

BeWell news



Welcome to the December 2024 edition of BeWell News

We are expecting a hot, stormy summer with lots of rain, which may become drier towards the end of summer. Be prepared and know the risks associated with heat and stormy weather. Having a well-stocked cupboard means you won't need to leave home during extreme weather conditions.

This edition includes lots of advice on preventing falls and taking care of your feet, as well as various social activities.

Your feedback has also inspired us to change the design of this newsletter to improve readability. We hope you enjoy the new look. If you would like to receive this newsletter by email, drop us a line on communitysupport@monash.vic.gov.au

Please note, the office will be closed on public holidays and 27 December 2024 and there will be no services on these days.

We hope you enjoy the summer and festive season.

Feedback on 9518 3553

If you want to receive this newsletter by email:

 communitysupport@monash.vic.gov.au

Next edition: April 2025

Public Holidays

- Christmas Day: Wednesday 25 December 2024
- Boxing Day: Thursday 26 December 2024
- New Year's Day: Wednesday 1 January 2025

- Australia Day in lieu: Monday 27 January 2025
- Labour Day: Monday 10 March 2025

**No Community Home Support Services:
Friday 27 December 2024**

FACTS ABOUT FALLS

by occupational therapist Johnny Chan

In Australia, falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalisations and deaths.

More than 230,000 hospitalisations resulted from falls, and more than half of them took place on a flat surface. Many of the injured reported that they tripped, slipped, stumbled, bumped into furniture or household appliances, or collided with a pet or person.

What kind of injuries are sustained from falls? Fractures are the most common, particularly in women. Other reported injuries included open wounds, superficial injuries, traumatic brain injuries, soft tissue injuries such as bruises and strains, as well as internal organ damage.

In 2020-2021, the most frequently injured body parts from a fall were the head and neck (28%), hip and leg (27%), and shoulder and arm (23%). Injuries around the torso, wrist, hands, ankles and feet are less reported.

What we can do to avoid falls:

- **Stay active:** walk and exercise every day to maintain muscle strength and balance.
- **Declutter your home:** remove excessive items on the floor, place items on tables or in storage cabinets, and reduce the use of floor mats.
- **Check your eyes and ears regularly:** wear prescription glasses and/or hearing aids as advised.
- **Get enough rest:** you are more likely to fall when tired.
- **Choose the right footwear:** wear safety boots for gardening, running shoes for dry surfaces.
- **Monitor medications:** if medications make you drowsy or dizzy, tell your doctor and pharmacist.
- **Talk to an occupational therapist:** seek advice on home safety recommendations, such as installing grab rails, improving lighting, and clearing pathways.



Our annual spring clean service, which includes tasks such as cleaning pantries, fridges and cupboards, and moving excessive items off the floor, is available for 1 to 1.5 hours with two workers. Please ask them for the decluttering task list.

If you are currently using the Home Maintenance service, please call ☎ 9518 3553. New users can contact My Aged Care on ☎ 1800 200 422 for more information.

FOOT CARE FOR DIABETICS

Taking care of your feet is important for everyone, especially if you have diabetes.

Diabetes can cause problems with your feet, such as foot ulcers. In extreme cases, it can even lead to amputations. However, with daily care, you can prevent serious complications. Here are some essential tips:

- Check your feet daily. Look for changes or problems.
- Visit a podiatrist annually. Or more frequently if your feet are high risk.
- Speak to your doctor. Under a chronic disease management plan, you may be able to access five subsidised podiatry visits annually.

Visit the website link below or **scan the QR code** to watch a Diabetes Australia video exploring foot care for diabetics.



Watch the video online:

 www.monash.vic.gov.au/diabetes-foot-health



RAINBOW FILM AND BOOK CLUB FOR SENIORS

Enjoy film screenings and share your latest reading recommendations at our monthly book and film club for the older LGBTI+ community and their allies. Join us for interesting discussions in a safe and inclusive environment. Meetings will alternate between watching films and sharing book reviews that are all about LGBTI+ themed content. Morning tea provided.

