



Community Options Illawarra Inc.

Community Options - Quality Options

COI CONVERSE ILLAWARRA & SHOALHAVEN NEWSLETTER

CEO REPORT



Welcome to the Christmas edition of COI Converse.

The past few months have been busy ones for Community Options Illawarra with our normal operations of case management and brokerage for people of frail age, people with disabilities and their carers; extra respite organized for people with disability and those with dementia; the memory walk for people with dementia; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mini-Olympics and a carers' retreat..

We have also completed the end-of-year financial and compliance activities and had the Annual General Meeting on 23rd November 2011 with a guest speaker from the University of Wollongong,

Associate Professor Victoria Traynor of the newly established NSW & ACT Australia Dementia Training & Study Centre.

Associate Professor Victoria Traynor outlined the work carried out at the university on improving dementia care processes. The presentation included drawings by people with dementia as alternative ways of supporting people affected, in particular those with younger onset dementia. Art was considered a way for sufferers to express what is happening to them.

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Emotional intelligence becomes highly sensitive for those suffering from dementia and the programme is investigating new ways of thinking about how positive interaction can take place so that sufferers can flourish and live well within the community.

Other activities have included some consultations about the changes due to occur between the federal and state governments about service provision for people over 65 years (50 years for people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities) with the federal government and aged care services and service provision for people under 65 years with the state government and disability service providers.

Transition arrangements are in place for the next 2 years and we will more than likely have a service agreement with the federal government for services to people over 65 years (50 years for people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities) and with the state government for people under 65 years. These should be finalised by April 2012.

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In the first Standard of the Community Care Common Standards there are 8 expected outcomes for service providers. These include:

- 1. The service provider has implemented corporate governance processes that are accountable to stakeholders*
- 2. The service provider has systems in place to identify and ensure compliance with funded program guidelines, relevant legislation, regulatory requirements and professional standards.*
- 3. The service provider has effective information management systems in place.*
- 4. The service provider understands and engages with the community in which it operates and reflects this in service planning and development.*
- 5. The service provider actively pursues and demonstrates continuous improvement in all aspects of service management and delivery.*
- 6. The service provider is actively working to identify and address potential risk, to ensure safety of service users, staff and the organisation.*
- 7. The service provider manages human resources to ensure that adequate numbers of appropriate—skilled and trained staff/volunteers are available*

for the safe delivery of care and services to service users.

- 8. The service provider manages physical resources to ensure the safe delivery of care and services to service users and organisational personnel.*

More information on the other two standards will be provided in following newsletters.

In order for COI to meet these obligations it is important the surveys sent out next year in March are completed and returned to inform what we do.



Guest speaker Associate Professor Victoria Traynor and Jan Wetherall, Chairperson, Community Options Illawarra Inc at the COI 23rd Annual General Meeting

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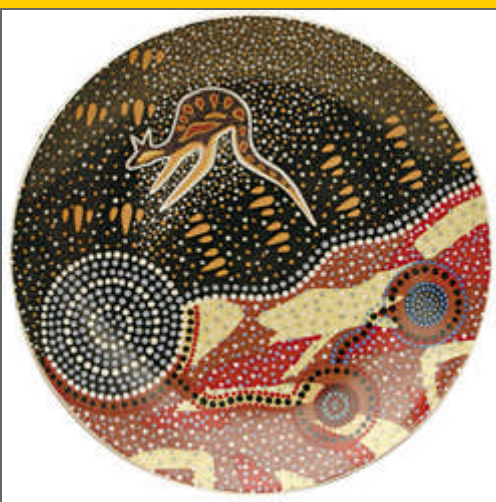


It remains for me to wish you all the very best wishes of the season and we will resume our busy schedule in 2012 and be very attentive to what you may wish to tell us about how we are going and be open to any suggestions for improvement.

