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Edition 2 - June 2012

Assist Connecting Consumers



Newsletter by consumers, for consumers

Gawler Home Assist

Elderly Centre

37 Fourteenth Street, Gawler South SA 5118

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home and community care

Gawler

Meet Helen Christie
Home Assist Team Leader

Your professional background?

I have over sixteen years of experience working in the Community Care sector. I worked for two not-for-profit organisations, then eight years ago moved into local government, firstly at the City of Salisbury and most recently to the Town of Gawler.

What do you like most about your role?

The diversity of my position. I enjoy working with staff across council, supporting each other, and knowing we make a real contribution. My belief in the community programs we provide is amplified by level of support we have from residents and the valuable contribution made by volunteers.

What is strangest thing you've ever seen on the job?

I visited a consumer in their own home to work out the details of a Spring Clean. In one room I noticed a big black mark on the ceiling, on closer inspection it was black fluff. The consumer explained there was actually a small hole in the ceiling and being the middle of winter heat from the home rises upwards. She explained a possum had taken to curling up in ceiling over the hole during the day to take advantage of the warmth.

Who is strangest character you've ever met on the job?

A consumer's dog, who liked to catch mice. And just like a cat, the dog would proudly line them up for his owner's inspection, so he would receive the appropriate praise for his hard work.

Which is the most unusual home you have visited?

The most unique consumer's home, in both look and smell, was a home made completely from Jarrah. I'm sure it was constructed long before today's building standards. However with, persistent staff, help from an occupational therapist and a builder, we were able to install the requested grab rails and increase safety for the consumer in their bathroom.

Your favourite quote:

It is well to remember that the entire population of the universe, with one trifling exception, is composed of others - John Andrew Holmes



What is Home Assist?

Gawler Home Assist has been running for 21 years. From humble beginnings, in 1991 with a part time staff member co-ordinating services for a few consumers, it has grown so that in the last financial year the program provided over 10,000 services to over 800 consumers.

Here is how the service is used:

Domestic Assistance	59%	👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤👤
Maintenance	17%	👤👤👤
Administration	13%	👤👤
Social Support	11%	👤👤

Footnotes:

1. Includes - long and short term domestic assistance, spring cleaning and personal care
2. Includes maintenance, modification, gardening, security,
3. Includes assessment, co-ordination, information and advocacy
4. Includes, social and shopping support

Next Issue – Who pays for the Home Assist costs?

Clues for Consumers

Those pesky phone callers

Have you had someone call you to tell you have problems with your computer? This is a scam, do not give them your details.

Have you had someone call and ask you to verify personal information or bank account details? Banks will never call you to ask for your personal details. Tell them politely you are not interested and then hang up your phone

Tired of businesses ringing you and offering their services? You can register with the Do Not Call Register to have your numbers listed, so that they will not call you. Once you register your home or mobile phone numbers, telemarketers must, by law, stop calling you if they don't have an existing business relationship with you. This may take up to 30 days.



There are two ways to register:

Online: www.donotcall.gov.au

Phone: 1300 792 958

Our Ron

In 2006, I became a fully fledged consumer of HACC. It was the year of “water rot”. It started in the laundry with the failure of tap washers to the washing machine. A gentleman with a pantechnicon of tools, bits and pieces arrived. Hey presto my washers were replaced and fixed.

Ron is a quiet achiever, a dry wit and the kindest man. “Always look on the bright side of life” (Monty Python) is his motto. The next watery event was when I arrived home from a walk to find a flood creeping through the house. The laundry again. I panicked, rang HACC and up came Ron, followed by a private carpet man. It was not a good day!

I had a new flexible showerhead fitted, two weeks later it leaked and Ron replaced it.



Our Ron

Leaking hose fixtures in the garden and up came Mr Fixit, replacing the flimsy plastic clamps with metal ones. A few weeks ago a dripping shower and Ron to the rescue. Could he find the mains water tap in the garden? After scrabbling in the deep bark he eventually found it and the meter, movement had hidden it. All is well again and long may it last!

