

Carer Support Service

The Caring Times

Ballarat, Golden Plains, Moorabool & Hepburn Shires



Grampians
Health
Ballarat

ISSUE 10

Hi Carers,

How did we get April so quickly? We hope you had a good start of the year. For us it has been going so fast, we must either have been busy or having fun with what we do. We think it was both.

One exciting thing that comes with the new year is that we are face to face with you for more events. Some of you have walked with us in the Botanic Gardens and enjoyed a cuppa and cake and some of you have come with us to the movies. In the school holidays Young Carers had adventures including mini golf, movies and ten pin bowling. Young Carers will be offered a fantastic camp in April also.

Another program that we are starting up again in April is our Memory Mingle program. Memory Mingle is a social group for Carers and the person they care for with a memory impairment or a diagnosis of Dementia. The group comes together to share experiences and provide peer support to one another in an environment where they feel safe and understood.

Before COVID this group met regularly, face to face. During COVID we tried to be there for this group online and now we are very excited to be offering this again in a face to face capacity in 2023.

We will start in April with a WELCOME BACK TO MEMORY MINGLE luncheon. From there on we will meet every 2 months and have a varied program offering speakers and other events during the year. We will work together where we can with Dementia Australia and tap into their expertise.

Are you interested in this group and caring for someone with a diagnosis of Dementia or the person you care for has a memory impairment? Please contact us and put your name on the mailing list. If you have attended this program before COVID, your name should already be there.

Let's meet up again with our old friends,
we hope to see you soon.

Janneke and Tracey



Pic source: unsplash.com/ricbro

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Events coming up:

* Delivery of programs is subject to COVID related guidelines and/or restrictions in place at the time.

	What are we doing	Who is it for	Where
April			
6 th	Q&A session (Our Kitchen Garden)	All Carers	Online
17 th	School holiday event with Little Dreamers (movies & lunch)	Young Carers	TBA
20 th	Pathways for Carers	Carers meet at 9:45am at Pipers for a stroll around the Ballarat Botanical gardens & a free morning tea at Pipers	Pipers by the Lake
21 st	Memory Mingle (Welcome lunch)	Carers of people with memory problems and the person they care for	Ballarat Golf Club
29 th -30 th	Young Carer Camp	Young Carers	Log Cabin Camp
May			
4 th	Q&A session (Pathway for Carers)	All Carers	Online
18 th	Pathways for Carers	Carers meet at 9:45am at Pipers for a stroll around the Ballarat Botanical gardens & a free morning tea at Pipers	Pipers by the Lake
21 st 28 th	Difficult Decisions workshop Facilitator: Counsellor, Mary O'Mara	For Carers who are looking at permanent care for the person they care for (<i>2 part workshop</i>)	Online
TBA	Young Carer monthly catch up	Young Carers	TBA
June			
1 st	Q&A session (Mindfulness with Jane)	All Carers	Online
15 th	Pathways for Carers	Carers meet at 9:45am at Pipers for a stroll around the Ballarat Botanical gardens & a free morning tea at Pipers	Pipers by the Lake
16 th	Memory Mingle	Carers of people with memory problems and the person they care for	TBA
22 nd 29 th	Life After Caring workshop Facilitator: Counsellor, Mary O'Mara	For Carers who have recently lost the person they care for (<i>2 part workshop</i>)	Online
28 th	Young Carer bus trip (Melbourne Aquarium & Harry Potter stage show)	Young Carers	Melbourne
TBA	Young Carer monthly catch up	Young Carers	TBA

**** If you are interested in any of these events, please contact us on (03) 5333 7104 or email carers@bhs.org.au to register your interest.**

Young Carer Camp

Grampians Health Ballarat and Bendigo Health would like to invite young carers to spend some time relaxing and enjoying fun activities with other young carers at a Young Carer Camp in Creswick.

When: Saturday 29 April & Sunday 30 April. Bus provided to and from Bendigo and Ballarat.

Who: Young carers aged 9 - 17 yrs living in the Central Highlands, Grampians, Pyrenees, Wimmera, Loddon Mallee regions or City of Melton.

For more information or to register your interest, please call (03) 5333 7104 or email carers@bhs.org.au

Question & Answer Sessions (Online Q&A)

We invite you to join us online with the experts to provide information and have your questions answered. Ask all you want to know about a different subject each month.

