



**Council on the Ageing
Western Australia Inc.
COTA WA**

Annual Report 2012 - 2013

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WHAT IS COTA WA AND WHAT DO WE DO?

COTA WA is:

- An independent organisation run by older people for older people;
- The Voice of Seniors – advocating on behalf of seniors to influence local, state and federal government, business and the community;
- A provider of programmes and projects that benefit seniors, including the Seniors' Housing Centre, Living Longer Living Stronger, Seniors Quality Use of Medicines and *beyond maturity blues*;
- A member organisation providing benefits to individual and organisational members including the Ambassador Card, COTA Maintenance, 'ONECOTA' magazine and free or reduced prices to attend our events;
- An incorporated, non-profit, charitable, deductible gift recipient organisation governed by an elected Board, managed and run by professional staff, and supported by the generous contributions of many volunteers;
- Recognised by the State and Federal Governments as the peak seniors' organisation in Western Australia;
- A member of COTA Australia, an organisation that brings together all State and Territory COTA's. Nationally, we:
 - Assist and resource the COTA Australia National Policy Council in the key areas of policy development, information dissemination and resource development.
 - Collect, interpret and disseminate information within the COTA network and to interested external individuals and organisations.

As the peak non-government seniors' organisation in Western Australia, COTA WA is widely respected for its policy and programme work. Our submissions to government have resulted in a number of significant improvements in services for seniors in recent times.

COTA WA is a uniquely inclusive organisation. Unlike mass membership organisations who lobby solely for their members, we seek to promote the interests of **all** older Australians, irrespective of their origin, situation or background.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2012 – 2015

Vision

An equitable, just and inclusive society in which older people can flourish.

Purpose

To advance the rights, needs and interests of older Western Australians.

Key Values

- Integrity
- Respect
- Inclusiveness
- Impartiality
- Excellence

Principles

Valuing the contribution and lived experience of older people in all their diversity: consulting and acting on the advice of older people; engaging older people in all aspects of our organisation.

Teamwork and co-operation: being respectful, ethical and cohesive; being committed and prepared to work hard to maintain the full involvement of all parts of the COTA federation for the common good of our constituents.

Vision and Optimism: being enthusiastic: being creative and forward looking, prepared to think laterally and constructively.

Leadership and Action: taking united action, providing unbiased advocacy and leadership for older people whilst having measurable and accountable outcomes.

Quality and Efficiency: having planned, systematic, evidence based and best practice approaches to all that we do.

OUR PEOPLE

Patron

His Excellency Mr. Malcolm James McCusker, AOC, CVO, QC, Governor of Western Australia.

Honorary Life Members

Mrs. Bettine Heathcote AM

Mrs. Clare Zilko

Board of Directors at 2012-2013

Office-Bearers

President Hon. Bob Kucera APM, JP

Vice President Dr. Ann Zubrick

Executive Members Bettine Heathcote AM and Judy Hogben

Directors

Gerri Clay

Marie Moloney

Bob Raisbeck

Frank Schaper

Shelley Whitaker

Dr. Robert Ziegler.

Chief Executive

Ken Marston

Auditors

Macri Partners



Policy Committee

Bettine Heathcote (Chairperson)

Chris Jeffery

Delese Butti

Helen Joyce

Luke Garswood

Theresa Kwok

Ron Lullfitz

Ken Marston

Bob Raisbeck

Donna Turner

Chris Twomey

Bob Ziegler

Ann Zubrick

Staff

Chief Executive

Ken Marston

Active Ageing Managers

Nathan Trengove &

Nicole Joubert

Finance and Administration Officer

Flyura Pak

Policy Officer

Chris Jeffery

Project Officer

Jane Newsome

Project Officer

Marlene Robins

Programme and Project Officer

Nicole Joubert

SHC Community Education Officer

Phillip Airey

SHC Information Officer

John Millar

Volunteers

The projects and programmes conducted by COTA WA would not be possible without the hard work and generosity of our many volunteers. Our administration volunteers undertake a wide range of tasks including - answering telephones, greeting people as they arrive at the office, processing the mail, processing event registrations, organising computer lessons, producing mail-outs and many more invaluable tasks.

Administration Volunteers

Pat Billett
 Kaye Douglas
 Megan Ellis
 Elaine Hardy
 Jeannette Monteiro
 Edith Pedersen



Computer Class Teachers

Glennis Bell
 Roger Vella Bonavita
 Tony Loades
 Liz Stafford
 John Stephens



Special Projects

Peter Bachelard-Lammas

In addition, special mention to:

Kaye Douglas who coordinates weekly computer class bookings and takes care of monthly donation receipts sent out to members;

Megan Ellis who gives PA assistance to the CEO and executes minutes of meetings;

Elaine Hardy who supports LLS™, grants and other events with data entries;

Jeannette Monteiro, Edith Pederson and Elaine Hardy who look after registration at annual LLS™ Awards Night, WA Active Ageing Conference, AGM as well as other events throughout the year.

