



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Communities**

# An Age-Friendly WA

State Seniors Strategy 2023 – 2033

Action Plan (2023 – 2027)





# Acknowledgement of Country

## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Acknowledgement of Country                                   | 2  |
| 1. Introduction  | 3  |
| 2. The Action Plan (2023-2027)                               | 5  |
| 3. Measuring our progress                                    | 6  |
| 4. Our actions   | 8  |
| 4.1 Thriving physically, mentally,<br>and spiritually        | 9  |
| 4.2 Safe and friendly communities                            | 14 |
| 4.3 Staying connected and engaged                            | 18 |
| 4.4 Having views that are heard                              | 23 |
| 5. Working alongside the Australian and<br>local Governments | 25 |

The State Government is proud to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and recognises their continuing connection to their lands, families, and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures and to Elders past and present.

The first step in living alongside and working with the Aboriginal community<sup>1</sup> is built upon establishing respectful relationships. Crucial to these respectful relationships is acknowledging the history of Aboriginal people and recognising the importance of connection to family, culture, and country.

---

<sup>1</sup> Through this report, the Department of Communities uses the term 'Aboriginal' respectfully to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as the preferred usage by Aboriginal people in WA.



# 1. Introduction

*An Age-friendly WA: State Seniors Strategy 2023–2033* (the Strategy) is a 10-year commitment towards whole-of-community action to ensure that:

**Western Australian seniors feel valued, safe, and empowered to lead happy and fulfilling lives in age-friendly communities.**

The Strategy is a commitment from the State Government to building and promoting a community where seniors are supported and thriving, and sets a clear path forward for the State Government and our communities to support and empower seniors across WA over the next 10 years. The Strategy, outlined 'on-a-page' overleaf, includes:

- a vision which provides a shared goal or aspiration for WA seniors – this is the ultimate aspiration guiding the Strategy and its delivery
- pillars for change which identify the most important features that seniors told us are critical for them to live and age well

- key focus areas which recognise specific areas of opportunity to support WA seniors to live their best lives.

Development of the Strategy has included extensive consultation with seniors, peak bodies, community organisations and State and local government representatives. This consultation process has helped shape the direction and ambition of the Strategy – as well as inform the actions the State Government will take in achieving this vision for seniors in WA.

It is crucial that our communities and service systems work together to address known challenges and ensure seniors can fully participate and contribute. Two, five-year, Action Plans will support the implementation of the Strategy over the next 10 years. Each Action Plan will detail the specific initiatives that support the pillars and key focus areas, along with the agency that will be responsible for delivering them.



**Figure 2** State Seniors Strategy on a page

|   |   |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Vision</b>   | <b>Western Australian seniors are valued, safe, and empowered to lead happy and fulfilling lives in age-friendly communities</b>  |  |  |  |
| <b>Pillars of change</b>                                      | <b>Thriving physically, mentally, and spiritually</b>   | <b>Safe and friendly communities</b>   | <b>Staying connected and engaged</b>   | <b>Having views that are heard</b>   |
| <b>Outcomes</b>   | Seniors have access to suitable housing options<br>Seniors have the support they need to stay in place<br>Seniors have the support and information they need to maintain their wellbeing<br>Seniors have access to health care information and services that support their individual choice and needs<br>Carers and grandcarers are recognised and supported | Members of the community welcome and respect seniors<br>Community infrastructure is accessible and inclusive for all seniors<br>Seniors can access and navigate the transport system with ease<br>Seniors are safe in their homes and as they navigate their communities | Seniors have access to the right information in the right ways so they can make informed choices<br>Seniors have opportunities for meaningful and inclusive employment<br>Seniors are supported to engage in their community in ways they choose | Seniors and their advocates feel heard<br>Seniors have the confidence and opportunity to make their views heard regardless of identity or background |
| <b>Key Focus Areas</b>  | Housing<br>Staying in place<br>Care and support<br>Wellbeing<br>Support for carers  | Inclusive communities<br>Infrastructure and spaces<br>Transport<br>Safety  | Information<br>Employment<br>Volunteering and social participation   | Representation and advocacy<br>Diverse views   |
| <b>What this means for seniors</b>                            | Affordable and appropriate housing<br>Increased support for those who wish to stay in place<br>Available and accessible care, informed by individual choice<br>Proactive support to maintain wellbeing<br>Supporting those who care for seniors   | Addressing ageist attitudes and valuing seniors' contributions<br>Age-friendly public spaces, infrastructure, and facilities<br>Accessible, appropriate, and affordable transport options<br>Supporting seniors to be safe at home and in the community                  | Accessible and culturally appropriate information which enables informed choices<br>Available and appropriate opportunities for employment<br>Enhanced opportunities for volunteering and socially participating in the community                | Meaningful opportunities for seniors to make their views heard<br>Elevate and advocate for the diverse views of seniors                              |
| <b>Domains of the WHO* Age-friendly Communities Framework</b> | Community and healthcare<br>Housing   | Respect and social inclusion<br>Transportation<br>Outdoor spaces   | Communication and information<br>Civic participation and employment<br>Social participation  | Civic participation and employment<br>Respect and social inclusion   |
| <b>Action Plan</b>  |   |  |  |  |
| <b>Internal Monitoring and Evaluation Plan</b>                |   |  |  |  |

