



older
tenants
voice



Special **Culturally Diverse** edition

HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP

MARCH 2018 | AUTUMN EDITION

CHAIRPERSONS WELCOME

Welcome to this special edition of the Newsletter, celebrating Diversity Week and reaching out to our members and friends of various language backgrounds.

With 50% of our clients, and a growing number of our members from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, we are happy to be making progress towards our strategic goal of increasing CALD involvement in the HAAG community.

One major step towards this goal is the convening of a new Cultural Diversity Reference Group who began meeting in February. This is a group of service providers, community members and HAAG members who aim to make the day to day operations of HAAG more culturally responsive, and we look forward to implementing the strategies they come up with.

In other work this quarter, the committee and staff have been very busy preparing documentation to meet the Human Service Standards. Gaining accreditation against these standards is a requirement of every DHHS funded agency and ensures a certain level of service to all clients. We believe strongly in the highest quality service for older people and although it is exhaustive, we are very happy to be undertaking this accreditation process.

Phyll Williams

WELCOME FIONA AND CHRIS

Fiona has joined our Housing Support team as a placement student and is in her third year studying Social Work (Honours) at RMIT. She is already halfway through her placement here at HAAG. She has been volunteering at WIRE –Women’s Information Referral Exchange on the telephone support line as both a phone worker and a team leader for the past 4 years. Before studying social work Fiona studied Fine Art, but realised she didn’t want to be an artist when she grew up!

Chris joins the Retirement Housing and Intake teams, sharing his time between both roles. Chris has a Master of Human Rights from Curtin University and a Bachelor of Business Management. His most recent job was working on the remote Aboriginal Lands of South Australia where he advocated for the aged, frail and the disabled ensuring holistic case management was undertaken, focusing on client strengths and abilities in order to optimise health outcomes, independence and self-reliance. He conducted community engagement, consultations, identifying community needs, designing and implementing creative community programs and initiatives to address those needs. He also has extensive experience in working with clients from CALD backgrounds.



WHAT'S ON?

11 April - Filipino/Hispanic Community Information Session
23 & 24 April - Retirement Housing Community Information with COTA
2 May - Cultural Diversity Reference Group
9 May - WA Ageing on the Edge Reference Group
14 May - RAAG (Retirement housing working group)
14 May - Forum: Complaining to the regulator (Retirement Housing)
16 May - Chinese Community Information Session
18 May - Indian Community Information Session
18 May - Delegation to Directors of Housing & Ageing NSW
18 May - NSW Ageing on the Edge Working Group
19 May - Whittlesea community futures partnership meeting
24 May - HAAG General Meeting
12 June - RAAG Working Group

RADIO 3CR:

City Limits-3rd Wed of Month - 9am
Raise the Roof- 4th Wed of Month - 6pm

We love sharing our member's stories. Want to be our next member in the spotlight? Or do you have something to say on radio?

Contact Shane on 03 9654 7389

HARMONY DAY

March 21st is Harmony Day in Australia. This day was created to celebrate this country's rich cultural diversity and is marked on the same day as the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This day exists to remind people of the negative consequences that arise from racial discrimination.

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that all humans are 'born free and equal in dignity and rights' and Article 2 states that regardless of race, or any other distinction, every person is entitled to the rights and freedoms outlined in the Declaration of Human Rights. Every person also has a responsibility to combat racial discrimination.

While all older people experience discrimination in housing, especially in the private rental market, Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) older people often experience increased discrimination and hardship as their difficulties can be compounded by racism. Multiple barriers can also exist to prevent them from accessing the support services that could work with them to find their home. Maybe the service does not understand their cultural needs, maybe an organisation's publications and contact options are not in their language, maybe they do not know how to access an interpreting service, maybe workers do not have the knowledge to holistically support and understand them.

Recently released ABS statistics have shown the following:

" People who arrived in Australia in the last 5 years accounted for 15% (17,749 persons) of all persons who were homeless on Census night in 2016.

Of the homeless people who were born overseas and arrived in Australia in the five years prior to Census, 12% were born In India, 10% in China, 6% in Afghanistan, 5% in Pakistan and 4% in Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan and Malaysia.