Anja Nivala

CEO

EVENTS



MINI OLYMPICS

On Friday 14th October, the annual Aunty Jean's Koori Mini Olympics event was held at Shellharbour Stadium at Albion Park. The idea for the Koori Mini Olympics was an initiative of the "Aunty Jean's Good Health" teams in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. The team programs were developed to provide exercise, education and support for Aboriginal people with chronic conditions such as diabetes and diseases of the circulatory system. The program, which first ran in 2003, was named after well respected local elder Aunty Jean Morris. The Mini Olympics are a celebra-

tion of the improvements to health and fitness made in the past year and involves teams from all over the state competing in a variety of events.

CEO Anja sat on the organizing committee, and Community Options Illawarra was one of the sponsors of the event. COI staff members were happy to attend on the day to observe the fun and also to provide information to the community about our programs.

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YARN UP

Yarn Up was held at Wollongong Youth Services on the corner of Burrelli and Keira street ,Wollongong on Friday 28 October 2011 between 10 and 2pm . Yarn Up is an event that has been held over the last two years by the Illawarra Aboriginal Pathways Group which meets on a regular basis at the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service, Wollongong Office. The maipurpose of this year's Yarn Up was to develop informal networks and linkages between local aboriginal people living in the Illawarra area and Disability and Community Care providers.

It also provide an opportunity for the various organizations to provide information to the community and obtain there feedback. At this year's event the Illawarra Koori Men's Support Group cooked a delicious barbeque which included tasting traditional foods such as crocodile and kangaroo.

Aunty Jeans Program provide some wonderful fun entertainment that was greatly enjoyed by all. Everyone acknowledged that Wollongong Youth Centre was a great venue for such an event. Staff from Community Options Illawarra were on hand during the day to help organize a delicious morning tea and provide information about COI services.

People who attended on the day were invited to participate in short evaluation of the event at the end of the day. The results of the evaluation are currently being col-lated.



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Tip Toe Through The Tulips

The retreat for older parent carers of adult children with disabilities was held in the picturesque country estate of Peppers Craigieburn Bowral, at the end of September.

The theme was “Pleasure, Relaxation and Wellbeing.” There was much fun and laughter during the trivia and the Community Options Cruise night, which was full of deck games and dancing. The retreat was an opportunity for carers to unwind and be indulged. Fabulous food, pamper sessions to relax muscles and release stress, meditation, and yoga was provided to all.

Carers NSW provided some tips on “Taking Care of Yourself”, such as taking time out, sharing the caring role, and accepting that by taking time out and attending to your own needs, your capacity to care will increase. The retreat embraced all these tips, together with providing an opportunity to talk to others, share life-stories, the love and challenges of the caring role, and planning for the future.

Of course there was the stroll through Corbett Gardens to admire the tulips, although under umbrellas and raincoats, due to the rain.

Your feedback has told us that a few days away makes a big difference. We understand caring is demanding and can leave you too tired and exhausted to even organize time away. It has been a pleasure to arrange the details of the respite, accommodation, and transport, to create this escape to the Southern Highlands.

Lisa, Katherine and Snezana



Carers at Peppers Craigieburn Bowral Retreat



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Dementia March

On 13 October 2011, Dianne Zisis and Kate Troy attended the Alzheimer's Australia Fight Dementia march in Canberra with coordinators from Illawarra In Home Support, volunteers and graduate carers from Kiama and Wollongong Respite Services. The Fight Dementia Campaign was a result of the Federal Government's decision to terminate the Dementia Initiative in the 2011/12 budget meaning a loss of guaranteed funding for essential dementia programs and support services for people with dementia.



This was a severe disappointment to people with dementia and their families and carers as the dementia epidemic continues to grow, with 1 million Australians predicted to have dementia by 2050.

The nearly 500-strong march was shown on national TV and raised awareness for people, both young and old, living with dementia and their families.

Our group was lucky to have a tour of Parliament House with Federal MPs Sharon Bird's personal assistant, and then met with local Federal MPs Sharon Bird and Stephen Jones to voice our concerns regarding the reduction in funding for dementia programs and the need for more packages of care in the Illawarra. The MPs have agreed to attend a morning tea with local services, carers and clients.