\* World Health Organization.

## 2. The Action Plan (2023-2027)

This first Action Plan will guide the State Government’s approach to delivering the Strategy over its first five years. The Action Plan translates the Strategy into clear initiatives to support meaningful change for seniors in WA.<sup>2</sup>

On behalf of the State Government, the Department of Communities (Communities) has lead responsibility for the Strategy and Action Plan. Communities will work collaboratively with all stakeholders to deliver on the Strategy’s intent to support and empower seniors. The Action Plan sets out which government agencies are responsible for the delivery initiatives, and the timeline for delivery.

Timeframes associated with each action are as follows:

- ongoing: activities which are currently underway and/or will be continuously undertaken
- short term: activities to commence within the next 1-2 years
- medium term: activities to commence within the next 3-5 years.

The Strategy and accompanying Action Plan will be overseen by a cross-government implementation group facilitated by Communities, which will have responsibility for progressing, delivering and monitoring the actions captured in this plan.

---

<sup>2</sup> Initiatives with an asterisk are subject to new funding proposals which are yet to be confirmed.





### 3. Measuring our progress

The Strategy and Action Plan are supported by an internal Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E Plan). The M&E Plan is essential to ensure that the Strategy is being implemented effectively and that the vision of the Strategy is being achieved. The M&E Plan is based on a theory of change, outlined in Figure 2 overleaf, which identifies the change anticipated from the Strategy, and assumptions for how that change will occur.

The cross-government working group will use the M&E Plan to track and evaluate progress on the Strategy and initiatives, against the intended outcomes. It will also connect to other monitoring and reporting channels.



**Because...**

People are spending more time than ever in older age, there are a range of challenges and opportunities to be addressed. There are currently a number of strategies that directly and indirectly support older Western Australians, but not a specific approach for WA seniors. The WHO Age-friendly Cities Framework identifies eight interconnected domains that together empower seniors to participate in and contribute to their communities in the ways that they choose.

**So this Strategy and Action Plan provide...**

A framework that outlines a whole-of-government approach to guide how we will support and empower all seniors across WA over the next 10 years.

Initiatives which reflect features of age-friendly communities to be implemented over the life of the Strategy.

**That will lead to...**

WA seniors being supported to:

- 1. Thrive physically, mentally, and spiritually
- 2. Live in age-friendly communities
- 3. Stay connected and engaged
- 4. Have views that are heard



**It is understood that...**

Seniors in WA are a diverse group with different needs, so any approach must:

- recognise the wide range of capacities and resources among seniors
- anticipate and respond flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences
- respect older people’s decisions and lifestyle choices
- reduce inequities
- protect those who are most vulnerable
- promote older people’s inclusion in, and contribution to, all areas of community life.

To meet this diversity of needs, everybody (government, communities, individuals) plays a role in supporting older Western Australians.