In 2016, 74% or 13,088 people who were born overseas and arrived in Australia in the last 5 years were living in 'severely' crowded dwellings and 13% (2,350 persons) were staying in boarding houses." (ABS 2018)

This shows that we are clearly not doing enough to look after new migrants, including many older people who come to Australia to be with their children and grandchildren but are left to fend for themselves without access to government pensions. In addition to these homelessness figures, there are a significant number of people from CALD backgrounds who are at risk of homelessness living in unaffordable private rental and living temporarily with friends and family.

Therefore, HAAG has been working in collaboration with the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV), the Centre for Culture Ethnicity and Health (CCEH) and various community groups to gather information, knowledge, experiences, suggestions and expertise on how to combat discrimination for older CALD people accessing housing supports. This work has produced the 'Preventing Homelessness in CALD Communities Report' and 'A Home for Diversity Report' (which can be found on the 'Projects' page on our website) as well as driving future collaborations and reference groups to continue to foster harmony in Australia.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY REFERENCE GROUP

HAAG's new 'Cultural Diversity Reference Group' has come together as part of the 'CALD Communities Connecting for Housing Justice' project which aims to engage community members from a culturally diverse background who are isolated due to rental issues or family conflict.

The 'Cultural Diversity Reference Group' is a group of service providers, community members and HAAG members who have an interest in making HAAG's day-to-day operations more culturally responsive.

Thanks to previous initiatives, HAAG's Housing support service Home at Last now has 50% of its clients from Culturally Diverse Backgrounds. One of the aims of the Cultural Diversity Reference Group is to increase the representation of CALD communities in HAAG's membership base. The group also focusses on:

- Contributing to internal HAAG policies
- Building awareness of HAAG in community
- Feeding specific information about their communities into the organisation
- Advocating for their community's needs

The 'Cultural Diversity Reference Group' will meet monthly, for the first 3 months, then bi-monthly thereafter.

For more information on this group please contact Gemma on 03 9654 7389 Monday, Wednesday or Friday.



PHOTO. Some of HAAG's Cultural Diversity reference group enjoying lunch with HAAG staff for Harmony day. L to R: Housing Support student Emily, HAAG Community Advocates Lilliana Curkovic, Davinder Mamik, Senada Bosnic Ekic and Vijay Laxmi, and Outreach worker Melis.

DIVERSITY WEEK 'PROUD TO BELONG' 17 – 25 MARCH 2018

The theme of Diversity Week in 2018 is 'Proud to Belong'. HAAG works tirelessly to support people into homes that they can feel safe in and proud of. The research, collaborations, and housing work that HAAG have been involved in are about nurturing connections and fostering belonging for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. HAAG is driven to ensure that any person who contacts the service feels a sense of belonging and understanding.

We have embedded our work with CALD communities into our everyday practice at HAAG, particularly through the 'Cultural Diversity Reference Group'.

HAAG works to ensure that no matter what languages you speak, communication and support will be available to you. There are bilingual workers as well as telephone and in-person interpreter services. We have brochures and publications translated into 10 different languages so our contact information and service options are clear and understandable. We would like to thank the workers and community members from our partner agencies who have been the cornerstone of our work in this area, as well as the HAAG staff who have worked tirelessly to provide an equitable service to everyone who walks through our doors. Here at HAAG we believe every older person has a human right to belong; in their home, in their communities, at HAAG, and in Australia.

Home at Last can help you find a home that is affordable and suitable to your needs.

ਹੋਮ ਐਟ ਲਾਸਟ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਸਸਤੇ ਘਰ ਤਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਜੋ ਤੁਹਾਡੀਆਂ ਲੋੜਾਂ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਢੁਕਵਾਂ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ

If you need help with housing call
यदि आपको आवास के लिए सहायता
की आवश्यकता हो तो फ़ोन कीजिये-

1300 765 178

CALD COMMUNITIES CONNECTING FOR HOUSING JUSTICE

CALD Communities Connecting for Housing Justice is a 12 month project running between August 2017- August 2018. It aims to engage community members from a culturally diverse background who are isolated due to renting or family conflict, as well as people who have been housed by Home at Last in previous years. HAAG would like to thank the Department of Health and Human Services who's Participation for CALD seniors grant has made this project possible.

