

Sept/Oct

The Bugle

UnitingCare Community Options

If you would like to contribute to The Bugle, please email info@ucco.org.au or ring (03) 9239 2500. We welcome any ideas or suggestions you may have.

New CE For UCCO

THE UnitingCare Community Options (UCCO) Board of Governance has appointed Gerry Mak as its new Chief Executive.

An experienced leader with a long history as a senior executive both inside and outside the social services sector, Gerry was most recently employed as CEO of Finlaysons, one of Adelaide's leading commercial Law firms. He was also the first non-doctor to be appointed as CEO of the Royal Australian College of GPs (NFP) and was CEO at SA Heart – a world class health organisation at the forefront of advances in cardiology.

"Gerry is an experienced CEO with substantial management experience across the private, not-for-profit and public sectors and we are fortunate to have such a smart and articulate individual join our organisation," said UCCO Board Chair, Michael Lanyon.

"Our sector is moving into a very exciting new phase and I have no doubt that Gerry's strong governance expertise, his strategic outlook and emphasis on sustaining a competitive advantage will be



Chief Executive Gerry Mak (centre) with Group Managers Fonda Voukelatos, Andrew Johnston, Emmanuel Gauci and People & Culture Manager Cassandra Hatton.

a tremendous asset to the organisation."

Gerry joined the UCCO team in late August and said he was passionate about taking on a role in which he could utilise his commercial acumen in a community-focussed context.

"UCCO has a great reputation as a progressive, values-based agency and I am honoured to be taking on the role during such an exciting time," said Gerry.

"The organisation already has an experienced and capable Executive team in place and I am looking forward to working with them to take the organisation into its next phase of its long and illustrious history."

www.ucco.org.au

'A Good Life For All'.

A message from the Chief Executive's desk



ONE of the many things I have learnt throughout my working life is that first impressions say a lot about an organisation and its people.

From the moment I walked through the door here at UCCO I was immediately struck by the energy and passion that our people bring to the office every day and I am thrilled to have an opportunity to add to that wherever I can.

During my first few weeks here I have spent a lot of time meeting with our people and getting up to speed on the many programs we run, as well as on some of the complexities that each of them throws up from time to time. I am also looking forward to getting out and about to speak with some of our participants and fellow agencies in the UnitingCare network.

It is a great time to come on board and I am genuinely excited about some of the new initiatives we have in place, particularly **mypalette** (p3). This new initiative will allow us to provide a broader range of services that can be specifically tailored to individual needs and will be an important part of our offering as our governments continue to move towards a consumer-directed model of care.

We are also confident we are on the right track with **mypalette** given the findings of our recently launched People At Centre Stage evaluation research (p7).

This important work revealed that older Australians in particular wanted greater control

over their services but didn't want the financial/administrative burden that comes with it.

It's an interesting insight and one that suggests the demand for initiatives that can help people navigate 'the system' (such as **mypalette**) will continue to rise.

I'd like to close out this column by thanking the UCCO Board of Governance for their faith in my ability to lead this organisation through what is shaping to be an exciting new era. I would also like to acknowledge the Executive Team for making me feel so welcome and particularly for their efforts in keeping things moving ahead during the past six months. They are a driven, capable bunch of people and I am looking forward to working closely with them well into the future.

From what I've seen so far, I'd have to say I am very lucky to be leading an organisation that is so full of vibrant and talented people and I am eagerly looking forward to the years ahead.

Gerry Mak
Chief Executive

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Welcome to mypalette



UCCO participants and the wider community now have greater flexibility and control over the services and support they receive following the launch of a new fee-based service.

mypalette is a premium offering specifically designed to help older people and people with a disability to stay living in the comfort of their own home for longer. Adhering to the idea of consumer-directed care, **mypalette** allows people in need of support to acquire services that may not be covered by conventional government-funded packages.