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

Advocare Inc.
Aged & Community Services Western Australia
Albany Region Over 50's Recreation Association (Inc.)
Alzheimer's Australia WA Ltd
Amaroo Village
Amity Health
BaptistCare Inc.
Bassendean Senior Citizens Welfare Association (Inc.)
Bayswater ECHO
Bayswater Senior Citizens Association Inc.
Beverley Community Resource Centre Inc.
Bos Architects
Braemar Presbyterian Care
Bridgetown - Greenbushes Recreation Centre
Brightwater Care Group
Brookton Men's Shed Inc.
Busselton Senior Citizens Centre
CapeCare
Care Options Inc.
Chung Wah Community Aged Care
Citizens Advice Bureau
City of Armadale
City of Bayswater
City of Belmont
City of Canning
City of Cockburn
City of Fremantle
City of Gosnells
City of Mandurah
City of Melville
City of Stirling
City of Subiaco
City of Subiaco (Community Services)
City of Swan
City of Swan (Library Services)
City of Wanneroo
Collie Adult Day Centre
Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre
Continence Advisory Service of WA Inc.
Coolgardie Community Resource Centre / Coolgardie Telecentre
Craigcare
Cunderdin Community Resource Centre
Dale Cottages (Inc.) / City of Armadale
Denham Seniors Inc.

Denmark Dragon Boat Club Inc.
Denmark Over 50's Association Inc.
Gay Retirement Association Inc. - GRAI
Gosnells Women's Health Service Inc. (IGWHS)
Hall & Prior Aged Care Organisation (Varna Pty Ltd / Fresh Fields)
Harvey Recreation and Cultural Centre Inc.
Health Consumers' Council
Independent Living Centre of WA (Inc.)
Injury Control Council of WA (Inc.)
Italian Aged Care Incorporated
Jewish Care WA (Inc.)
Kalbarri Senior Citizens Group Inc.
Koorda Community Resource Centre Inc.
Lawley Park Residents Management Advisory Committee
Leading Age Services Australia - WA (previously Aged Care Association Australia WA)
Learning Centre Link
Legacy Fund of Perth
Loftus Community Centre
Manning Senior Citizens Centre Inc.
Masonic Care WA (Freemasons WA)
Maylands Autumn Club Inc.
Meath Care (Inc.)
Melville Cares Inc.
Men's Advisory Network
Merredin Senior Centre (Inc.)
Mt Laverna Retirement Village (Inc.)
Multiple Sclerosis Society of WA (Inc.)
Mundaring Sharing Incorporated
National Council of Women WA
Nedlands Community Care
Older Women's Network (WA) Inc.
Park Home Owners Assoc. WA Inc.
Parkinson's Western Australia Inc.
Peel Seniors Net Association. Pty Ltd
People Who Care Inc.
Prime Timers Western Australia
Regis Aged Care Pty Ltd
Relacs Pty Ltd.
Retired Teachers' Association of WA
Retirement Village Association of WA
Rise Community Network
Rod Evans Community Centre
Royal Australian Air Force (WA Div.) Inc.
Shire of Broome (Broome Recreation and Aquatic Centre)
Shire of Capel
Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup

Shire of Manjimup Home and Community Care
Shire of Mundaring
Shire of Northam
South Perth Bridge Club Inc.
Southcare Inc.
Spanish Speaking Seniors Association
Sunshine Welfare Action Mission Australia
Super Tuesday Whitfords Church of Christ Seniors
Tambellup Community Resource Centre
Tammin Senior Citizens Inc.
TAPSS Community Care Inc.
The Bethanie Group Inc.
The Burmese Association of WA (Inc.)
The Centre for Cerebral Palsy
The Spiers Centre Inc.
Torchbearers for Legacy in WA
Town of Bassendean
Town of Narrogin, Narrogin Homecare
Trinity School for Seniors
Uniting Church Homes
University of the Third Age (UWA) Inc.
Volunteer Task Force Inc.
WA Deaf Society Inc.
WA Retirement Village Residents Association Inc. (WARVRA)
WA Sri Lanka (Ceylon) Association Inc.
Walridge Village Residents' Association
WANSLEA
Waroona Community Resource Centre Inc.
Western Australian Council of Social Service - WACOSS
Wheelchair Sports WA Association
Wyndham Family Support Inc.
Yarloop Community Resource Centre Inc.