Older private renters can be socially isolated due to the high cost of renting. There is often little money left at the end of the week to get to seniors groups or any other social outing. Older renters from CALD communities can be even more socially isolated as they are often forced out of their community in search of the most affordable rental property (which are often in the outer suburbs). These properties can also be far from public transport, increasing isolation for those who don't drive.

Older people who are living with family and who wish to leave the family home can also be socially isolated. HAAG has found that people in this situation can feel ashamed that things haven't worked out, or may fear being excluded from their family if others know that they wish to leave or have left the family home.

There may be a cultural expectation that matters that take place within the family are private. This could lead to avoidance of seniors groups and other social activities where they may be encouraged to discuss their issue, especially in situations of elder abuse and family conflict.

The CALD Communities Connecting for Housing Justice project works with community leaders and ethno-specific service providers (who are already engaged with HAAG through our previous project) to deliver community education sessions, using an audio-visual tool. A film which has been developed in close consultation with target communities, is available in ten languages (Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Arabic and English). This resource, which tells culturally appropriate stories about housing issues, elder abuse and where to find help, has been used in many of the community education sessions with older people from the targeted communities. After showing the film, the group leader discusses the issues raised and where help can be found.

Some of the information sessions have been held at informal settings such as morning teas. At these morning teas, community leaders have asked seniors group members to invite their friends who are experiencing difficulty with their housing. Having good links to the community, the group leaders have also invited specific people who they know need assistance to the session.

Community leaders have so-far run 12 information sessions in 4 languages including, Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian, plus in-language radio shows. As part of the project we have also established the HAAG Diversity Reference Group which will continue to operate past the duration of the project.

If you are interested in being part of the reference group or would like information about any other aspect of work we do with Culturally Diverse communities at HAAG call Gemma on 9654 7389.

“I HAD HOPE; I HAD ENORMOUS HOPE”



Home at Last clients Slavko, Vesna and Irena, with Outreach worker Melis and housing support student Fiona

Social, cultural and linguistic diversity are characteristic of modern, inclusive and globally connected cities such as Melbourne. For generations Melbourne's suburbs have been shaped by cultures and people from all around the world. The Italians went to Carlton, the Greeks found Richmond and the Vietnamese made Footscray home. People often choose to live close to people from the same ethnic background as it enables them to connect with family, friends and community, to communicate with others who speak the same language, to buy food from shops which sell traditional foods, and to attend the same church, mosque or synagogue.

In recent weeks, Home at Last (HAL) were able to find secure, affordable and appropriate housing for three clients, all from a Serbian background in the same block of social housing properties located in the City of Brimbank.

Slavko (58) was referred to our Home At Last program as he was homeless and couch surfing. He stated that his already poor health deteriorated rapidly due to being homeless. 'I was not eating properly as I was not allowed to cook and I was just happy that my friends offered me a couch to sleep on', stated Slavko.

Mother and daughter, Vesna (61) and Irena (29) approached our service as they were being evicted from their expensive and poorly managed private rental unit.

The pathways and documents people are required to complete to access the public housing system are confusing, complex and overwhelming for most people. This was the experience of Irena, Vesna and Slavko. "I was stressed out about all the paperwork, everything was going through my mind. I understood what I needed to do, but so much paperwork!" This feeling of panic and uncertainty about even beginning the application process is common among people who contact Home At Last for advice and support - it has the potential to be even more daunting for a person if they are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. This is where a HAL outreach worker steps in! Melis worked with Irena and her family, and Slavko to holistically assess their housing situations, provide them with housing options, submit their housing applications and support them whilst waiting for application approval.

The support from Melis continued all the way through to when they are settled into their new homes. Slavko said he has “the greatest place to live in”. When Melis asked him how much his living situation has improved from 1-10 he said “TOO MUCH!”. Vesna reiterated this sentiment sharing that now her rent is more affordable she feels “very, very happy”. It was obvious that now Irena, Vesna and Slavko feel secure and safe in their homes after a long time feeling fear about their housing situation. Fiona asked how it felt living in a safe home near people who know a similar culture and speak Serbian too. “We are now living here in peace, living here with other people. We have no problems with anybody”, said Irena. This sense of belonging, safety, community and peace is an intrinsic part of the service HAL endeavours to provide. This sense of safety extends beyond the physical; it includes spiritual, cultural and emotional. It is this holistic understanding of safety and belonging that HAL regularly considers; in this situation HAL successfully secured housing for multiple people who speak Serbian in the same public housing locality to nurture their shared community,

Home at Last can help you to find a home that you can stay in for the long term.