**And result in...**

- 5. Western Australian seniors feeling valued, safe, and empowered to lead happy and fulfilling lives in age-friendly communities

**Figure 2** Theory of Change (the change anticipated from the Strategy for WA seniors)

## 4. Our actions

This Action Plan is organised by the four pillars of the Strategy and sets out the initiatives and their alignment to the focus areas under each pillar. Note that not all focus areas have a specific action listed in this first Action Plan – actions will continue to be developed over the life of the Strategy to address outcomes through the key focus areas.

For each action we set out:

- the lead agency, which will lead the delivery of that action
- a description of the action and its aims
- the focus areas the action aligns to
- the timeframe for delivery.





## 4.1 Thriving physically, mentally, and spiritually

### What it means and why it is important

Seniors told us that physical, mental and spiritual health and wellbeing are central to a good life. In practice, this means having ready access to the right supports and services, with a focus on appropriate, affordable housing, and healthcare options close to where they live.

### Focus areas and outcomes

| Focus areas  | Outcomes   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care and support</li> <li>• Staying in place</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• Support for carers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seniors have access to suitable housing options.</li> <li>• Seniors have the support they need to stay in place.</li> <li>• Seniors have the support and information they need to maintain their wellbeing.</li> <li>• Seniors have access to health care information and services that support their individual choice and needs.</li> <li>• Carers and grandcarers are recognised and supported.</li> </ul> |

#### Case study: Great Southern Seniors Health and Community Rehabilitation Services<sup>3</sup>

The Great Southern Seniors Health and Community Rehabilitation team is a WA Country Health Service, currently working across the Great Southern region of WA. The aim of this organisation is to provide high-quality services in a timely manner to seniors, their families, and carers in need, including

- A dedicated Aged Care Assessment team which works with seniors and their carers to determine the best mode of care dependent on individual need, whether it be for extra support at home or moving into residential care.
- Broad community rehabilitation services providing targeted programs such as group rehabilitation clinics, home exercise programs, and individual appointments. This is supported by the expertise of Community Rehabilitation team members, including but not limited to, allied health assistants, pharmacists, social workers, and occupational therapists.
- An Older Patient Initiative (OPI) team who follow up with seniors following discharge from hospital to provide ongoing care and support.

3 WA Country Health Service (2021). [Great Southern Seniors health and community rehabilitation services](#).

| Lead  | Action   | Description  | Timing      | Focus Areas |                  |                   |           |                        |
|---|--|--|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------------------|
|   |  |  |             | Housing     | Staying in Place | Care and Supports | Wellbeing | Support for caregivers |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors have access to suitable housing options</b>     |  |  |             |             |                  |                   |           |                        |
| Department of Communities   | <b>Identify current and future housing needs of seniors at home to inform updates to policy and commissioning practices</b>  | <p>The Department of Communities will identify the changing accommodation needs of seniors and implications for government policy and services, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities housing policies</li> <li>• availability of health services and in-home supports, with data support from the Department of Health</li> <li>• commissioning strategies, policies, and practices.</li> </ul> | Short term  | •           | •                | •                 | •         |                        |
| Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety                 | <b>Provide information and advice on housing options for seniors in WA</b>   | The Consumer Protection Division will provide information and advice to seniors on housing options.  | Ongoing     |             | •                |                   |           |                        |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors have the support they need to stay in place</b> |  |  |             |             |                  |                   |           |                        |
| Department of Health  | <b>Continue to scope and implement models of care to support independence at home and other appropriate settings, in line with Sustainable Health Review recommendations</b> | Continue to work towards implementing models of care to support independence at home and other settings, in partnership with consumers, providers, primary care and the Australian Government.   | Medium term |             | •                | •                 | •         |                        |