REPORTS

President's Report

Nationally, Aged Care Reform dominated the seniors sector in 2012-2013. The Federal Government's *Living Longer Living Better* package was announced in response to the Productivity Commission's *Caring for Older Australians* Report. Many of COTA's recommendations were embodied in the Productivity Commission report, and many came through in the government's response, but we continue to lobby for some very important provisions which have been disregarded to date.



Firstly, we believe that aged care is a right rather than a privilege, and we will continue to advocate for provision of quality care as a right. Secondly, we believe that access to high quality, personalised information is essential if people are to make wise choices about their care in later life. We believe that the so called "Gateway" to aged care needs to be very much more than a call centre and web-based information portal. Decision-making in later life is complex and made more so by aged care reform that changes established names, systems, and procedures. Information needs to be readily available and easily accessible and we will continue asking for "a map, guide and compass" to assist seniors to make those crucial aged care decisions.

In WA, the State Election was the year's major political event. Together with members of The Seniors Alliance, we made policy recommendations in our budget submission, unfortunately with little impact on the policies of the elected government. Our submission focussed on Housing, Disability and Ageing, Health and Active Ageing and Transport and Mobility; all of which are key issues for seniors. We will continue to pursue the government to address those issues.

On a brighter note, I was delighted to learn that COTA WA won the prestigious Richard (Dick) Fletcher Award in March this year. This award acknowledges a local government, non-government organisation or group of individuals operating in Western Australia that has, through their particular field of endeavour, made a significant contribution to the advancement of consumer protection in their community. They effectively deliver services or carry out projects or initiatives that raise community understanding and awareness of consumer protection issues. Competition for this award is stiff, and it is wonderful that we have been recognised for our contribution to consumer affairs, an often neglected and undervalued area of work that is so very important to seniors. As usual, this was a

team effort, and our work in consumer protection has spanned many years and covered many topics, but our special thanks go to John Millar who wrote our submission which led to the award.

The three main areas of our work, policy and advocacy, projects and programmes and membership development and support progressed well during the year. As the voice of seniors in Western Australia we achieve significant benefits for older people in this state and nationally. With your help, we will continue to voice your issues and concerns and provide more and better programmes that benefit seniors. Thank you for your continuing support – please remember to tell a friend about COTA WA!

Hon R.C. (Bob) Kucera APM, JP – President COTA WA

Chief Executive's Report

2012-2013 was a memorable year in many ways. Our Human Rights Conference, held on the International Day of Older Persons 2012, broke new ground and highlighted issues that deserve greater attention, including age discrimination, skewed views of the health costs associated with the ageing population, barriers to older people seeking employment and Dr Jane Barratt, Secretary General of the International Federation on Ageing, spoke eloquently about the international context of seniors' human rights.



Our colleagues' interstate regarded our venture into human rights as rather brave, because we rarely think of human rights breaches within Australia, but we were perhaps even braver in that we ran not just one, but two conferences last financial year. The second, our WA Active Ageing Conference, 2013, was also a resounding success, receiving accolades from presenters, delegates and sponsors.

In addition to these large events, we continued our programme of free talks on a variety of topics, including a suite of Seniors' Housing Centre presentations, seniors' quality use of medicines and beyond maturity blues peer education talks, crime and safety presentations, Living Longer Living Stronger launches, retirement seminars and talks to seniors' groups in the Cities of Melville, Swan, Joondalup and other local government areas. We attended senior's events, expos and shows right across the metropolitan area and made some country visits. We have also continued our computer training, which has been especially welcomed since the demise of the First and Second Click Programmes.

For a tiny organisation, we have an amazing reach and make ourselves available to as many seniors as humanly possible. How so? Our volunteers, staff and directors work long and hard to make this possible. Every member of our team contributes knowledge, skills, time and energy to the shared vision of *an equitable, just and inclusive society in which older people can flourish*. Our vision statement isn't just something that sits in our strategic plan – it is something that we actively seek to achieve day by day. I hope you agree with me that all our staff, volunteers and directors deserve our thanks and congratulations on their fine achievements during the year.

Of course, we don't do what we do without support and assistance. Partnerships and collaborative work are essential and we are pleased to have worked in 2012-2013 with an ever expanding group of organisations including the Commonwealth Government, State Government, Local Governments, not-for-profit organisations and businesses. These diverse organisations have provided not only funding and sponsorship but also often input to programmes and projects that has enabled us to provide more and better services to seniors.

And last, but most certainly not least, I would like to acknowledge our members. All of us working at COTA WA are touched by the gratitude expressed by you, our members, for the things we do. Thank you for your continued involvement and support.