‘Најзад кућа’ вам може помоћи да нађете дом у коме ћете моћи да останете на дужи рок.

language and culture. Vesna said, “Without HAL who knows what would have happened to us”. Slavko, 58, stated that the City of Brimbank is becoming an increasingly popular local government area from the Serbian speaking community. Vesna and Irena said that ‘having a neighbour who speaks the same language makes it easier to communicate’. Feeling hope and a sense of belonging is important to our organisation and we try to cultivate this as we provide ongoing and personalised housing support. When asked how she felt after first coming to the HAL drop-in-service, Irena said, “I had hope; I had enormous hope”.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

HAAG Worker Jeff Fiedler paid a visit to long-time HAAG members Lionel and Marion Foster. Lionel and Marion were one of the original representatives on our Caravan, Residential Parks and Villages (CARPAV) Working Group starting all the way back in 2005 when we held the first big gathering of residential park residents to begin campaigning for legislative reform. Lionel and Marion also led the local fight at their own Summerhill residential park to improve conditions for all the residents and took on and won a case against the management in a landmark legal case that became famously known as Foster vs Ellerton Lodge. Lionel has not been well in recent times but they continue to fight their own battles with customary courage and grace. Whilst they are not as actively involved at HAAG any more, they are still members and will always be part of the HAAG family and remembered for their pioneering work.



Bi-Lingual Worker, Sonja Zigic speaking on Community Radio



Bi-Lingual Worker Marina Celebic Speaking to Serbian Seniors



Bi-Lingual Worker Hoda Nahal speaking to Arabic Speaking Seniors



Housing Support worker Maria Cozzi speaking at the General Meeting.



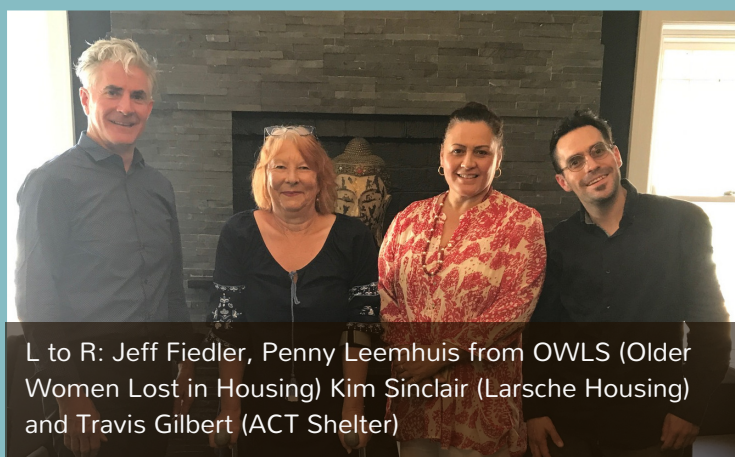
HAAG mini-member Taimer with Retirement Housing Worker Shane McGrath



HAAG members at the General Meeting in February



Jeff Fiedler speaking to members at the General Meeting in February



L to R: Jeff Fiedler, Penny Leemhuis from OWLS (Older Women Lost in Housing) Kim Sinclair (Larsche Housing) and Travis Gilbert (ACT Shelter)



Bi-Lingual Worker Billiana Conway speaking to Serbian Seniors

FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

A General Meeting was held on the 22nd February with 44 people in attendance.

Members were presented with an insight into the operations of the organisation via reports from a selection of workers. Crystal McDonald presented a summary of 2017 which showed that 1048 clients were assisted and 122 were housed. Maria Cozzi gave an outline of the Intake process and the complexities around making assessments and referrals. Anne Maher spoke on the experience of providing Outreach Support to clients and shared a story of the time her and Darwin Cheng (also Outreach) did three trips to help a client move his 100 precious pot plants. Shane McGrath and Chris Kadira presented the work of the Retirement Housing Advice Team and Jeff Fiedler gave a rundown of his amazing work promoting the Home At Last model and networking around Australia with the National Project. Reuben Endean gave a short demonstration of the new online Information Clearing House he constructed for the National Project which houses hundreds of articles and reports related to housing policy and older persons housing issues.