| Lead   | Action   | Description   | Timing      | Focus Areas |                  |                   |           |                        |
|--|--|---|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------------------|
|  |  |   |             | Housing     | Staying in Place | Care and Supports | Wellbeing | Support for caregivers |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors have the support and information they need to maintain their wellbeing</b> |  |   |             |             |                  |                   |           |                        |
| Department of Health   | <b>Provide information and programs on falls prevention for older people in WA</b>   | <p>Invest in falls prevention programs to keep WA seniors safe and reduce unnecessary hospitalisations.</p> <p>Scope the development and implementation of a public education program to raise awareness among seniors regarding their responsible use of alcohol, and the impact of alcohol on their wellbeing and health, particularly injuries.</p> <p>Work with partner organisations and aged care providers to support evidence-based initiatives to reduce the risk of serious falls.</p>  | Medium term |             |                  |                   | •         | •                      |
| Department of Health   | <b>Ensure health literacy is a core component of WA health system policies, programs and services intended to support the health and wellbeing of WA seniors</b> | <p>Take stock of health system efforts in WA to build seniors' health literacy and opportunities to enable better ease of access, comprehensibility and use of health information and health services. Review and update systems, policies, and practices to determine how health literacy can be better embedded and promoted to seniors in WA. This will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support seniors to make informed decisions about their health care</li> <li>• contribute to improved access for seniors to health support and services.</li> </ul> | Medium term |             | •                |                   | •         | •                      |



| Lead   | Action   | Description  | Timing      | Focus Areas |                  |                   |           |                        |
|--|--|--|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------------------|
|  |  |  |             | Housing     | Staying in Place | Care and Supports | Wellbeing | Support for caregivers |
| Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries  | Physical activity programs for seniors                                   | Encourage and promote initiatives that support participation of seniors in physical activity through targeted funding programs, sector engagement and partnerships with seniors' support services stakeholders across WA. These initiatives should also engage seniors in a way that recognises the significant and valued contributions they can provide to community, through volunteering and mentoring.  | Ongoing     |             |                  |                   | •         | •                      |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors have access to health care information and services that support their individual choice and needs</b> |  |  |             |             |                  |                   |           |                        |
| Mental Health Commission   | Investigate a State-Wide Model of Service for Older Adult Mental Health* | Investigate a State-wide Model of Service for Older Adult Mental Health to promote best-practice care and evidence-based, culturally appropriate services across the continuum of care and geographical areas for older adults impacted by mental health and alcohol and other drug issues.<br><br>It will promote equity of access across metropolitan and regional areas and be inclusive of the needs of special cohorts, such as individuals from an Aboriginal background, culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) populations, and individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+. <sup>4</sup> | Medium term |             |                  |                   | •         | •                      |

4 LGBTQIA+ - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, or asexual and those who identify as members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

| Lead   | Action  | Description  | Timing      | Focus Areas |                  |                   |           |                        |
|--|---|--|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------------------|
|  |   |  |             | Housing     | Staying in Place | Care and Supports | Wellbeing | Support for caregivers |
| Department of Communities  | Explore how to measure and respond to happiness and wellbeing among seniors in WA | Develop a framework for measuring and responding to happiness among seniors in WA. Drawing on current national and international work on measuring happiness, this may include examples of best practice, such as the UK Happiness Index, to ensure effective data collation and analysis.   | Medium Term |             |                  |                   | •         |                        |
| <b>Outcome: Carers and grandcarers are recognised and supported</b>                        |   |  |             |             |                  |                   |           |                        |
| Department of Communities<br>Supported by Department of Training and Workforce Development | Investigate training support services pilot program for regional in-home care     | Investigate a training pilot, liaising with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), Elders and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to augment training for in-home carers to support older people in regional and remote areas. This training is intended to lead to a recognised qualification (e.g., Cert III in Individual Support: Ageing, Home, and Community). This will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve access to, and quality of, personal support for seniors in regional and remote areas</li> <li>• provide training and employment opportunities in regional and remote WA.</li> </ul> | Medium Term |             |                  |                   | •         | •                      |

## 4.2 Safe and friendly communities

### What it means and why it is important

Seniors have told us that when they feel safe and secure in the community, they are able to navigate it freely and actively engage. Safe and friendly communities are crucial for seniors. This means communities are places where seniors are treated with respect and included in community activities. To help facilitate this, infrastructure and transport systems must be accessible and affordable regardless of age or ability.

### Focus areas and outcomes

| Focus areas   | Outcomes   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive communities</li> <li>• Infrastructure and spaces</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Safety</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of the community welcome and respect seniors.</li> <li>• Community infrastructure is accessible for all seniors.</li> <li>• Seniors can access and navigate the transport system with ease.</li> <li>• Seniors are safe in their homes and as they navigate their communities.</li> </ul> |

#### Case study: Vulnerable Seniors Peak<sup>5</sup>

The Vulnerable Seniors Peak works to support vulnerable seniors and takes steps to raise awareness of, address and combat elder abuse as part of the Elder Abuse Strategy. Since 2020, the Council on the Ageing WA (COTA WA) has been recognised as the Vulnerable Seniors Peak that represents seniors as a group of individuals.