Ken Marston - Chief Executive

COTA WA Winner of 2013 Consumer Protection Award

In 2012 COTA WA was nominated for the Ninth Annual Consumer Protection Awards. The application was a COTA WA team effort led by our Seniors' Housing Centre Information Officer, John Millar. Contributions also being made by Ken Marston, Jane Newsome and Phil Airey. The awards ceremony was held on Friday 22nd March 2013 when COTA WA was announced as the winner out of three finalists for the Richard (Dick) Fletcher Award for organisational achievement:



“In recognition of excellence in advancement, development and promotion of consumer protection in Western Australia.”

The Dick Fletcher Award acknowledges a Western Australian local government authority, organisation or group of individuals which has, through a particular field of endeavour, made a significant and enduring contribution to the advancement of

consumer protection. This contribution can be through delivering a service or carrying out a project or initiative which raises community understanding and awareness of consumer protection issues.

Receiving the award, Acting Chief Executive Chris Jeffery acknowledged the tireless and committed work of the COTA WA staff and volunteers in supporting and reinforcing the organisation's purpose to advance the rights, needs and interests of older Western Australians. "Although our work in the area of seniors' housing underpinned our winning application, in all other areas of our operations we are guided by our vision and key values which drive our commitment to protect and enhance the integrity of, and respect for older West Australians. It is a real honour for a small organisation like COTA WA to be recognised in such a way, especially as any of the other finalists would have been worthy winners. The Award will further enhance COTA WA's standing as a leading advocate for older West Australians."

Financial Report

Our audited financial statements are available separately.

During 2012-2013 we continued to receive income from diverse sources, including grant income from Commonwealth and State Governments, fee for service income, membership and insurance royalties. Sponsorship and donations increased substantially, but remain a relatively minor source of income for us. A growing proportion of our income originated from the State Government during the financial year, a matter of some concern in the light of increasing government stringency and funding constraints.

Financial pressures continue in the light of increasing costs. Regular (and well deserved) increases in award wages over the coming few years will see community sector wages approach public service rates, which will require us to drive a harder bargain with funding agencies to ensure the viability of contracts and fee for service work.

In common with many seniors, COTA WA experiences pressure as interest rates fall, diminishing our term deposit income from our reserves. The Board continues its conservative approach to investment which makes our reserves secure and ensures their availability should income falter significantly.

Finance and Administration Officer, Flyura Pak, has managed our bookkeeping patiently and well despite numerous and multiple interruptions to her work. Financial oversight has been provided during the year by Finance Committee members Judy Hogben, Frank Schaper, and Bob Raisbeck.

Auditors Macri Partners assisted us during the year to make a transition from Quickbooks to MYOB which was financed by Lotterywest.

In view of possible threats to our funding base during and immediately following this financial year, the downward trend of independent income sources, and increasing cost pressures, the Board will be reviewing our strategic and business plans to ensure that we have continuing capacity at a time when seniors need the voice of COTA WA as much as , if not more, than ever.

The Board recommends appointment of Macri Partners as auditors for 2013-2014.

Ken Marston - Chief Executive

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

Living Longer Living Stronger™

Living Longer Living Stronger™ (LLLS™) is an evidence-based programme which makes a strong contribution to falls prevention in the community and optimises conditions for the social engagement of participants, both to foster compliance with the training programme and to minimise the social isolation frequently experienced by those seniors with poor health. It aims to maximise the opportunities for people to engage in affordable, high quality, results-oriented, strength training programmes over the longer term



In Western Australia, LLLS™ has been running since 2004 and continues to be a leading strength and resistance training and physical activity programme for the over 50's. The number of participants currently exercising, as reported by LLLS™ Providers, increased in all age categories with exception of those aged 50-60 years during 2012-2013.

Partnerships and collaborative work continued to expand in 2012-2013. Since January 2013, HBF Home Care Services has referred 41 HBF Health Connect Programme clients presenting co-morbidities such as Lung Cancers, Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension, Knee and Hip Replacements, Anxiety and Depression, Angina, Peripheral Neuropathy, and Alzheimer 's disease to LLLS™.

In October 2012, Perth North Metro Medicare Local (PNMML) launched LLLS™ based in the purpose built gym at PNMML Osborne Park office. This LLLS™ Intensive Course is a 12-week progressive resistance-training programme for people aged over 50 years living with chronic disease.

In May 2013, LLLS™ engaged with Fremantle Medicare Local (FML) and partnered shortly afterwards to promote Living Well workshops to the LLLS™ network. FML has been issued 50 LLLS™ brochures along with a selection of LLLS™ promotional items for staff to discuss the programme with clients after the Living Well workshop.

