

# My life, my way



News from our community

SUMMER 2024-25

## welcome

**Dear valued Clients, Families, and Team Members, welcome to the latest edition of our AccessCare newsletter!**

As I reflect on my first year as Manager, I feel incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such a dedicated team and to serve our wonderful clients and their families. It has been a year of growth, learning and collaboration, and I am proud of the positive impact we've made together in supporting our community. Thank you for your trust and continued support as we strive to deliver high-quality care that truly makes a difference in people's lives.

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable Christmas and a relaxing start to the new year. Please remember to stay safe

and take care of yourselves and your loved ones during the warmer summer months.

In this issue, you'll find exciting updates, helpful resources and highlights from our recent programs. We are also proud to celebrate the achievements of our wonderful team and clients.

Thank you for being a part of the AccessCare family. I look forward to what the coming year will bring and wish you all a joyful and peaceful holiday season.

Warm regards,

*Camille Hoyle*

**Camille Hoyle**  
Manager – AccessCare

## Community Bus

**Our Community Bus has had another fantastic year, offering fun and connection.**

Highlights include our Christmas in July celebration, visits to art galleries, animal sanctuaries, historical homes, and the popular Morning Melodies outings.

Each trip is designed to bring joy, foster connections, and create lasting memories. Whether discovering new places, enjoying music, or socialising, there's something for everyone.

Want to join us on our next adventure? Call our team at **1300 819 200** for more details. 



**READ OUR  
INSPIRING  
STORIES**  
*inside*

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# How Margot and Des made their new house a home

It would have come as no great surprise to anyone when, back in his teenage years, Des decided to pursue a career in the train industry. After all, both his grandfather and his father had worked on the railways across Victoria, with Des spending much of his childhood in the country town of Merrigum where his father was station master.



“When I’d go and play, I’d play in the railway yard, so I got used to the movement of trains,” recalls Des.

On many occasions, young Des would get invited to climb aboard one of the goods trains for the day, off on an adventure for a few hours before transferring to a passenger train and heading back home again.

**“Trains are in his blood,” beams Margot, Des’s wife of 62 years.**

Des himself spent years working in administration for the Victorian Railways Rolling Stock Branch and by the time he retired at 57 years of age, he, his father and grandfather had given 134 accumulative years of service to growing and operating the state’s extensive rail network.

As a third-generation railway man, it wasn’t easy for Des to walk away from the world of trains. So, following his retirement, he found a way to maintain this passion: model railways.

Over the course of two years, Des built an extraordinary model of the town of Merrigum, measuring two by three metres. He then dedicated about three months to wiring the train tracks to allow his locomotives to run, and countless days, weeks and months afterwards painstakingly maintaining and expanding the model.

“I’m always tinkering with the model and adding bits on and that sort of thing. It keeps me entertained,” says Des with a smile.

“Then I’ll look in my train register book and see it’s been three years since I’ve oiled everything, so I’ll go in and oil all the tracks again.”

So passionate is Des about his model trains, that when he and Margot decided that it was time to move out of their family home of 46 years and into a retirement village, they had some very specific requirements.

According to Margot, any unit they moved into needed to have a garden and three bedrooms: one for them to share, one for her to use as an office, and one large enough to house Des’s model trains.

**“When I walked to the front door of this unit, one of my favourite trees [from our family home] – the lipstick pink camellia – was right by the front door. I knew then it was the perfect unit.”**

Their courtyard garden is also full of carefully cultivated flowers and plants, from which Margot’s support workers at AccessCare have been delighted to be gifted cuttings.



## On the cover:


AccessCare support worker helping a client out in their garden.

And then there's the kitchen, the heart of every home, where Margot and Des are always willing to share stories from their long life together over a cuppa at their dining table.

*"I couldn't travel when I was younger as we had a lot of responsibilities; we got married young and then started having babies straight away," says Margot. "I had to wait until I was in my early 40s, and then I used to jokingly say, 'Well, now I'll have my teenage years!'"*

And of course, there have been plenty of train journeys since then. Together, Margot and Des travelled through Alaska on the Denali Explorer up to Fairbanks, and on the Rocky Mountaineer through the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Closer to home, they journeyed through the Australian outback on the Ghan up to Alice Springs.

Having met some 65 years ago, their stories are innumerable; many happy, some sad, all of them important. Things didn't always go to plan, and recently their health has started to decline, but as Margot notes, "we're not going to give in to the negative."

AccessCare is humbled to be able to support Margot and Des to continue living with their garden and railway models for as long as possible. 






## home maintenance

Here at AccessCare, we pride ourselves on offering high-quality home maintenance services for our clients in the City of Kingston.

Our wonderful team of expert maintenance officers can take on a range of jobs around the house, including:

- ✓ Minor general home repairs
- ✓ Changing light globes and smoke alarm units
- ✓ Replacing tap washers, excluding mixer taps
- ✓ Installation of hand held showers
- ✓ Fan and air conditioner filter cleaning
- ✓ Repairing window locks, winders and fly wire screens
- ✓ Removing trip or slip hazards.



If you would like to discuss how our home maintenance team can support you, please call us on **1300 819 200**. 


## The well-being benefits of volunteer- delivered *meals*

For older adults, maintaining a nutritious diet can sometimes be a challenge, especially when mobility or health issues make cooking difficult.