Last month, we had the pleasure of being joined by Social Support Program Manager, Teresa from the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council (BRMC)

Did you know that the Social Support Program offer things such as

- Social hub (all day drop in centre) where you can drop in for morning tea, lunch, therapeutic activities, entertainment, local outings, Bus trips, digital literacy support and more
- Multicultural tucker (monthly opportunity) to socialise and enjoy a 3 course meal with live music
- Wellness classes (currently running Tai chi and chair based Yoga)
- Home visiting program in which a trained volunteer (matched based on culture, interests and personality) will visit once a week for an hour
- Health & Wellbeing seasonal lunches Plus much much more

For further information you can visit 25-39 Barkly Street, call (03) 5333 1123 or email teresa@brmc.org.au

Feeling out loud

Places are already filling for our Feeling Out Loud workshop series, hosted by local Carer, poet and spoken word performer, Megan.

Explore creative writing exercises, poetry, or spoken word — there's a workshop for everyone!

Write Here, Write Now: A guided creative writing workshop designed to get the creative juices flowing in a fun, pressure-free environment. Friday 17 March (10am-12pm)

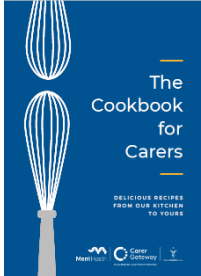
Poetry, Found: Use printed text and magazines to create a literary collage masterpiece with images, colour or cut-out words in this fun hands-on workshop. Friday 24 March (10am-12pm)

Writing Poetry: Let your feelings flow onto the page with a series of writing prompts and the gift of time to write, with the option to share your poetic works out loud in a safe space. Friday 31 March (10am-12pm)

Slammin' Spoken Word: Gain confidence when presenting aloud to an audience. Use your original writing or a variety of existing texts and learn techniques to engage your audience. Friday 14 April (10am-12pm)

Places are limited so secure your free spot through Ballarat Libraries by calling (03) 5338 6850, emailing ballaratlibraries@ballarat.vic.gov.au or book direct via this link <http://bit.ly/3XSY6IJ>

Carer Cookbook



Our Carer Cookbook is now out!

Special thank you to all Carers who participated and/or supported us in making this become a reality. Please have a look at our website to download your free copy today

[Carer Cookbook * click here *](#)

or scan the QR code to download



Carer Story

My husband Clive was diagnosed with Alzheimers just as COVID hit in 2020. Our once happy, peaceful lifestyle was now different. Soon, his loving, gentle nature would change. As confusion set in, he became suspicious, or non-cooperative, or angry. Other days, he was back to his former self. Over time, some days felt like a battle ground. Waking up each morning I'd wonder what the day would bring.

My own confusion and anxiety took over my life. I dreaded the mornings that I tried to dress a 6ft tall man when he got angry and resisted my help. Coaxing and persuasion would work one day, but not the next.

A serious situation arose one day, I was desperate for a miracle. Soon after, salvation came when I opened up my emails to find Carer Gateway had a zoom class on Difficult Decisions with Mary O'Mara. I read and reread the information. Luckily, I could book in to the sessions. Through Mary's gentle guidance I found some answers. Thank you Mary!

At first, I had misgivings about the decision I had made. I felt so vulnerable, my emotions were on a roller coaster. I consulted with family and got their support. We all agreed there was no other option.

Clive has been in full time care now for a little over two months. At first, I felt so much guilt. Why was it him and not me? Had he gone in to care too soon?

I became angry that we never got to spend more time together (I still feel cheated). And then, Where to now? What is my purpose in life? So miserable and depressed, I knew I had to do something about how I felt. I just wanted my life back. I started doing Yoga again. I read self-help books, books on meditation and relaxation; I searched the internet.

I am now spending three or more hours each night listening to meditation and relaxation CD's. I re-joined our community garden, and I'm now socialising more with friends. I am feeling better as time passes. There is a light at the end of the tunnel – no one has switched it off yet.

Iris

**** Our next Difficult Decisions workshop is being held in May. Please contact us on (03) 5333 7104 or email carers@bhs.org.au to register your interest.**

Further information regarding any articles featured in this newsletter is available by contacting