In July 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding was drafted between YMCA Morley Sport and Recreation Centre and COTA WA to run an on-site Tier 3 LLLS™ programme within the aged care sector. For the second year running COTA WA and Injury Control Council of Western Australia (ICCWA) partnered to honour volunteers in programmes such as LLLS™ and Stay on Your Feet.

Edith Cowan University's School of Psychology and Social Science is currently conducting research to explore the reasons why retired men, aged 55-70, exercise.

The Life at the Core Programme is an initiative between the Cities of Rockingham and Kwinana funded through the Department of Health and Ageing Healthy Communities Initiative. Since March 2013, 47 Life at the Core Programme members attended at least one (or more) LLLS™ sessions at Aqua Jetty (Rockingham) or City of Kwinana (Kwinana) free of charge.

In February 2013, we partnered with the Shire of Donnybrook at the Donnybrook Gourmet Wine and Food Festival to promote the re-launch of the LLLS™ programme in Donnybrook. Approximately 175 people were issued COTAWA/LLLS™ promotional bags.

Shire of Harvey's Community Radio broadcasts to the greater southwest region of Western Australia. During March and May 2013, the LLLS™ programme featured on the Life at the Centre.

The LLLS™ Excellence Awards Night, an annual event that aims to recognise, celebrate and honour our LLLS™ participants, and those who support them towards a healthier quality of life, is promoted via COTA WA individual and organisational members and the LLLS™ Programme network, including the Falls Prevention EAG and Department of Health networks. Our special guest was 94 year old Freda Bender, who had recently won the WA Seniors Week Community Award earlier that month.

Nicole Joubert - Active Ageing Manager

Peer Education Programmes

Seniors Quality Use of Medicines Programme

The Seniors Quality Use of Medicines Programme came to an end on 30th June 2013 after nine very successful years. During the year the following people were active in the programme.



Staff

Jane Newsome

Peer Educators

Theo Bushe-Jones
 Agnelo D'Souza
 James Duck
 Joan Jarman
 Maggie Richardson
 Jen Stewart
 Bob Ziegler
 Pat Zanetti

Three of the volunteers (Theo, Joan and Maggie) had been volunteers with the programme for the full nine years since it commenced in mid-2004.

A total of 62 SQUM sessions were delivered during the year to some 1,230 participants. This was slightly above our target of 60 sessions, and included 49 metropolitan and 13 country sessions (including five sessions in Geraldton, and single sessions in Moora, Bunbury, Busselton, Dalyelup, Balingup, Greenbushes Bridgetown and Manjimup).

The majority of sessions were general 'Medicines and You' sessions, but six included supplementary information on Managing Pain, Sleep Problems or Antibiotics.

beyond maturityblues

During the year, the following people were active in the *beyond maturityblues* programme -

Staff

Marlene Robins
 Jane Newsome



Peer Educators

John Anderson

Malcolm Ginn
 Roberta Gripton
 Mary Hobson
 Maureen Holmes
 Joan Jarman
 Maggie Richardson
 Jen Stewart
 Bob Ziegler

Italian Programme

Gemma Altieri
 Luisa Biondo
 Connie Di Perna
 Maria Longo

A total of 68 *beyond maturityblues* sessions were delivered during the year, to approximately 1350 participants. Twelve of the sessions were presented outside the Perth metropolitan area, in Geraldton, Moora, Bunbury, Dalyelup, Busselton, Manjimup, Bridgetown and Northam.

Nine sessions were delivered to CALD groups. Four sessions were presented by the Italian speaking team. A Vietnamese speaking peer educator was provided by COTA NSW, who presented three sessions to Vietnamese groups in March.

Home and Community Care (HACC) Programme

The HACC peer education finished on 31st December 2012. During the year, the following people were involved in the HACC programme:

Staff

Jane Newsome

Peer Educators

Clive Gear
 Graham Spence
 Rhonda Spence

Five sessions were presented to approximately 100 people.

Promotion of the Peer Education Programmes and support of peer educators

Sessions for peer education programmes were generated using a number of strategies including mail-outs (post or email) to seniors groups and clubs, and



direct telephone contact. The sessions were also promoted at COTA WA events and through the COTA WA page in 'Have-a-Go News' (some editions).

A diverse range of seniors groups hosted sessions. These included retirement villages, chronic illness and carers' support groups, church groups, membership based seniors organisations, Probus clubs, Men's Sheds, groups, Library groups, Senior Citizens centres, RSL and Laurel clubs, Weightwatchers, U3A, CALD cultural groups and HACC funded day centres. There were also presentations at expos and festivals.