The highlight of the day for many members was the film: Older woman lost in housing (OWLS), showing the amazing work of advocate Penny Leemhuis in NSW.

Finally, Fiona York presented an update on the Hands Off Public Housing Campaign which HAAG supports and informed members about the rally being held later that week.

To finish up, we all had a lovely lunch and chat together afterwards.

AGEING ON THE EDGE- NATIONAL PROJECT

The Ageing on the Edge National Project is focusing on four key actions at present:

1. We are moving into Western Australia to begin our research on older people at risk of homelessness. Having provided reports for South Australia and New South Wales, it will be fascinating to see the trends in the West and find out what needs to be done to help. A reference group has been set up that is convened by Council on the Ageing WA and we will be having our first meeting in early May.
2. April Bragg has obtained a \$9,500 grant from StreetSmart that will be used to set up a national older persons housing network. This group intends to be a strong lobbying force for improvements to housing and services for older people across Australia and it provides HAAG the opportunity to link our membership to the bigger national stage. If you are interested in being involved as a Victorian representative please let Jeff Fiedler know at the HAAG office.
3. We have been lobbying politicians in federal parliament to seek their support for more action on older people and housing. We are only 12 months away from the next federal election and we are demanding that more be done in the face of growing evidence from the 2016 Census that homelessness is increasing at a greater rate for older people than any other age group. In particular there has been a 78% increase in homeless older women aged 65-74 in NSW and a 71% increase in Victoria.
4. Our Digital Communications Worker Reuben Endean has been working hard to finalise the development of our Older Persons Online Research Library. This excellent resource will be a publicly available place where all HAAG members can access the latest and greatest research on housing and older people. Watch this space for further information on the launch of the library.

RETIREMENT HOUSING CASE STUDY

اتصلت مؤخراً امرأة لبنانية تبلغ من العمر 90 عاماً مع HAAG من خلال مدير حالتها. عاشت في شقة سكنية مستقلة لمدة 30 عاماً، لكن المالك استغل أحياناً إفتقارها إلى مهارات اللغة الإنجليزية - على سبيل المثال، حيث جعلها توقع على عقد إيجار غير عادل لم تفهمه. وحاول عقد الإيجار أخذ حقوقها - بما في ذلك السماح للمالك بطردها بإشعار مدته خمسة أيام فقط، وزيادة إيجارها بصورة غير مشروعة.

عندما تدخل HAAG، تم إرسال لها رسالة تخبرها أن أمامها خمسة أيام فقط للمغادرة. من الواضح أن هذا الأمر سبب لها التوتر الرهيب - لم يكن بإمكانها الانتقال بسرعة بأي حال من الأحوال. تمكنت خدمة إسكان التقاعد التابعة ل HAAG من مساعدتها على إنفاذ حقوقها - التأكد من أنها لم تحصل فقط على ستة أشهر كاملة للإنتقال، مع المساعدة المناسبة للعثور على منزل جديد وآمن، ولكن أيضاً الحصول على ما يقرب من 1,000 دولار من الإيجار الزائد المدفوع من المالك .

يمكن أن تكون قواعد وقوانين إسكان التقاعد مربكة للجميع ، لكن الحواجز اللغوية تجعلها أكثر صعوبة. إذا كنتم تواجهون مشاكل أو مخاوف في قرية التقاعد، أو شقة سكنية مستقلة، أو حديقة البيوت المتنقلة (كارافان بارك)، أو أي نوع آخر من مساكن التقاعد، يرجى الاتصال بخدمة إسكان التقاعد، وسنبذل قصارى جهدنا للحصول على نتيجة رائعة من أجلكم.

A 90-year-old Lebanese woman had been living in an ILU for 30 years, but the owner took advantage of her lack of English by making her sign a lease that she didn't understand. The lease tried to take away her rights – including allowing the landlord to evict her with only five days notice, and to illegally increase her rent.

When HAAG got involved, the owner had sent her a letter telling her she had only five days to leave. This caused her terrible stress –she could not move so quickly. HAAG's Retirement Housing Service was able to help her enforce her rights – making sure she got a full six months to move out, with proper assistance to find a new and secure home, and got back almost \$1,000 in overpaid rent from the landlord.