"There's no doubt that the arrival of consumer-directed care initiatives like 'Living Longer, Living Better' and DisabilityCare will see a greater demand for services that historically may not have been available to them under the traditional models of support," said UCCO's new Chief Executive, Gerry Mak.

Better understanding/delivery

"Our recently released People At Centre Stage research (see page 7) offers a clear indication of how older Australians want to live their life as they age and **mypalette** will ensure we can better understand and deliver on what they truly want/need to live a meaningful life – not what we think they want."

mypalette is a little bit like choosing colours from a paint set, and laying them out on your palette so you can paint whichever picture you want. Then, as your circumstances change, you can add colours or remove them if you no longer need them.

The process is easy. Simply contact **mypalette** and speak to one of our staff. From there, you'll be assigned your own **mypalette** consultant, who will work closely



with you to develop a **mypalette** plan which matches the level of service you need.

If you need a flexible support package to match your lifestyle, you can choose from **mypalette**'s wide range of services – from meal preparation to house cleaning to complete health coordination or even social management. The choice is yours and our skilled consultants will provide dignified, safe and sensitive personal care, home care and healthy living support.

To find out how **mypalette** can help you live the life you choose call 1300 288 866 or visit www.mypalette.com.au

UNITINGCARE COMMUNITY OPTIONS NEWS AND VIEWS

FONDA Voukelatos, UCCO's Group Manager, Innovation and Ageing, recently had the opportunity to share some wisdom with Shadow Minister* for Mental Health and Ageing, Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells.

During a fact-finding visit to Melbourne in July, Senator Fierravanti-Wells met with a number of organisations to gather information and share some of the ideas a potential Coalition Government had for the sector.

During the visit, Fonda raised some of the many issues that were concerning people in the aged care space and briefed the Shadow Minister on the key findings of the recent People At Centre Stage Evaluation Report.

* at time of the visit



New UCCO services

UCCO's new Mental Health Carer Support Service is now up and running in Melbourne's south east.

Based in UnitingCare Connections' Narre Warren office, this service targets carers of people with a mental illness living in the municipalities of Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia. The team will support 50 carers and 35 family members and will focus on building carer capacity and resilience.

The program has been funded for the next three years through the Commonwealth Department of Family Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

UCCO has also established a presence in Melbourne's North in recent weeks, with a new National Respite Carer Program operating out of UnitingCare Kildonan's Epping office. This new team is already working on 14 referrals from a range of

service providers (including smaller ethno-specific and bigger mainstream services) and has started visiting clients, designing care plans and introducing services.

Carers Week activities

Carers Week runs 13-19 October this year, with events across Victoria providing opportunities for carers to get together and support one another, exchange ideas and information, along with spreading awareness about caring.

If you would like to attend a Carers Week event, download the activity guide and find one that best suits your location and needs.

Go to www.carersvictoria.org.au/carersweek2013

CONNECTED 2013

The 2013 State Trustees CONNECTED Art Exhibition® will showcase the talent of 150 new and emerging Victorian artists with a disability or experience of mental illness at Federation Square's Yarra Building from 29 October until 6 November.

Open from 10am to 6pm each day, the free exhibition provides a platform for new and emerging artists to show the power of their artistic expression and share their stories.

Art media on display will include painting, drawing, sculpture and digital media. Judges prizes and the Allan Merigan People's Choice Award are provided and selected artworks are available for sale. www.statetrustees.com.au/connected



After hours contacts

Did you know we have now consolidated our various after hours contact numbers for disability and ageing support into one easy to use service?

For the best possible outcome when trying to reach us outside regular business hours, please call us on 9239 2500 and delete any older numbers you may have saved or have written down.

BEING SCAM AWARE



IN the last edition of *The Bugle*, the Direct2Care team shared some helpful tips on how to protect yourself from scams. In the final part of this special feature we present some advice on how to reduce your chances of being vulnerable when you are out and about.

