seniors receiving pensions.	Department of Communities
Provide information and referrals to services for women through the Office for Women website.	Department of Communities

Actions	Lead agency
<p>Improve consumer access to community care services through the Access Points initiative which provides a single point of information or referral to community care through a freecall number in Rockhampton Central Highlands, Banana, Gladstone and Wide Bay. The service targets eligible frail older people and younger people with a disability.</p>	<p>Department of Communities</p>
<p>Provide seniors with information about all relevant Queensland Government services through the development of a customer-focused integrated website.</p>	<p>Department of Communities and Department of Public Works</p>
<p>Ensure seniors can access information about services through a single telephone number for the Queensland Government. Seniors can also find information online or by visiting any counter-based services, such as multi-government service centres, or through departmental counters.</p>	<p>Department of Public Works</p>
<p>Support the provision of information</p>	
<p>Improve access for frail aged people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to Home and Community Care (HACC) services through new regional HACC Multicultural Advisory Services across Queensland.</p>	<p>Department of Communities</p>
<p>Provide opportunities to identify actions that will assist culturally and linguistically diverse seniors to access services and engage with their communities through the review of Queensland's Multicultural Policy.</p>	<p>Department of Communities</p>

Actions	Lead agency
Celebrate the role of Elders and older people in communities across Queensland through a series of locally-produced radio broadcasts. The broadcasts will be produced by community members, with the direct involvement of local seniors and Elders, in the communities of: Northern Peninsula Area, Doomadgee, Mornington Island, Aurukun, Wujal Wujal, Hopevale, Kowanyama, and Pormpuraaw.	Department of Communities
Lead the development of a coordinated approach to the Queensland Government's language service policy, including developing interpreter guidelines for departmental staff and service areas and a streamlined approach for department-funded services.	Department of Communities
Undertake community engagement to inform people aged over 50 of proposed amendments to the <i>Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003</i> and encourage stakeholder input.	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
Provide information to Queensland seniors through publication of: <i>Important Information for Queensland Seniors</i> (available in 15 languages), <i>Ageing: Myth & Reality; A Guide to Retiring</i> ; and <i>Seniors and the Law</i> .	Department of Communities
Improve links within culturally and linguistically diverse communities, through the translation of Queensland Police Service materials, including those aimed at seniors, into six languages.	Queensland Police Service





Implementing the strategy

An initial two-year action plan is included at the end of each priority area in the strategy. These actions for the next two years will ‘get things started’ and build on the strong foundation already in place for seniors’ services.

The Department of Communities, as the lead agency, will be responsible for the implementation of *Positively Ageless*, in consultation with other Queensland Government agencies.

Subsequent two-year action plans will be developed and released until 2020. The action plans will be published on the Department of Communities website and will include links to further information about services.

Future action plans beyond 2012 will align with the *Positively Ageless* priorities and address issues raised in the consultations, including:

- ✱ improving health care
- ✱ transport accessibility
- ✱ appropriate housing
- ✱ better access to information and service coordination

- ✱ valuing and respecting seniors
- ✱ involvement in the community
- ✱ workforce participation options.

For each of these issues, the focus will be on appropriate service delivery to seniors.

Every six months, government agencies will meet to formally review current and future action plans.

The Seniors Roundtable will act as a community reference group for the implementation of the strategy and provide feedback as part of the progress report process. The roundtable includes representatives from key seniors’ organisations and meets with the Minister for Community Services and Housing twice a year.

Representation will also be sought from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and disability groups to provide feedback on the strategy’s progress and for consultation on relevant issues. This will provide a means for ongoing feedback and ensure that action plans address the diversity of our communities’ needs.

As the lead agency, the Department of Communities will discuss performance improvements with agencies so the action plan objectives are met.

The department will also publish progress reports every two years. For the reports, agencies will be asked to:

- ✱ provide details on the impact of their initiatives in the action plan
- ✱ report on relevant performance indicators
- ✱ provide an assessment of the progress of actions that are to be completed.

A final report will be released in 2020.

In relation to implementing the strategy, the Seniors Roundtable, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives and disability groups will be actively involved to build strong relationships, improve planning and policy development, and contribute to improvements in service quality and innovation.

The involvement of the sector and stakeholders is in line with the Queensland Compact, which is a formal agreement to strengthen the partnership between the government and the non-profit community services sector to achieve better outcomes for Queenslanders.

And, of course, we will welcome feedback from Queensland seniors, who will have the opportunity to respond to the progress of *Positively Ageless* after each progress report is published.

The next 10 years

First action plan 2010–12 — Where we are now

The first action plan sets out the Queensland Government's current investment in services for seniors. This action plan takes stock of what is happening in the 2010–12 period and looks at where improvements can be made.

Second action plan 2012–14 — Moving ahead

The second action plan will build on the first plan, and encourage departments to prioritise service delivery for seniors.

Third action plan 2014–16 — Looking at how far we've come

We're half-way toward achieving our vision for an age-friendly state! During the third action plan we will see what has been working for seniors in Queensland, how far we have come and improvements we need to make.

Fourth action plan 2016–18 — Toward our goals

The fourth action plan will see strong progress towards our goals. We expect to see seniors benefiting from improvements in all of the priority areas.

Fifth action plan 2018–20 — Age-friendly communities

In the final action plan, reporting will show seniors are supported to be active and healthy and live in age-friendly communities. At this time, there will be almost twice as many people over the age of 65 as there were in 2006.

How do I get copies of the seniors strategy?

The strategy is available at www.seniors.qld.gov.au
or by calling 13 13 04.

For further information about services

Seniors Enquiry Line is a free and confidential service
operated by Lifeline.

Ph: 1300 135 500, 9am to 5pm weekdays

Website: www.seniorenquiryline.com.au

TTY users: 07 3250 1928