In a recent copy of The Bunyip in “Letters to the Editor” I saw that Ron J had fractured his leg. I enquired and found it was the wrong Ron J - there are two in Gawler!! So I will stick to the first one. What would we do without our Ron? Thankyou so much Ron for all your kindness and help.

Jean Barton – a happy consumer.



Activities for Seniors

Australia Retired Persons Association (SA) Inc. (ARPA) Gawler - Regional Group

Coordinator: June - tel. 8522 5596
Secretary: Val - tel. 8522 1390

Time: Wednesday 10am – 2:30 p.m.

Location: South Gawler Football Clubrooms
Dawson Road, Evanston

Club is open to retired & semi-retired people
Members and visitors. BYO lunch; tea and coffee
available.

Visitors may come up to 3 times before joining

Activities: Bias Bowls, 8-ball (pool), darts, board
games, cards, day trips

Fees: \$3.50 per week

Annual Fees: Single - \$25

Couple - \$45

My name is Pat and this is my story

I am a member of the Home Assist Consumer Group and really like participating in their meetings. After leaving my nursing profession three years ago I wanted to join a friendly, active group of people in the 50 plus age bracket. A friend informed me of A.R.P.A as she thought that may be just what I was looking for. It certainly was!

I love socialising with the members at the weekly meetings and taking part in some of the many activities. My favourite activities are cards, indoor bowls and rummiking, a game of numbers played with tiles rather than cards. Sometimes we become quite noisy!!

We have a committee which meets regularly to plan special activities. These include a Devonshire morning tea, barbeque lunches and on the anniversary of the founding of the Gawler branch a birthday cake. Once a year we have a bus trip with lunch at a hotel. A.R.P.A is a non profit organisation with about 30 members. It is a friendly group and new members are most welcome.



You can be part of Home Assist

The Gawler Home Assist Consumer Group consists of a group of users of the service who meet monthly to:

- Discuss ongoing development of the program
- Encourage feedback from all consumers
- Work with staff, providing the consumer perspective in review and improvement processes
- Hear interesting speakers

Last year our speakers included:

- Caroline from Gawler Health Service Volunteer program which included social and fitness options in the area.
- Gaye from Gawler And Surrounds Women's Health Action Group
- Michelle from Uniting Care Wesley including Violet's Visitors pet visiting program.

If you are interested in joining the Consumer Group, contact Helen, Home Assist Team Leader on 8522 1177 to find out more.

Has Home Assist been helpful to you?

If so, you might like to write your thoughts and experiences down and send them to the Home Assist office. We would like to share more consumer stories with you and publish some in future editions.

Getting your own copy of the newsletter

This issue has been posted out with the annual survey which we encourage you to fill in. Future issues will be available from:

- The Home Assist Office at the Elderly Centre
- Home Assist contractors
- Online (if you have a computer) please call to provide your e-mail details

Who puts the newsletter together?

On behalf of the Consumer Group, 3 members meet regularly to gather information.



Margaret, Leigh and Maria

Why didn't I think of that? Handy hints worth trying *Consumer suggestions and ideas.*

A quick squirt of hairspray on a thread will stiffen the end and help it go through the eye of a needle.

Stuff crunched up newspaper into wet shoes or boots while drying. It helps them keep their shape.

Use a coat hanger to hang towels on if you are short of hanging space. Use coloured or covered hangers to match towels or the bathroom.

From Audrey Shepherd

What's on in June?

Resthaven Occupational Therapist Mary-Anne is providing a free talk about services available to increase your well-being and maintain independence in your own home.

Wednesday 27 June 10am - 10.45am

This is a free talk for anyone who accesses Home Assist services, and will be held in the Elderly Centre on Fourteenth St. To assist with seating, please RSVP Home Assist by calling 8522 1177 before 26 June.