HANDBAG SECURITY

- Keep handbags and purses zipped and secured and carry them close to your body
- Never leave your handbag or purse unattended in a shopping trolley
- Be mindful of distractions
- In restaurants/cafes keep your handbag on your lap
- If your bag is stolen, report it to the police

USING AN ATM

- Use ATMs located in busy locations and shield your PIN number
- Check the area for suspicious activity before using the ATM

- Do not carry large amounts of cash with you
- Make use of EFTPOS facilities and direct debit to avoid carrying cash to pay bills

IN YOUR CAR

- Plan your route and ensure you have enough petrol
- Be mindful of where you park – especially when dark
- Have car keys in your hand
- Consider driving with doors and windows locked
- If you are being followed, do not go home. Go to the nearest police station or service station where you can get help and attract attention

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Plan your journey to minimise time spent waiting for trains at night
- Choose a well-lit, clear walking path to and from station and stand where you can be seen
- Keep valuables concealed and secure
- If you feel uncomfortable with the person near you, consider changing carriages
- If you leave your car at the station, park as close as possible to the building. Remain alert and take note of suspicious people.

INTRODUCING STATE TRUSTEES

OVER the next few issues we'll be hearing from State Trustees on a number of topics, including guardianship, appointment of financial administrators and other relevant issues. But who is State Trustees?

State Trustees has been serving the Victorian community for more than 70 years by preparing wills and powers of attorney, providing a range of estate planning services, administering deceased estates plus creating and administering private and charitable trusts.

As well as providing commercial services, State Trustees also acts as an administrator for the legal and financial affairs of more than 9000 people in Victoria with a disability, illness or injury who need help managing their financial and legal affairs.

Service centres are located in Melbourne, Bendigo and Dandenong. Will appointments are also available in a number of regional centres throughout Victoria including Bairnsdale, Ballarat, Geelong, Mildura, Shepparton, Traralgon, Warrnambool and Wodonga.

State Trustees hosts educational activities and seminars at various locations throughout Victoria on a range of topics for community members and health care professionals. You might also have seen that State Trustees is a sponsor of the annual Victorian Seniors Festival, holds an annual exhibition for artists with a disability or an experience of mental illness (p5), and hosts an annual will awareness education campaign, 'I Will Week'.

State Trustees' services include:

- Will preparation and secure storage in The Victorian Will Bank
- Executor services
- Deceased estate administration



ORGANISATION	PROGRAM	GRANT
Ability Technology Ltd	Regional Assistive Technology Workshops	\$9,934
Bayley House	The Always Learning Program	\$8,054
e.motion21, Inc	Expanding opportunities for children and young adults with Down Syndrome	\$8,122
Radius Disability Services	Social inclusion for elderly people with a disability	\$10,000
Social Firms Australia	Indigenous HOPE Program	\$10,000
Uniting Care Community Options (in partnership with Deakin University)	Developing evidence-based policies and procedures for Disability Service Providers (DSP) to safeguard children with disabilities	\$10,000
Melbourne Youth Initiative	Outreach Behaviour Consultation Pilot Program	\$10,000

An extract from the August edition of State Trustees' newsletter 'Enduring'.



- Preparation of enduring powers of attorney for financial, medical treatment and guardianship
- Financial attorneyship administration
- Financial administration under Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) administration orders
- Trust preparation and administration
- Administration of the State Trustees Australia Foundation including an annual grants program.

Clients also benefit from the organisation's funds management, funeral funds, taxation and genealogical services.

More information:

www.statetrustees.com.au or 03 9667 6444

STUDY BACKS AGED CARE MODEL



NEW research released last month has revealed older Australians want greater control and decision-making authority over the type of care and services they receive, with a small minority seeking full control of administrative and financial management responsibilities.

The finding is a key part of a 12-month evaluation of the People At Centre Stage (PACS) program – a new model for Australian aged care that creates more say, flexibility, motivation, empowerment, independence and less loneliness – by UnitingCare Community Options (UCCO) and Deakin University.

This important research was officially launched at UCCO's Glen Waverley office by then Federal Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Senator Jacinta Collins.