Promotion of peer education sessions and also NPS and *beyondblue* took place at numerous COTA WA events and expos throughout the year.

During the year, support meetings were held for all peer educators. There were 'Thank you' functions for all volunteers during December and May, the latter being a National Volunteer Week 'Mystery Bus Trip' run with ICCWA (lunch at Whiteman Park).

WA Active Ageing Conference 2013

The 3rd annual WA Active Ageing Conference was held at the Esplanade Hotel on 5 and 6 June 2013.

Main Staff Involved

Jane Newsome
Nicole Joubert

Conference Committee

Jane Figgis
Bettine Heathcote
Chris Jeffery
Bob Raisbeck
Ann Zubrick



Volunteers

Megan Ellis
Kaye Douglas
Elaine Hardy
Jeanette Monteiro
Edith Pedersen

165 delegates attended over the two days. Eight sponsors supported the conference: Rosewood Care Group Inc., Department for Communities, First State Super/Health Super, St Ives Group, GESB, ACSWA, Technology Assisting Disability

WA (TADWA), and Stay on Your Feet WA[®]. St Ives Group and TADWA joined as sponsors for the first time.

The spacious conference area at the Esplanade Hotel allowed for non-sponsor trade exhibition tables to be included alongside sponsor displays.

The conference secured 25 Lotterywest scholarships to support country delegates with costs of attending. Lotterywest scholarships supported delegates from Port Hedland, Carnarvon, Norseman and Kalgoorlie as well as many country areas closer to Perth. Many of these delegates personally expressed their appreciation of the support to COTA WA staff during the conference.

An outstanding programme was put together by the Conference Committee; speakers were by invitation only. Excellent speakers included Professor Tony Broe, Dr Kristyn Bates, Kathleen Brasher and Steven Mills.

Delegate feedback from evaluation forms was consistently positive.

Jane Newsome - Project Officer

Crime and Safety

Seniors' safety remains a priority for COTA WA, and we continue to provide information to assist older people to remain safe in their homes and the community.



Strategic
Crime Prevention

Funded by the State Attorney General, Learning Circles were established, one in Bunbury and one in Northam. The Learning Circles are delivered to a group of seniors from a country town who in turn will inform and educate other seniors groups within their area. Both were attended by very interested groups of seniors as crime is one area where concerns differ from town to town. Crime statistics for both Bunbury and Northam were presented to the group together with a number of hand-outs on Internet crime, identity theft and safety advice for seniors to assist the groups to prioritise their local solutions and keep seniors safe. Ken Marston, Bob Kucera and Marlene Robins attended from COTA WA.

In June 2013, a grant of \$10,000 was received from the W.A. Police – Strategic Crime Prevention Division for the safety message to be delivered to 1,000 seniors throughout the metropolitan area during 2013-2014. These talks will include information on Safety, Elder Abuse presented by Advocare, Identity Theft and Internet Crime presented by Edith Cowan University's School of Computer and Security Science, plus a presentation from the local government of that area on their crime prevention strategies.

Seniors Awards 2012

COTA WA managed the successful Seniors Awards 2012 Awards ceremony held at the Crown Ballroom on the 11th November 2012. This event was managed by Hayley Hinchcliffe of ESP who was employed by COTA WA with a grant from Lotterywest and in collaboration with the Department for Communities.



The Bendigo Bank Seniors Awards is an annual event held during Seniors Week. The Awards incorporate Inspiration for Wellbeing, Community, and Intergenerational Awards and from these winners the Senior of the Year is named. In 2012 Kathleen Mazzella OAM was named as Senior of the Year. The COTA WA Champion for Seniors and Active Ageing Leadership Awards are for people and organisations who contribute to the quality of life and wellbeing of Seniors.

The Awards have a cash prize sponsored by Bendigo Bank, Crown Perth, Beyond Blue, Australian Super, COTA WA and 'Have-a-Go News'.

Marlene Robins - Project Officer

COTA WA Seniors' Housing Centre

From its start up early in 2012 (March) the Seniors' Housing Centre has continued to grow from strength to strength. Staff have increased their knowledge base and networks thus providing a better service. The Centre is a resource for seniors who are provided with information and referral to help them make better informed decisions about their housing future. The Centre does not offer financial or legal advice.