The State Government has provided funding of \$870,000 over four years to June 2024 to support the continued operation of the Vulnerable Seniors Peak and raise awareness of elder abuse.

COTA WA has delivered a diverse range of initiatives, including facilitating sector and public forums and events to raise awareness; representing the interests of older people on committees and advisory groups; developing resource guides; and undertaking communication and advocacy work.

5 COTA WA (2020). [COTA WA is Vulnerable Seniors Peak Body in WA](#).



| Lead  | Action   | Description   | Timing      | Focus Areas           |                           |           |        |
|---|--|---|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------|
|   |  |   |             | Inclusive communities | Infrastructure and spaces | Transport | Safety |
| <b>Outcome: Members of the community welcome and respect seniors</b>          |  |   |             |                       |                           |           |        |
| <b>Department of Communities</b><br>Supported by Local Government Authorities | <b>Support a grants program supporting local governments to become members of the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities*</b> | Provide grant funding to support Local Government Authorities (LGAs) across WA to join the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities, designed to operate in line with age-friendly design requirements across all local initiatives, infrastructure, and events. | Medium term | •                     | •                         | •         | •      |
| <b>Department of Communities</b>  | <b>Develop a WA charter of rights for the older person</b>   | Work with community and sector stakeholders to develop a WA charter of rights for the older person.   | Short term  | •                     |                           |           |        |
| <b>Department of Communities</b>  | <b>Deliver a public campaign to address ageism in WA*</b>  | Target ageism and known stigma in the community through utilisation of innovative approaches to raise awareness (e.g. initiatives like the Life in Pictures short-film competition). The campaign will include a focus on older Aboriginal people.                                | Medium term | •                     |                           |           |        |
| <b>Department of Communities</b>  | <b>Champion the Age-friendly Communities Grants Program*</b>   | Work collaboratively with local governments to oversee this grants program, which supports local governments and not-for-profit organisations to implement age-friendly, positive ageing seniors-related strategies.  | Ongoing     | •                     | •                         |           |        |

| Lead  | Action   | Description   | Timing  | Focus Areas           |                           |           |        |
|---|--|---|---------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------|
|   |  |   |         | Inclusive communities | Infrastructure and spaces | Transport | Safety |
| <b>Outcome: Community infrastructure is accessible to all seniors</b>           |  |   |         |                       |                           |           |        |
| Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions                        | <b>Improve accessibility of parks in WA for seniors</b>  | Improve accessibility for seniors to the parks and attractions managed across the broader Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and make such information readily available to support increased visitation and visitor satisfaction among older Western Australians, particularly those with a disability.  | Ongoing |                       | •                         |           |        |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors can access and navigate the transport system with ease.</b> |  |   |         |                       |                           |           |        |
| Department of Transport<br>Supported by the Public Transport Authority          | <b>Ensure all future Metronet infrastructure (including all new train stations) are accessible and user-friendly for seniors</b> | The Metronet Access and Inclusion Reference Group will continue to inform planning and decision-making on Metronet projects to ensure all projects consider and plan for the needs of seniors. The Department of Communities is working closely with Metronet as part of the Ageing with Choice initiative to ensure the same project parameters. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• considerations for making travel to and from train stations easier for those with reduced mobility</li> <li>• ensuring new train stations are pedestrian friendly and accessible for seniors and those with disability</li> <li>• ensuring station precincts include a diversity of housing types to support them being multi-age precincts.</li> </ul> | Ongoing |                       | •                         | •         |        |