In releasing the findings, Senior Research Fellow at Deakin University, Dr Goetz Ottmann, said although the Federal Government's recent aged care reforms (Living, Longer, Living Better) opened the door for a more consumer-directed approach to aged care, many older Australians didn't want the burden of managing the financial side of their care.

"Very few of the people we spoke to

wanted full control over the administrative processes associated with their care, preferring to focus on retaining their decisional authority and staying 'hands on' with their care coordination," said Dr Ottmann.

"A far greater number of clients wanted the case management agency to manage the financial arrangements, while they held the authority to make decisions regarding service delivery."

UCCO's Group Manager, Innovation & Ageing, Fonda Voukelatos, said the research findings "offer a glimpse of the enormous potential of a motivational goal setting, restorative health maintenance approach to aged care programs".

Far more important to participants was retaining decisional authority, social independences and being more directly involved in the care coordination process, while agencies such as UCCO managed financial arrangements.

"Whether resolutely independent or relieved and liberated through help with their finances, participants felt the PACS model was for them," Mr Voukelatos said.

•Continued on page 11

It was only 12 years ago that Mario arrived in Australia. A child refugee fleeing war in Croatia with his mother, Mario had the added difficulty of limited mobility due to Cerebral Palsy.

This month we celebrate Mario's latest achievement - very promising driving lessons - and reflect on the road he has taken with UCCO's resourcing, partnership and advocacy.

Partnership Worker Gayle first began working with Mario in 2009. Wheelchair-bound and with great dependence on his mother Marija, Mario was still in secondary school at Glenallen, unsure what kind of future would be possible for him.

With solid UCCO partnership, Mario has now forged a career path for himself.

Gayle worked closely with a Futures for Young Adults Planner from DHS in Mario's last year at Glenallen. He completed VCAL and studied Croatian at VCE level in his last year at Glenallen. After many discussions and a lot of work from Gayle and DHS, Mario was accepted at Holmesglen TAFE.

Last year, at 19, Mario successfully completed his Certificate 1 in Transitional Education. During work experience for that course in a TAFE office and at Oakleigh Industries, he discovered his passion for administrative IT functions, and this year he is undertaking the Cert 1 in Work Education – Retail and Admin. He has also undertaken work experience at Oakleigh McDonald's.

Leaving secondary school meant that he no longer had a physiotherapist available to assist with his ongoing building of strength, and maintaining his mobility. Gayle made a referral to Monashlink community health service which provided a Physiotherapist assessment and, over a five session period, developed an individual gym program together with a



home program. A support worker from Yooralla individual support program assisted Mario in building up confidence to attend Monash Aquatic and Leisure Centre gym. Yooralla offered to pay for Mario to attend a third day each week due to his enthusiasm and great progress.

Transport and mobility have been a constant challenge, with great results over the past couple of years. A recent OT assessment has confirmed that Mario is able to drive a car with hand controls. Gayle organised for Mario to receive some assistance with studying for his Learners Permit, the first step towards achieving his goal to drive his own car.

Similarly, Mario has shown great progress in strengthening his communications skills. When Gayle first began working with Mario, all correspondence and discussion was with his mother Marija, with the assistance of an interpreter. Now Mario emails Gayle directly and writes detailed accounts of his achievements and makes requests for assistance with meeting his goals.

The Bugle asked Mario to email us about his feelings for the future (see story over page).

From two wheels to four: my road ahead

By Mario

The sort of impact that driving will have on my life is I will be more independent eg: go to the gym, go swimming at a pool, shopping, going out with friends, being able to have freedom to go out to places like movies, parks, shopping centres and events. It means I don't have a barrier in front of me when I have plans (in a wheelchair) plus I don't have to use public transport as much which will cost me less money.

It will also help me get to the workplace destination when I find a part time job so that I can earn money. It will also give me an opportunity to drive my mum to places when she is unfit to drive.

