

Home Care Connection

Newsletter

September 2024

VMCH

Our Client Liaison Officer (CLO) team is here to help!

Our CLOs are dedicated to assisting you with all your needs, no matter how big or small. They can:

- Provide on-the-spot information about your existing services
- Quickly and easily make changes to your services, such as rescheduling, cancelling or pausing any service provision
- Respond to queries about your Home Care Package (HCP) statement
- Follow up on your behalf regarding any products or services
- Offer support and assistance in response to any concerns or incidents.



Our CLOs are trained to escalate matters that require further attention to your Case Manager or management.

Our Victoria-wide CLO team, consisting of Kelly, Satvir, Michelle, Aleisha, Kirrily and Chrissy, is always ready and eager to assist you.

Dementia Australia launches Brain Track app

Have you ever 'second-guessed' yourself if you occasionally forget the date, or where you put something?

Memory loss that disrupts daily life is not considered a normal part of ageing. For example, misplacing the car keys and then forgetting what they're used for.

To help people better understand suspected changes in their cognition over time, Dementia Australia has launched a free mobile app called BrainTrack.

Developed with Deakin University and funded by the Australian Government, the app is a self-monitoring tool designed around a series of fun, travel-themed games that have been adapted from validated cognitive testing.

Users 'travel to a new country' every month to complete a series of games, and if they have any concerns about their results, the app can easily generate a pdf report to share with their GP.



"While not intended to replace a formal cognitive assessment, BrainTrack supports the early identification of cognitive changes over time that may warrant further testing," says Dementia Australia's CEO, Maree McCabe.

BrainTrack is free to download through the Apple App Store or Google Play. For more information, call the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500, or visit: <https://www.dementia.org.au/braintrack>

Please reach out to us if you have any concerns about your memory, thinking or problem-solving abilities. We can explore strategies and options to use your home care funds in a meaningful and practical way.

The health effects of loneliness



Many people are reluctant to acknowledge they're lonely, for fear it makes them seem flawed in some way. But it's important to know that loneliness is not your fault and it's not a personal failure. Rather, it's a wider societal issue, in part due to our diminished sense of community in a society that values self-reliance and autonomy.

Pioneering research by Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, Julianne Holt-Lunstad, combined over 148 studies and showed that people with stronger social relationships had a 50% increased likelihood of survival over a given period of time, than those who have fewer social connections.



In a nutshell, having more and better relationships predicted living longer.

What about lacking relationships, does that put us at risk?

You may have seen the news headlines that lacking social connections carries a similar risk to smoking up to 15 cigarettes per day.

This statistic comes directly from Holt-Lunstad's research, which also suggests that social isolation is comparable to risk factors like excessive drinking, physical inactivity, air pollution and poor nutrition.

But here's the good news ... There are things you can do!

Developmental Psychologist Susan Pinker elaborates in *The Village Effect* on two important factors that can help increase longevity: close relationships and social integration.

Social integration includes both strong and weak bonds, like the people you see on your daily walk, the quick chat you have at your local cafe or the people who stop to pat your dog.

It turns out the face-to-face interactions you have daily are also one of the strongest predictors of how long you'll live, as face-to-face interactions release the stress reducing hormone oxytocin.

And, it just so happens that our Case Managers are experts when it comes to keeping you connected to your community. Your wellbeing is our priority, so please get in touch to discuss your options for a wide range of meaningful activities we can organise for you.

Have your say

We are dedicated to upholding the rights of those we support and are committed to achieving excellence and continuous improvement. Please be assured that all feedback is documented and addressed accordingly.



Scan the QR code or visit us at vmch.com.au/feedback.