Retirement Housing rules and laws can be confusing. language barriers make them even more difficult. If you're having problems or concerns in any kind of retirement housing, please contact our Retirement Housing Service.

Home at Last can help you to find a home that is suitable to your needs as you get older.

يمكن أن تساعدك خدمة **Home at Last** على العثور على المنزل الذي هو مناسب لاحتياجاتك مع التقدم في السن.

If you need help with housing call إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة بشأن السكن اتصل على الرقم

1300 765 178

MOLLY HADFIELD AWARD 2017

The Molly Hadfield Award, named for one of HAAG's founders, honours outstanding services to older tenants. This year the award went to the volunteers of the MOSS Food Bank at the Barkly Street highrise in Brunswick – particularly appropriate given Molly's pioneering emphasis on the importance of good nutrition for older people. The volunteers collect, sort, store and distribute food to 80 to 100 families a week.

Lyn is MOSS's volunteer coordinator, and was happy to see the volunteers recognised with the award. "I felt very honoured for the volunteers because they dedicate their time free, they dedicate it with love and compassion, and they're all here to help people who are underprivileged." Terry, a volunteer, agreed that this is what makes the food bank important: "something to help out underprivileged people, and make up for where the government fails." Helen is a local who visits the food bank regularly. "I'm just so impressed with the volunteers from the building – the work that they do, the hours they put in and the spirit that they do it in." And how's the food? "Oh, the food's amazing! The only disappointment is the fact they dropped the price." If you'd like to get involved with the food bank you can call on 9380 6036, and ask for Lyn the volunteer coordinator.



MOSS Foodbank volunteers - Winners of the 2017 Molly Hadfield award



Anne Lewis, director of housing practice and complex support, Nick Foa, Director of Housing, with Molly's daughter and HAAG committee member, Sue Marino



HAAG members Kris Spark, Phyll Williams (Chair) & manager April Bragg



The Hon. Minister for Housing Martin Foley with Sue Marino (Molly's daughter and HAAG committee member) presenting the award to MOSS.



Mr and Mrs Chen (both in their 80s) live together. Mr Chen has many health issues due to his age and frailty. Recently Mr Chen had a fall at home and broke his leg. He has to use a wheelchair to get around. Now Mr Chen has trouble accessing his home because of stairs at the front and back doors. As a result, Mr Chen can't go outside and is very isolated. Apart from that, the bathroom is also very difficult for Mr Chen to access. The rented house has no hand rails in the bathroom or toilet and Mrs Chen has trouble helping Mr Chen in the shower. They informed the landlord about the difficulties they are encountering and the need for hand rails, but the landlord did not want to assist and refused to add handrails and ramps to the house. When talking to Mrs Chen, she mentioned that Mr Chen had dementia. Since the accident, Mr Chen's dementia seems to have become worse. Mrs Chen is very worried about Mr Chen falling over and how isolated he is being stuck in the house.

If you need help with housing call:

如果你需要住房幫助，請
致電：

1300 765 178

第一种情景：陈先生和陈太太 – 住房不再合适

陈先生和陈太太 80 多岁，住在一起。由于年老虚弱，陈先生有很多健康问题。最近陈先生在家里跌了一跤，摔断了腿，他行动时不得不用轮椅。现在陈先生难以进出自己的家，因为前门和后门均有台阶；结果陈先生无法外出，生活上变得非常孤立。除此之外，因为出租房的洗澡间及厕所里都没有扶手，所以陈先生进出都很困难，而且陈太太很难帮陈先生洗澡。他们告诉房东他们遇到哪些困难并要求安装扶手，但房东不愿帮忙安装扶手和进出房屋的斜坡。陈太太在和工作人员谈话时，她提到陈先生有老年痴呆症，摔跤后陈先生的老年痴呆症似乎有所恶化。陈太太对陈先生的摔跤问题以及被困在家里的孤独状况感到非常焦虑。

If you need help with housing call:

**Ako vam je potrebna pomoć u vezi
stambenog smještaja, nazovite:**

1300 765 178

If you need help with housing call

**Ako vam je potrebna pomoć
u svezi stambenog smještaja,
nazovite**

1300 765 178

CASE WORK SUMMARIES

RETIREMENT HOUSING ADVICE SUMMARY

Greatest Success

We have been able to keep up with the volume of work and solving some of the problems the clients have eg contracts and responsibilities in a caravan parks and retirement villages

Greatest Challenge

We often do not have the capacity to help those clients wanting ILUs because the database we use is managed by an external organisation. Those wanting to downsize to ILUs form the about half of the calls we receive.