| Lead   | Action   | Description  | Timing     | Focus Areas           |                           |           |        |
|--|--|--|------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------|
|  |  |  |            | Inclusive communities | Infrastructure and spaces | Transport | Safety |
| Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development                              | <b>Review policies and procedures for the Country Age Pension Fuel Card</b>      | Improve accessibility and uptake of the Country Age Pension Fuel Card. This will provide additional support with the cost of living for seniors in regional and remote WA and enable seniors to better and more frequently engage with healthcare and social activities.   | Short term |                       |                           | •         |        |
| Department of Transport  | <b>Taxi Users Subsidy Scheme (TUSS) reform Program</b>                           | Replace paper vouchers with a modern card for TUSS participants, and a digital system for taxi drivers that will record all trip details and ensure subsidy payments are made in a timely fashion. Improvements to TUSS will increase ease of access for people with disability, including older people with disability who make up the largest portion of participants in the scheme. | Medium     |                       |                           | •         |        |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors are safe in their homes and as they navigate their communities</b> |  |  |            |                       |                           |           |        |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Deliver the Elder Rights WA wrap-around service and measure impact</b>        | Four-year funding commitment (from 2020) to establish and deliver a wrap-around service for seniors experiencing elder abuse. Services include comprehensive support, legal advice, and representation.  | Ongoing    | •                     |                           |           | •      |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Establish a peak advocacy group for seniors to maximise impact and reach*</b> | Support the design and operation of a seniors' peak body to provide an independent and active advocate for seniors. The peak will continue to provide the function of supporting vulnerable seniors and take steps to address and combat elder abuse.  | Ongoing    | •                     |                           |           |        |



## 4.3 Staying connected and engaged

### What it means and why it is important

Being able to stay engaged, make independent choices, and contribute to society allows us to manage life and meet our personal needs. For seniors, this means having ways to stay connected with friends and family, opportunities to contribute through paid and unpaid work, and access to and the ability to engage with relevant information.

### Focus areas and outcomes

| Focus areas  | Outcomes  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information</li> <li>Employment</li> <li>Volunteering and social participation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors have access to the right information in the right ways so they can make informed choices.</li> <li>Seniors have opportunities for meaningful and inclusive employment.<sup>6</sup></li> <li>Seniors are supported to engage in their community in ways they choose.</li> </ul> |

### Case study: Digital Inclusion in WA<sup>7</sup>

In an increasingly digital world, having access to digital technologies, and the know-how to use them, is an essential and expected part of our everyday lives – from managing our finances to staying connected to our loved ones and the wider world. The Digital Inclusion in WA Blueprint (the Blueprint) aims to support Western Australians and their communities to access and use digital technologies in everyday life. The Blueprint provides a centralised and coordinated approach to ensure all Western Australians can access and use digital technologies, with older people a specific focus for support.

Partnerships with the community services sector, industry, government and the wider community will be key in addressing the barriers to digital inclusion, such as the skills to confidently and safely use digital technologies and having access to affordable digital devices and quality internet services.

The Blueprint will be delivered through the Blueprint Implementation Program, which outlines initiatives the State Government is progressing to improve digital inclusion outcomes for all Western Australians, including seniors.

<sup>6</sup> New initiatives Re: Seniors have opportunities for meaningful and inclusive employment will be addressed in the next action plan.

<sup>7</sup> Office of Digital Government WA (2023). [Digital Inclusion in WA Blueprint – Implementation Program](#)

| Lead   | Action   | Description   | Timing      | Focus Areas |            |                                       |
|--|--|---|-------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
|  |  |   |             | Information | Employment | Volunteering and social participation |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors have access to the right information in the right ways so they can make informed choices and decisions</b> |  |   |             |             |            |                                       |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Establish a streamlined seniors information service through expansion of existing services*</b>                                     | Expand existing services at the WA Seniors Card Centre to provide additional support, information and referrals for seniors. A dedicated phone line for seniors, managed by the Seniors Card team and volunteers, will be established with qualified staff to support referrals, particularly for seniors with complex needs. Volunteers will primarily be seniors to provide peer-to-peer support. | Medium term | •           |            | •                                     |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Advocate and lead practice in supporting government and industry efforts to make digital spaces more inclusive and age friendly</b> | Develop guidance for government and industry promoting inclusive, age-friendly digital spaces to support seniors' engagement with the broader digital landscape.  | Short term  | •           |            |                                       |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Establish a seniors information package to increase awareness and uptake of existing services and concessions*</b>                  | Develop an information package including information relating to the WA Seniors' Card, healthcare and housing, aged care, and home care options, as well as local community information and details about where to go for more information. Information to be made available online, and in hard copy at Community Resource Centres (CRCs) across the state.  | Short term  | •           |            | •                                     |