A most successful and enjoyable day networking with local services and our representatives in Canberra. Our thanks to Kiama Community Transport for chauffeuring us all.

Kate Troy, Dianne Zisis



Dementia March group with local MPs Sharon Bird & Stephen Jones

News and upcoming events

Younger Onset Dementia

Carers Support Group Meetings 2012

The support group is an open and ongoing nonprofessional group of people who support each other through the journey of dementia.

The main purpose of the support group is to:

- provide an opportunity for carers to share, discuss and assist each other through a process of mutual aid
- enhance the well-being of the carer
- enhance the well-being of the person with dementia

Dates for 2012

16th February 2012

23rd August 2012

19th April 2012

18th October 201

21st June 2012

6th December 2012

Please contact Dianne Zisis 42248610, Kate Troy 42041006 or Jill Hunter 42248602 for further information.

COMMUNITY OPTIONS ILLAWARRA YOUNGER ONSET DEMENTIA CARER SUPPORT GROUP EVALUATIONS RESULTS 2011

Annual evaluations were sent to our support group members. We had a 100% return rate and the results are extremely positive. There was an overall consensus that the group is meeting its expectations. I have listed some of the questions and the responses.

“ What has been the most valuable aspect of attending the group?”

Meeting others with similar stories, meeting people with the same problem, speaking about our feelings, Information, valuable friendships formed, knowing you are not alone in this journey, interaction with other carers”.

Some of the topics the group members would like to discuss at future meetings were :

Managing carer stress, meaningful relationships and skillful communication, coping with changed behaviors, taking a break.

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We asked the group if there was anything they would like to change and there was one suggestion stating they would like the meetings to be held monthly instead of bi monthly.

We wish all our members a safe and happy Christmas and are looking forward to another successful year.

Dianne, Kate & Jill

STAFF SNIPPETS

Welcome new staff member :- Community Options Illawarra Inc welcomes Susan Mitchell who will be based at our Bungendore office.

Staff resignation :- Katherine Firth, Case Manager at our Nowra office, has tendered her resignation to take effect from Friday 16th December 2011. We are sorry to see Katherine go and wish her all the best for the future.



Community Options staff at the 23rd Annual General Meeting

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*Community Options - Quality Options***BOARD MEMBERS****Elected Board Members for 2012**

Jan Wetherall	Chairperson
Jake Pearson	Vice Chairperson
Nicole Paramanis	Treasurer
Trevor Phillis	Secretary/Public Officer
Glenda Potts	Board Member
Terrie Leoleos	Board Member
Joanne Boyce	Board Member
Ann Farrell	Board Member
Karen Williams	Board Member

We would like to acknowledge Jenny Godin who has resigned this year from Community Options Illawarra Inc Board of Management . Jenny has been a long serving Board member. We thank Jenny for her dedication and hard work.

CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

Community Options Illawarra Inc will be closed from 1.00pm Friday 23rd December 2011 and will reopen Tuesday 3rd January 2012. [\(see back of newsletter for contact details\)](#)





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**COI CONVERSE
ILLAWARRA & SHOALHAVEN
NEWSLETTER**

Wollongong Office: ```` Ph: 02 4226 3611

Shellharbour Office ```` Ph: 02 4297 100

Nowra Office `````````` Ph: 02 4421 4234

Milton Office `````````` Ph: 02 4454 1701

Bungendore Ph: 02 6238 1872

Email: info@coi.org.au



Visit Community Options Illawarra's new website for program information and much more

www.coi.org.au

Any contributions, letters, items of interest, your stories, and other information will be acknowledged and published in the next newsletter.

Everyone is WELCOME to contribute.

Send to: PO Box 1433, WOLLONGONG NSW 2500 OR

Call Maria Ph: 02 4226 3611/ email: maria.puljic@coi.org.au



ACCOUNT PAYMENTS

If paying an account through the bank please remember to use your name or invoice number as a reference.

Please note: we will no longer issue receipts when paying by cheque.