Since January 2018, HAAG Outreach Housing Support worker Paola Posso (left), has been working with low income older adults who have been experiencing homelessness, or are at risk of homelessness in the municipalities of Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliff, Colac Otway and Surf Coast Shires. This expansion of our services has been thanks to increased funding from the Department of Health.

“It has been my pleasure to assist and support people in the challenging task of finding long term, secure, affordable, and age-appropriate housing. I really enjoy what I do and am happy to be making a difference in people’s lives.”

For enquiries, please contact our intake workers on 1300 765 178, Monday to Friday 10am to 4 pm. Our friendly staff is always happy to help.

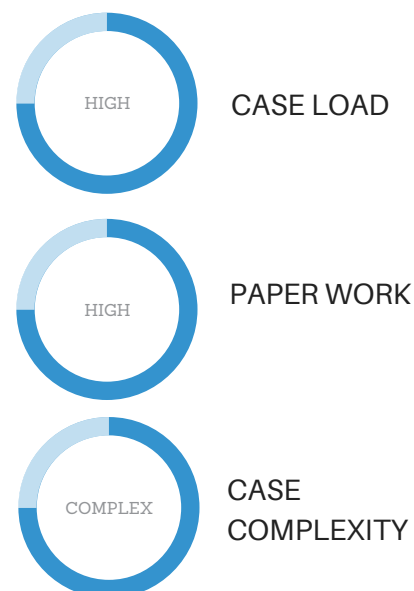
HOUSING SUPPORT SUMMARY

Greatest Success

Two of our long-term and most complex clients received an offer of social housing in their preferred area and within days of being about to be served with a Notice to Vacate. They were assisted to move into the property by April and Anne and are in the process of being linked into local health services for ongoing support.

Greatest Challenge

Due to the public housing redevelopments we have not been receiving any public housing offers, it has been quite distressing for clients who are needing appropriate housing as soon as possible, as well as for housing support staff with increasing numbers of people waiting for offers



HAAG Communications

It seems that public awareness of the issues facing older renters, particularly older women, is increasing. Yay!

This has certainly been helped by the release of the latest ABS Stats, which among many brow-raising statistics, stated that the number of homeless women over 55 has risen 31% -the largest increase in any age group. So, rightfully, a lot of media attention has been focused on this issue.

HAAG have had 2 letters to the editor published in The Age, speaking on older women's homelessness and the public housing redevelopments. Our media activities have also resulted in two articles in an online newsletter called Talking Aged Care. One covered older persons homelessness and the ABS stats, and the other was on the collaboration between HAAG and Streetsmart, joining forces to fund a grass roots housing support service for women in NSW. A great article also featured on Streetsmarts blog, with quotes from April Bragg, which I encourage you to read.

Finally for Media, Tegan Leader one of our Housing Support workers did a radio show Talking Health with Dr Sally Cockburn, speaking on the importance of pets in rental housing.

We also continue to share these stories and more with our followers on social media and on our website.

HAAG SERVICE DATA 01 DEC-28 FEB 2018

Total new Clients	250
Needing Housing support	214 (85%)
Needing Information Only	38 (15%)

Main reason for seeking assistance (top 3)

Housing Crisis eg: NTV	69 (38%)
Inappropriate/Inad. Housing	58 (32%)
Housing Affordability Stress	55 (30%)

Client Demographics

Average Age	65
Predominate Gender	Female(62%)
CALD clients	53%

Referrals to Housing Support/Information

HAAG Services	107
External Services	207

HAAG Housing Outcomes

Clients Housed	22
Offers made	20
Average time to Rehouse	< 1 Month

Retirement Info Service data^

Retirement Clients	80
Average Age	70
Predominate Gender	Female

Secondary Consultations*

Total	17
Total hours spent on SC	2.6
Consult. requested by other agency	20%



@HAAGHomeAtLast



@HousingfortheAgedActionGroup



www.olderrenters.org.au

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Research and Policy Development