| Lead  | Action   | Description   | Timing      | Focus Areas |            |                                       |
|---|--|---|-------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
|   |  |   |             | Information | Employment | Volunteering and social participation |
| Department of Communities                                     | <b>Redesign Digital Literacy programs to target seniors in regional areas and improve impact</b> | In 2022-2023, implement a grants program to improve digital literacy and culturally appropriate programs in regional areas, including those provided by/at CRCs. Grant funding will be allocated to targeted and effective projects in line with the priorities of the Strategy.  | Ongoing     | •           |            |                                       |
| Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries | <b>WA Multicultural Policy Framework and Language Services Policy 2020</b>                       | Support the implementation of the WA Multicultural Policy Framework and the WA Language Services Policy 2020 across the WA public sector. These policies provide guidance for government agencies to ensure operations, services and programs are inclusive and accessible to everyone. This includes the provision of language services for seniors from CaLD backgrounds with low English language proficiency. | Ongoing     | •           |            | •                                     |
| Department of Communities                                     | <b>Support the development of decision-making information for older Aboriginal people</b>        | Work with the Council on the Ageing and the Aboriginal Health Council to develop culturally safe resources for older Aboriginal people about life choices and decisions, potentially including financial decisions, housing, preparing for end of life, and other relevant information.   | Medium term | •           | •          |                                       |



| Lead   | Action   | Description  | Timing      | Focus Areas |            |                                       |
|--|--|--|-------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |             | Information | Employment | Volunteering and social participation |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors are supported to engage in their community in ways they choose</b> |  |  |             |             |            |                                       |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Highlight the valuable contributions of seniors to the community*</b>   | As part of the initiative to combat ageism (above), promote the recognition of and appreciation for seniors' contributions to the community. This could include innovative approaches to raising awareness (e.g., initiatives like the Life in Pictures short-film competition). | Medium term |             |            | •                                     |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Work with Community Resource Centres and libraries to design intergenerational programs for local communities</b> | Work with Community Resource Centres and libraries to design intergenerational programs that can be delivered ongoing in the community and maintained through community involvement, with the potential for expansion to different population groups.                            | Medium term |             |            | •                                     |

| Lead  | Action   | Description  | Timing  | Focus Areas |            |                                       |
|---|--|--|---------|-------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
|   |  |  |         | Information | Employment | Volunteering and social participation |
| Department of Communities   | <b>Ensure the successful delivery of the intergenerational LGBTQIA+ Program</b>        | Monitor the delivery of the 2022-2023 intergenerational LGBTQIA+ programs, which bring together older LGBTQIA+ people and LGBTQIA+ people over the age of 25 to interact and connect. The Department of Communities will work to ensure that funding is spent on targeted and meaningful initiatives which align with the Strategy.  | Ongoing | •           |            | •                                     |
| Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) | <b>Inclusive Policies and programs</b>   | DLGSC will promote and advocate for the development of inclusive policies, programs and services where people from CaLD backgrounds, including older CaLD people, can fully access and participate in every aspect of civic, social, economic and cultural life. DLGSC will support State Sporting Associations and State Active Recreation Organisations funded under the Industry Investment Program to develop or be working towards an Inclusion Policy stating a commitment to be inclusive and cater for all, including seniors. | Ongoing | •           |            | •                                     |
| State Library of WA   | <b>Deliver activities and programs to improve seniors' wellbeing and participation</b> | Provision of physical and online resources in accessible formats including large print, audio and captioned motion pictures, available state-wide through the State Library and public libraries. Free access to materials, facilities and support for activities to foster digital and social inclusion, life-long learning, research, literacy, financial wellbeing and recreation. Opportunities to volunteer in a variety of engaging roles to support the work of the State Library.  | Ongoing | •           |            | •                                     |

## 4.4 Having views that are heard

### What it means and why it is important

Seniors told us that they feel valued when they feel heard and their contributions are respected. Having their views heard is essential for seniors to influence issues that matter to and impact upon them and ensures that all policies, initiatives, and activities designed to support and empower them are informed by their views and experiences. This means all seniors – both locally and nationally – have their diverse range of views heard, have the agency and opportunity to advocate for themselves, or effective representation should they have someone speaking on their behalf. This is particularly important for seniors who also belong to under-represented groups, whose views have often been overlooked in the past.