The two staff, Mr. Phil Airey and Mr. John Millar have remained with the centre and greatly increased the number of people assisted. Community Education, provided by the Community Education Officer Phil Airey, remains the core component of this service with a range of seminars about seniors housing being provided. These have included:

- Making Informed Housing Decisions
- Retirement Villages and Residential Parks
- Downsizing – A Field Guide
- Reverse Mortgages and Accessing Equity
- Low Cost Housing Options
- Modifying Your Home

Statistics for the Seniors' Housing Centre show:

Number of seminars conducted	86
Number of attendees	3,123
Number of feedback questionnaire respondents	832
<i>Average ratings out of 5 given in questionnaires (to two places)</i>	
There was adequate time for questions and discussion	4.38
I now understand more about the Seniors Housing Centre	4.55
The workshop met my expectations	4.56
The presenters were knowledgeable and informative	4.74
The materials provided were relevant and useful	4.56
The venue was suitable for my needs	4.65
Overall seminar rating	4.67
Seniors assisted through appointments, telephone, email & post	682

The early strategy of forming partnerships has continued with organisations such as:

- State Government Departments (Commerce, Housing, Communities, Corrective Services)
- Local Governments (Cities of Swan, Perth, Vincent, Joondalup, Melville, Subiaco, Nedlands, Gosnells, Fremantle, Cambridge, Rockingham, Mandurah, Cockburn, Yanchep, South Perth, Wanneroo, Armadale; Shires of Mundaring and Kalamunda)
- Seniors' Groups (Association of Independent Retirees, WA Self-Funded Retirees, Retirees WA, National Seniors, Yanchep Seniors, Osborne Autumn Club, Nollamara Autumn Group)
- Seniors' Education Groups (University of the Third Age, Mature Adult Learning Association, Trinity School for Seniors)
- Religious groups (Christadelphian Welfare, Woodvale Baptist Church, Salvation Army Home League, Sikh Community Temple, Dianella Church of Christ)
- Superannuation boards (Government Employees Superannuation Board, Australian Super)
- Men's Sheds (Mundaring Hub of the Hills, WA Men's Shed Association)

- Peak bodies (Community Housing Coalition WA, Shelter WA, WA Retirement Village Residents' Association)
- Other groups such as Water Corporation and Advocare

Additional notables have included consulting to the City of Cambridge rezoning project, peak representation of Seniors' interests on the Department of Housing's policy group(the Housing Advisory Round Table), site visits to Southern Cross Homes Retirement Villages and Aged Care Facilities, Technology Assisting Disability WA.

The Centre has generated positive PR with articles or references appearing in the 'Sunday Times,' 'West Australian' and 'Have-A-Go News' newspapers.

Notably Mr. Phil Airey has presented papers on aspects of seniors housing at two conferences:

1. National Housing Conference 2012 (Brisbane)
2. Active Ageing Conference 2013 (Fremantle)

John Millar – Information Officer

Phil Airey – Community Education Officer



Retirement seminars

We continued to deliver regular retirement information seminars to members of superannuation funds throughout 2012-2013. Although a minor project in terms of income, this project has major impact in terms of preparing younger seniors who are still in the workforce to prepare for retirement.

There is much evidence to suggest that there is an absence of planning for retirement in terms of lifestyle. Pre-retirees are often highly focussed on their financial planning, but have not often considered key factors that will affect their quality of life in retirement, including the need for preventative health measures, leisure and recreational needs, long term housing plans and dealing with relationship issues. While brief, our retirement talks highlight many of these issues and draw attention to the need to take a lifecourse approach to ageing as recommended by the World Health Organisation.

Several presenters assisted with making these talks over the year, including Bob Ziegler, Ann Zubrick and Chris Jeffery. Feedback has been very positive. Australian Catholic Superannuation have made a video of Bob Ziegler's presentation for use here and in the Eastern States as well as requesting Bob's continued "live" presentations at their seminars. My thanks to everyone who has shared in this project.

Seniors Week Community Grants

Continuation of interesting and relevant events during Seniors Week is supported by our Seniors Week Community Grants Programme. In 2012-13, COTA WA obtained funding from the Department for Communities and Lotterywest which enabled us to fund, or part fund, many and varied events.

A record number of applications was received (over 130), which made it difficult for the panel to allocate the limited funds.

However, focusing particularly on country areas, groups who would not otherwise be able to stage an event, events that targeted marginalised and disadvantaged seniors, and intergenerational activities, we were able to spread a relatively small amount of money across the State to make a lot happen that would otherwise have been impossible. The very positive feedback received from participants and event organisers demonstrated that this was money well spent.

POLICY REPORT

In the first half of 2013, Chris Jeffery was seconded from the Policy Officer role to take on the role of Acting CEO during the substantive CEO's Long Service Leave. During this time the position of Policy Officer was not filled.