The impact that driving will have on my family is I will be able to do chores like shopping (if my mum is unwell or too tired to drive), driving will also help me decide which route to take, to identify shorter routes when traveling to the chosen destination and to learn more road rules as a full licence driver along the way.

I will be able to make new friends if I go to unknown places to expand my social cycle, take them out to lunch, movies and events around Melbourne CBD. I'm planning to pay visits to my friends that I have met at TAFE last year and this year.

Dream seeding and door opening: Gayle reflects

Gayle has had the pleasure of watching Mario move towards adulthood, gain his independence, and dream for the future over the past four years with support and assistance from the City of Monash, his mum, Monashlink, Yooralla, DHS and Holmesglen TAFE.

"When I first met Mario he had two years of school to go in an integrated disability setting at that point. I remember asking the question about whether he had a bank account, he was 17, that concept was really quite foreign to Mario and his mum. The other thing that's changed is mum growing with him – she believes he can be safe and boss of his own life. She's now celebrating rather than steering."

After Mario's first driving lesson Gayle reflects: "It's a really good example of

Mario directing his goals as he was ready to. More than two years ago we did some dreaming and I asked him if he would like to drive a car one day. He'd never contemplated that. As a Partnership Worker I think you're often just planting seeds and exploring options – they run with some and others they put on the backburner for later.

"It really is wonderful to see the development and I'm really excited that he has the potential of a life like my young adult kids. I am proud. If you're persistent the boundaries that seem to be there can disappear.

"There's also excitement around the possibilities that exist for him to be totally independent of a service type structure in the future – that's the other thing I feel really comfortable about."

THE POWER OF POSITIVE ATTITUDE

We all like to think we have a positive attitude but for Michelle it has become a way of life. Despite the challenges life has thrown her way, Michelle continues to live life to the full. Here's her story...

Michelle was born with a bilateral vision impairment and, although she had some 'cross-eyed' vision as a young child, her vision soon deteriorated. An operation at the age of nine revealed severely damaged nerve endings which meant it was too late to correct her vision and Michelle has been legally blind ever since.

Fiercely independent and blessed with a wicked sense of humour, Michelle has since refused to let her disability keep her down and today lives independently with her dog Lucy and a much-adored gang of chickens.

"I need to be able to live independently and not rely on others...I have developed a really strong network of friends with sight issues and we support each other where we can," said Michelle.

"What you get out of life depends on what you put in. Life has plenty of bumps and lumps along the way but you just have to get over those things... it's an attitude thing."

But despite her positive attitude, there have been times when Michelle's quest for independence was seriously challenged and she needed some extra support to continue living life the way she wanted.

"While I was getting a bit of assistance from the local Council and my lovely neighbours, it wasn't enough to help me do all the things I liked doing," she said.

After a friend recommended UCCO to Michelle, she gave them a call and a

"This little bit of help has really enabled me to get out and about. I'm now working with Yarra Trams to help them improve their services for people with vision impairment, I am attending a leadership course for women with a disability so I can learn how to better support others and I am out with my friends more than ever"

Partnership Worker (Denise) soon visited to talk through all the available options. The first step was to secure some extra taxi vouchers to help Michelle get out of the house.

"I enjoy going to basket making classes, going out for tea or the theatre and so on but knowing when to get off a tram or changing platforms at the train station is a nightmare for me so greater mobility really lets me get out more and live life."



Soon after, UCCO secured funding for a 'Braille computer' which improved access to her network of friends, enabled her to arrange dates and connect with the vast amount of information available on the web.

Finally, Denise arranged for UCCO to subsidise the cost of Lite N' Easy – a weekly delivery of nutritious frozen meals – to ensure Michelle had access to a healthy hot meal every day rather than the two hot meals a week she was receiving previously.

"It's made the world of difference to me," said Michelle. "Without support it is very easy to become socially isolated...I know people who don't talk to anyone for days on end and are terribly lonely."