For adults aged 55 years and over.

Where: Wheelers Hill Library
860 Ferntree Gully Road, Wheelers Hill

When: 10am to 12pm

Next meetings:

Thursday 27 February 2025

Thursday 27 March 2025

Thursday 24 April 2025



Book online:

 www.monash.vic.gov.au/rainbow-book-club

SUMMER WEATHER OVERVIEW

The seasonal outlook is for wetter, stormier, hotter and drier than average weather over summer. Be prepared for a combination of different types of weather.



Are you ready to stay safe in extreme heat? Are you prepared for storms and potential power outages? Do you have enough pantry supplies on hand? To ensure you're prepared for the summer weather, please refer to the brochures in the information pack you received when you started, or contact us for new copies.

Survive the Heat brochure:

 www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/resources/survive-the-heat-brochure

Prepare for electrical outages:

 www.ausnetservices.com.au/outages/prepare-for-an-electrical-outage

Bureau of Meteorology summer predictions:

- Forecasts one of the hottest summers, with warmer than average days and nights.
- More rain, thunderstorms and humidity than normal.
- Risk of bushfires.

 www.monash.vic.gov.au/abc-news-heat

Tips to improve your hydration

- If plain water is difficult to drink, try alternatives like cordials (mixed with water), fruit or vegetable juices, and non-caffeinated tea or homemade lemonade.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks and alcohol as they can dehydrate you.
- Keep a journal to track your fluid intake or set a reminder on your phone to drink water.
- Consume water-rich foods such as cucumbers (96% water), tomatoes, spinach, broccoli, and brussels sprouts. Even if you don't feel thirsty, take a drink if you haven't consumed water in a while. Thirst is a sign your body is already dehydrated.



MONASH LIBRARIES: MORE THAN JUST BOOKS

Monash public libraries offer a wealth of resources including magazines, newspapers, audio discs, DVDs, music CDs and books in foreign languages, all available for free.

You can also access computers, scanning, printing, and photocopying services.

Our libraries provide technology help, run knitting, sewing and craft groups, and organise various social activities. They are comfortable places to visit year-round and membership is free without overdue fees.

To join one of our six branches (Clayton, Glen Waverley, Mount Waverley, Oakleigh, Wheelers Hill, and Mulgrave), simply bring identification with your current address.



Upcoming free activities

Oakleigh Library knitting group for all skill levels.

When: Tuesday 24 December 2024, 2pm–4pm

Where: Oakleigh Library, 148 Drummond Street, Oakleigh

Bookings: No registration required



Morning tea with swinging jazz by Galaxy News Jazztet featuring Geryl Leong and Imre Scicluna.

When: Tuesday 4 February 2025, 10.30am–12pm

Where: Oakleigh Senior Citizens Centre, 142 Drummond Street, Oakleigh

Bookings: Online or ☎ 9518 3970



Caring for yourself by Carers Victoria.

This session provides practical strategies for caregivers.

When: Tuesday 18 February 2025, 11am–1pm

Where: Mulgrave Library, 36–42 Mackie Road, Mulgrave

Bookings: Online or ☎ 9518 3502



Home Library Service

Monash Public Library Service offers a **free monthly delivery of library materials** to members of the community who cannot visit the library.

🌐 www.monash.vic.gov.au/home-library-service



RESPIRE CARE OPTIONS

Respite care is there to support you and your carer for short periods of time. It can give you both a break and can also give you the chance to meet new people.

- What respite care looks like depends on your situation. It can be available for a few hours, a few days or longer. It can be provided in your home, in the community or at an aged care home.
- Respite care is often planned in advance. For instance, if your carer is planning a trip or has an appointment to attend. However, it is also available in emergencies or unexpected situations.
- If you need emergency respite care, call **Carer Gateway** on **1800 422 737**.

Respite care is provided through My Aged Care ☎ 1800 200 422.



 www.myagedcare.gov.au/respite-care

HALCYON DEMENTIA DAY CENTRE

Step into a world of warmth and connection at our **Halcyon Dementia Day Centre** located in **Glen Waverley**. Our program is designed to cater for Monash residents who are experiencing the early stages of dementia while offering respite for their carers.

Halcyon fosters new friendships, laughter and a sense of belonging.

Immerse yourself or a loved one in a supportive community that understands and embraces each individual journey.

Participants must be registered with My Aged Care.



 www.monash.vic.gov.au/halcyon

COUNCIL'S NO GIFT POLICY

As we approach the holiday season, many clients may want to give support workers a gift. **Please remember, Monash staff are not permitted to receive any gifts or money from anyone. A simple thank you is welcomed.**

We understand you are grateful for the assistance our support workers provide, and want to show your appreciation. Instead of a gift, you could write a letter, email or send a feedback card. This appreciation will go on the support worker's employee record, and they will be acknowledged by Monash Council. Each year we recognise exceptional customer service for staff and departments.



PALS PROGRAM

Positive Ageing Lifestyles (PALS) is a quarterly program offering a variety of free or low-cost programs and activities aimed at promoting healthy, active ageing and social inclusion for older adults who live, work or visit Monash.

The PALS program offers activities for individuals living independently in the community and caters to various abilities and needs. From Age Well Adventures to movie screenings and live entertainment, to learning new skills, there's something for everyone.

To receive the PALS booklet, visit www.monash.vic.gov.au/PALS or contact PALS@monash.vic.gov.au or **9518 3555**.



www.monash.vic.gov.au/PALS

BECOME A CARERS VICTORIA MEMBER

Become a member of Carers Victoria and join our community to help us make a difference for Victorian carers.

Membership is free and open to carers, former carers, supporters and Carer Support Groups. Benefits include:

- Exclusive event invitations, workshops and programs designed for carers.
- Championing for real change through consultations, focus groups and research.
- A monthly eBulletin 'The Voice'.
- Free digital access to the *Australian Carers Guide*.
- Special member discounts, including movie tickets, accommodation and pre-packaged meals.



For more information or to register:

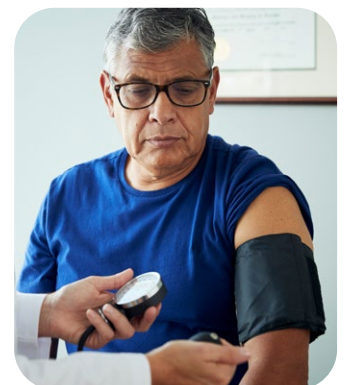
www.carersvictoria.org.au/membership

URGENT HEALTH CARE OPTIONS

For urgent, non-life-threatening healthcare, visit one of Victoria's 29 Urgent Care Clinics, such as those in Dandenong, Frankston, and Mount Waverley. No Medicare card or appointment is needed.

Alternatively, use the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department via video or call NURSE-ON-CALL on **1300 606 024**, available 24/7.

In life-threatening situations, call 000 or visit the nearest hospital emergency department.



Learn about the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department:

www.vved.org.au

TRAUMA RECOVERY STRATEGIES

When a family is affected by a crisis, everyone will react in a different way. Understanding distress reactions and their effect on family dynamics can help the family to cope.

Don't hesitate to seek professional help if you think your family is struggling to recover.

Some things you can do include:

- **Remember recovery takes time:** Prepare the family for a period of stress and cut back on unnecessary demands to conserve everyone's energy.
- **Don't just focus on the problems:** Make free time to be together and relax to help manage stress.
- **Keep communicating:** Make sure each family member shares what they are experiencing and how they can be helped.
- **Plan regular time out:** Continue activities you enjoyed before to rebuild emotional energy, even if that enjoyment has changed.
- **Track your family's progress:** Focus on what has been achieved rather than only on what still needs to be done.
- **Stay positive and encouraging:** While it's important to allow people to talk about their fears and worries, remind yourself that families often emerge stronger from hard times.

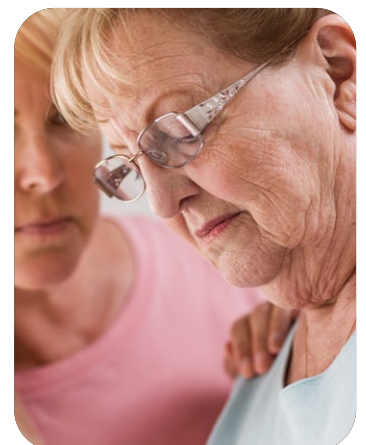


 www.monash.vic.gov.au/family-recovery-strategies

SUPPORTING SOMEONE AT CHRISTMAS

The end-of-year period can be a difficult time for many. By giving the gift of conversation, you can make the difference and help someone better manage the ups and downs of the holiday season.

- **Make the time:** Think about people you know who may be struggling and check in with them, whether it's through a card, a call or a visit.
- **Acknowledge it is ok to be sad:** Pausing and reflecting on emotions can help manage their intensity.
- **Be gentle:** Give them some space to adapt to a change of routine.
- **Create new traditions:** if old traditions no longer bring joy.
- **Offer practical support:** Some people may prefer the comfort of practical actions like a cuppa or helping cook a meal.
- **Remind people that Lifeline and Beyond Blue are available 24/7 over the holiday. Call ☎ 13 11 14.**



 www.ruok.org.au/supporting-someone-at-christmas

BEING PREPARED AS A FAMILY DECISION-MAKER

Being trusted to make treatment and care decisions for a family member in residential care is an important responsibility.

Dignified and Respectful Decisions is an organisation that provides information and support when families are making decisions on behalf of a loved one who no longer has the capacity to make decisions themselves. Resources include:

Being Prepared

Information to practically and emotionally support decision-makers.



Working Together

Understanding roles of staff in the aged care home and how to assess good quality care.



Making Decisions

Recognising the different types of decisions about care to be made and who can support you.



End-of-life Care

Illustrates the benefit of palliative care in an aged care home and what to expect as a family member.



The resources also include guided checklists, tips, wellbeing support guides, glossary of terms and a contacts directory.

Access printed resources and information in Greek, Italian and Simplified Chinese:

 www.pallcarevic.asn.au/dard

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Having a home is important to everyone. As we get older, a safe, secure and affordable home is more important than ever.

A safe home is where you are not in danger of violence, injury or illness. A secure home means a place you can live as long as you need. An affordable home is one that you can afford other essentials like food, heating and cooling, medicines, healthcare and transport.

If you do not own your own home, accessing safe, secure and affordable housing can be difficult. Depending on your income and assets, there are various housing alternatives for older people living in Victoria. These include private rentals, public housing, community housing, housing cooperatives, moveable units, tiny houses, independent living units, caravans or residential parks, rental villages, supported residential services, shared housing and crisis accommodation.

For more information on these options and if they are suitable for you, contact **Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG)** on ☎ **1300 765 178**. Or view the housing options section on their website at:

🌐 www.older tenants.org.au/i-need-help/housing-options

If you are living in private rental, Tenants Victoria provides free, confidential advice on your rights. Common problems they assist renters with include repairs and maintenance, bonds, notice to vacate, lease breaking, compensation for renters, mould and damp, rental apps, and discrimination.

Contact **Tenants Victoria** on ☎ **9416 2577**, Monday to Friday 9.30am-12.30pm and 2.30pm-4.30pm. Closed public holidays.

🌐 www.tenantsvic.org.au



STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH THE CHANGES TO AGED CARE



Subscribe online:

🌐 www.health.gov.au/aged-care-reforms

MONASH INTERPRETER SERVICES

普通话 4713 5001
廣東話 4713 5002
Việt Ngữ 4713 5003

Ελληνικά 4713 5004
हिंदी 4713 5005
Italiano 4713 5008

한국어 4713 5010
සිංහල 4713 5020

தமிழ் 4713 5021
Other languages 4713 5000