Despite this, the past twelve months has seen a great deal of policy activity on many fronts at both the national and state levels. These activities are outlined below:

NATIONAL ISSUES (all of which have involved WA's participation)

Policy Priorities

- Consolidation of antidiscrimination legislation: although COTA devoted a lot of time to contributing to this initiative, the Federal government eventually abandoned it.
- Workforce participation aimed at increasing the participation of older workers in the paid workforce. This has involved participation in an ALRC research project (Age Barriers to Work) identifying the impediments to such participation. The report was released in late 2012.
- Income support, focusing on advocating for an increase in the New start allowance, resulting in a representation to the Senate Committee Enquiry.
- Finalisation of the COTA Policy Compendium.
- Affordable housing especially for older single women in the private rental market.
- Energy costs.
- Ageing and Disability, especially relating to the interface between them. Despite constant advocacy for change, the upper age limit of 65 remains in the Disability Australia scheme.
- The Government's aged care reform (Living Longer Living Better), released in May 2012, resulted in a great deal of activity by COTA. One of the outcomes has been the acquisition of funding to provide education programmes for both providers and clients on various aspects of the reform.

- Another outcome of the aged care reform initiative has been COTA'S involvement in various groups including the Home Support Care Advisory Group; the Gateway, and Specified Care and Services.
- Contribution to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older Persons.
- Age friendly cities and communities.
- The 2013 Federal election resulted in a great deal of energy being devoted to the development of the Federal election platform. To this end, online election panels were formed with approximately one thousand people contributing Australia wide.

Participation in NACA (National Aged Care Alliance)

Dr Ann Zubrick, Vice President of COTA WA and a member of the State Policy Committee is a COTA (Australia) representative on this group. The National Aged Care Alliance (the Alliance) is a representative body of peak national organisations in aged care, including consumer groups, providers, unions, and health professionals, working together to determine a more positive future for aged care in Australia.

Policy Forum

The successful Policy Forum held in Canberra in May focusing on Age Friendly Cities and Communities, was attended by an invited audience. The speakers presented a number of different perspectives on the theme.

Other

In addition to the major initiatives and activities outlined above, there has been activity at the national level in many other areas. This is reflected in the fact that COTA WA has been active in 23 Federal portfolio areas. WA has contributed to all of these ongoing inquiries, submissions and discussions.

STATE ISSUES

COTA WA has been active in many arenas during the year. We were fortunate in enlisting the help of several work experience volunteers, who helped us in various areas, especially those involving research.

Policy Committee Discussion Topics

- Residential parks
- The effect of the aged care reforms on providers

- Extending the smart rider concession to include support carers
- Effective health promotion for older people
- Age discrimination
- ALRC Barriers to Work enquiry
- National Aged Care Strategies for People from CALD backgrounds
- National LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care Strategy
- Age friendly cities and communities
- Pre- election issues resulting in document Seniors Needs in an Election Year. The key issues identified were: housing; disability and ageing; technology; health and active ageing; transport and mobility; government/community sector partnerships; older Australians in a caring role
- The National Disability Insurance Scheme
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Older People
- Aged care reform package
- Palliative care

Policy Development and Implementation

- Continuing work on housing issues, including the review of retirement village legislation and preparation for review of park homes (long stay caravan park residents) Consumer Protection published a discussion paper in 2012.
- Seniors Housing Centre which opened March 2012 has reached approximately 3500 older people throughout the state in its 18 month lifespan.

Contributions to Policy (non-COTA organisations)

- Participation in WACOSS emerging issues forum
- Participation in WACOSS Peaks Forum
- Participation in Measuring the Impact of Community Care: Silver Chain Project Reference Group

- Attendance at Seniors Ministerial Advisory Council meetings
- Attendance at DHS Health & Older Australians Disabilities & Carers Consultative Forum
- Continuation of Seniors Alliance meetings
- Discussions with Fair Go for Pensioners Coalition WA
- Attendance at Housing Advisory Round table meetings.
- Attendance at Community Reference Group Breastscreen WA
- Attendance at Department of Human Services Consultative Forum on Health & Older Australians Disability and Carers
- Liaison with Shelter WA and other housing organisations including the Community Housing Coalition, St Bartholomew's (homeless men's service), Tenants Advice Service, WA Retirement Complexes Residents' Association (now WARVRA) and Park Home Owners' Association.
- Participation in Elder Abuse Marketing Working Party

Conferences and Forums

- Policy Forum: 'Ageing in the Right Place' with Canadian guest speaker Dr. Norah Keating
- State Conference 'What is Ageing Now' with attendance of about 170
- Co-facilitation of the inaugural meeting of the Age Friendly Communities Network Forum

Bettine Heathcote AM – Chair COTA WA Policy Committee

Chris Jeffery – Policy Officer