"My advice is to seek help whenever you need it...just having someone come over and chat can overcome any sense of social isolation. A little bit of help can make the world of difference."

IMPORTANT LEARNINGS FROM RESEARCH

(from page 7)

While the research backed the central aim of consumer-directed aged care – flexibility for older people in care – one of the most important learnings was that only a very small minority of clients actually seek full control of the administrative and financial processes associated with their care. Around 22 per cent of participants who experienced PACS chose to take on parts of the administrative and financial tasks underpinning their care, while only nine per cent were interested in taking on full control.

Dr Ottmann said the research also revealed that most participants in the PACS program felt it had significantly changed their view of what could be achieved with their support services.

"They were able to use their resources more flexibly which has definitely had a positive impact on their lives," he said.

More information on the People At Centre Stage project can be found at: <https://sites.google.com/site/pacsprojectsite/>

Research funding partners were: Australian Research Council, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, Percy Baxter Charitable Trust, B.B. Hutchings bequest and the John William Fleming Trust.

Hold the presses!

– by Roz Waters

To Participants: get your staff award nominations in

From excellent service follows excellent outcomes for our participants. It is essential that we recognise and encourage exemplary service, therefore, we would like you to nominate a member of staff who you believe should be recognised for their outstanding work.

Nominations close on 23rd October 2013 and will be announced at our Annual Report to the Community event (see below).

We will need examples of staff actions of service to support your nomination.

All nominations will be considered by the Executive Managers and a representative from the Participant Committee.

Annual Report to the Community

Our Annual Report to the Community event is on the 12th November at Kingston Links Golf Course, Corporate Ave, Rowville, Melway Ref: 81 E2. Arrive at 1:30pm for a 2pm sharp start.

If you plan to attend, RSVP to 9239 2500 by Friday 1st November. Copies of the 2013 Annual Report will be available at the conclusion of the presentation.

Join us for drinks in the Atrium after!

Greenfleet award for UCCO!

Some very exciting late-breaking news: Daniel Thambiratnam heard on Monday 23rd of September that we had received the Greenfleet Huon Award.

The Greenfleet Huon Award is named in honour of the Huon Pine tree – Australia's oldest living tree and one of the oldest living organisms on Earth. It recognises Greenfleet supporters who have consistently offset emissions for over five years. You can read more at: www.greenfleet.com.au

ABOUT US

UNITINGCARE Community Options is a community services organisation, dedicated to assisting people to live good lives in their own homes and communities.

We have been supporting older people, people with disabilities and the unpaid carers that support them since 1987. Each year, we support around 4000 people throughout Melbourne's east and south.

Our vision is to achieve 'a good life for all' regardless of their abilities. We aim to support people in achieving the goals they have and living the life they hope for. If you know anyone who might benefit from our support, please ask them to contact us.

CONTACTS

Direct2Care
Freecall: 1300 121 121

**Commonwealth
Respite and
Carelink Centre**
Disability: 1800 052 222
Ageing: 1800 059 059

Head Office
Ground Floor,
Building 5
Brandon Office Park
530-540 Springvale Rd
Glen Waverley
VIC 3150
Tel.: (03) 9239 2500
TTY: 133 677
Fax: (03) 9239 2522

FEEDBACK

We're always looking for ways to improve our service so please let us know if you have any feedback you'd like to share with us.

If you have an issue or complaint, please raise the matter with your Partnership Worker who will raise the complaint with their Manager if they are unable to help. Issues that remain unresolved will be dealt with by Senior Management. You can also ask for support from an external advocate. See your Participant Information Pack for more information.

Interpreters Available On Request

ΔΙΑΘΕΤΟΝΤΑΙ ΔΙΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΣ
ΚΑΤΟΠΙΝ ΖΗΤΗΣΗΣ

A RICHIESTA CI SONO A
DISPOSIZIONE INTERPRETI

可應要求提供傳譯員

For assistance,
please call
the Telephone
Interpreter Service
on 131 450.