### Focus areas and outcomes

| Focus areas  | Outcomes   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representation and advocacy</li> <li>Diverse views</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors and their advocates feel heard.</li> <li>Seniors have the confidence and opportunity to make their views heard regardless of identity or background.</li> </ul> |

#### Case study: Carers Advisory Council

The Carers Advisory Council (the Council) provides advice to the Minister for Community Services about issues affecting carers.<sup>8</sup> Carers and the people they care for are consulted and play an active role in policy planning.

The *Carers Recognition Act 2004* (the Act) sets out their obligations under the Carers Charter, which includes providing an annual report to the Minister on the compliance of relevant organisations named in the Act.

8 Government of Western Australia (2022) [Carers Advisory Council](#).

| Lead   | Action   | Description  | Timing     | Focus Areas |       |
|--|--|--|------------|-------------|-------|
|  |  |  |            | Advocacy    | Views |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors and their advocates feel heard</b>   |  |  |            |             |       |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Establish a grant fund to support relevant peak bodies and community organisations to promote and advocate for all seniors in WA*</b> | Establish grant funding for peak bodies and community organisations which represent seniors in WA and enable seniors to have their views heard. Funding will be allocated to projects and initiatives that enable seniors to have a view on issues that matter to them, and which elevate the diverse views of seniors.      | Short term | •           | •     |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Ensure that there is capacity for seniors' views to be heard</b>  | Work with representative and specialist groups including Council on the Ageing, (WA) the vulnerable seniors' peak body (see above), the Aboriginal Strategic Advisory Group and others to ensure that seniors' views are considered.   | Short term | •           | •     |
| <b>Outcome: Seniors have the confidence and opportunity to make their views heard regardless of identity or background</b> |  |  |            |             |       |
| Department of Communities  | <b>Review policy design processes to ensure a consistent and meaningful approach to elevating the diverse views of seniors</b>           | Review policy design processes to incorporate mechanisms which enable the involvement of seniors, their families and carers, peak bodies, community organisations, and local governments in the co-development of policy, planning, evaluation, and research, with a focus on enabling the involvement of vulnerable groups. | Short term |             | •     |

## 5. Working alongside the Australian and local Governments

During consultations on the Strategy, we heard from seniors and the broader community about the issues impacting older people in WA, and we have worked with stakeholders across State and local government to identify the actions (outlined in the tables above) that the State Government can take to promote better outcomes for seniors. Some issues we heard about are the primary responsibility of the Australian Government, and some were the responsibility of local governments across WA. Figure 3 at right outlines the areas of responsibility for each. It will be important for the State Government to work alongside other levels of government in advocating for issues that matter to and impact upon seniors.

The State Government will continue to provide advice as appropriate to the Australian Government on how issues within these areas affect older Western Australians, and work with local governments and provide relevant advice on behalf of seniors.

**Figure 3** Australian and local government areas of responsibility

### Australian Government

- **Aged care**, including assessments for aged care, in-home supports, eligibility for services, workforce planning and standards for residential aged care
- **Age pensions**, including rates of pensions, special conditions around eligibility
- **Superannuation** law, entitlements, and access to superannuation
- **Taxation matters**
- **Veterans' affairs**
- **Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme**, and the costs of medical treatment and medication

### Local Government

- **Disability (ACROD) parking**
- **Public Libraries**
- **Sporting and recreational** facilities
- **Community centres**
- **Seniors' activities and recreation centres**
- Membership of the **Local Government Professionals Age-friendly Communities Network**









## **Department of Communities**

Postal address: Locked Bag 5000, Fremantle WA 6959

Telephone: 1800 176 888

Email: [enquiries@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@communities.wa.gov.au)

Website: [www.communities.wa.gov.au](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au)

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) – Telephone: 13 14 50

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service. For more information visit: [www.communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs](http://www.communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs)