

Ageing in Place - What can we do about it?

A proposal for new directions for positive ageing in the Portarlington and North Bellarine Communities

Major policy changes are progressively giving the Federal Government a larger role in aged care policy, with increasing emphasis on long term in-home community care and consumer-driven services.

Staying in Portarlington Inc is concerned to ensure that aged care policy and services support peoples' independence and life long living in their communities.

Now is an appropriate time to look at how Portarlington and the Northern Bellarine could develop and shape age-friendly communities based on community control and citizen empowerment, and ensure that the aged service system is innovative, effective, cost efficient for agencies and users, and tailored to meet individual needs in flexible and responsive ways

An initial project could tackle the question of how changes to the service system under the current reforms are impacting on people.

SiP's Proposal

There is an urgent need to ensure that people have access to

- **INFORMATION** about the changes
- **ADVICE** about the implications of the changes for their ongoing well being, and assistance with:
- **ADVOCACY** to government, Non Government Organisations, and private providers about service gaps, costs, dysfunctions and lack of adherence to the Australian Government's Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Community Care.

A local task group could be established with responsibility for oversight of this project and funds sought for a part-time worker to

- develop a one-stop shop with a data-base of up to date information
- facilitate linkages to agencies for informed advice, and
- train a pool of skilled aged care community advocates.

The knowledge gained from this task group could feed into the work of a second group which has the objective of researching and designing age friendly townships of the future.

The initial task of this group would be to collate the relevant information on age friendly communities starting with the World Health Organisation Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide and human rights for older people (for example, Australian Human Rights Commission, Federal Department of Health and Ageing, United Nations charters and conventions and relevant Victorian legislation).

This would provide the foundation for future development of community controlled and empowered local communities meeting the needs of people of all ages.

A specific proposal researched by this group could be the basis for a funding application for project development and implementation over a 2-3 year period.

Findings from the project could be relevant to other small Victorian communities, and with adaptations, to similar communities in other States.

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