AccessCare's delivered meal services help alleviate this concern, but the true benefit often comes from the personal touch of a volunteer delivering those meals.

Having a volunteer bring meals each day provides more than just the convenience of a ready-made meal – it offers valuable social connection, a welfare check, and emotional support. For many older adults, regular interactions with a friendly volunteer can reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation, which are common in later life. A quick chat or a warm smile can brighten their day, providing a sense of community, belonging, and peace of mind to families knowing their loved ones are okay.

In addition to ensuring nutritious meals are enjoyed, the volunteer's visit helps maintain a routine and fosters a sense of independence for the person receiving the meals. Knowing that a familiar face will stop by each day provides security and something to look forward to, promoting overall well-being.

Our friendly meals team would love the opportunity to talk through meal options with you. Please reach out and have a chat today on **1300 819 200**. 





# volunteering with AccessCare

## Ever thought about volunteering?

Meet our dedicated volunteer, Frits, who brings compassion and a genuine love for making a difference in the lives of our clients. Volunteering in aged care is a rewarding experience that allows individuals to connect, support, and enrich the lives of older adults. Frits shares his thoughts on why he chose to dedicate his time to helping others. Frits has been volunteering with the Delivered Meals service for almost 13 years and is one of our most dedicated and community minded volunteers. Read on to discover what motivates Frits and how his contributions are making a positive impact on our community.

### What inspired you to start volunteering with AccessCare?

After retiring from work around 13 years ago, I found myself at a bit of a loose end. I was looking for ways to use my time and saw an advertisement in a local newspaper. I rang up and then started volunteering soon afterwards. Right from the beginning I found it enjoyable.

### What do you find most rewarding?

Often people haven't seen anyone for a while and their faces light up when I arrive with a smile on my face. We have a bit of a chat about the weather or something else before I head off to the next delivery. It gives me a good feeling.


### What impact do you feel you're making in the lives of the residents?

There are a lot of compliments about the food which clients appreciate. The fact that someone is there to talk to them regularly and to ask how they are doing. It's a positive interaction for them and gives me a good feeling as a volunteer.

### How would you encourage others to join and contribute to the community?

In conversations with other people, I often tell people that I volunteer. I tell people how much satisfaction I get out of it and encourage them to think about it. There are always bits and pieces to do after retirement but maybe they are also looking for something else, a pleasurable activity. For me this is a big motivating factor.

### Do you see yourself continuing to volunteer?

I have always enjoyed it so will continue as long as I am able to. I make myself available for additional runs which works well. It's always a mutually beneficial thing. 



# Domestic assistance over the festive season

Please be advised that domestic assistance will not be provided from 25 December 2024 – 1 January 2025.

All other services such as personal care and shopping will be provided.

Regular services will resume Thursday 2 January 2025.


Thank you for your understanding over this holiday season.

If you have any questions please call **1300 819 200**. 

## AccessCare's Home Care Packages

### Supporting you to live independently at home

At AccessCare, we understand the importance of staying in the comfort of your own home. That's why we offer Home Care Packages to help you live your life your way. Our dedicated team of support workers, case managers, community nurses, and home maintenance officers work together to provide personalised care and services to meet your unique needs.

Whether you need assistance with daily tasks, personal care, or home maintenance, we're here to support you every step of the way. With AccessCare, you can continue to live independently and confidently in your own home. 

## AccessCare Word Search

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | M | S | D | M | M | R | E | S | P | I | T | E | A |
| A | E | U | P | O | S | H | O | P | P | I | N | G | C |
| E | I | D | C | M | T | U | T | T | C | A | E | E | O |
| G | C | P | A | P | T | M | R | E | T | A | C | M | M |
| I | N | T | A | K | E | A | U | S | U | D | N | U | M |
| N | A | P | N | M | S | L | N | A | S | C | A | A | U |
| E | A | C | A | S | S | E | S | S | M | E | N | T | N |
| T | A | X | I | C | A | R | D | Y | I | A | E | D | I |
| C | I | T | S | E | M | O | D | P | U | B | T | A | T |
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| P | O | E | T | E | M | T | M | T | C | L | I | U | B |
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| N | O | T | M | L | C | S | S | I | R | P | M | E | S |
| I | M | I | N | D | A | Y | T | R | I | P | S | S | M |

### Can you find our service types in the word search?

- Intake • Day Trips • Community Bus • Respite • Taxi Card • Meals
- Domestic • Shopping • Maintenance • Assessment





## Spotlight on our case manager:

Michelle

In this edition, we're excited to shine a spotlight on one of our dedicated case managers, Michelle, whose passion and commitment to supporting older adults and their families truly embodies the values of AccessCare.

Read on to learn more about the impactful work Michelle does, and how she is helping clients navigate the aged care system with confidence.

### What aspects of being a case manager do you find most fulfilling?

I find it incredibly fulfilling to meet new clients and help them feel empowered. By using a strength-based approach, I assist them in maintaining their independence and ensuring they feel safe and supported in their own homes. It's rewarding to witness their confidence grow as they navigate their care journey.

### How does helping older adults improve their quality of life bring you joy in your role?

I've always had a deep respect for older adults and the incredible lives they've led. The wisdom, experiences, and stories they share with me are invaluable. I learn so much from them. One story that stands out is when I learned that one of my clients stopped roller skating at the age of 96. It's moments like this that remind me of the resilience and spirit of the older adults I work with, and it's truly joyful to be a part of their lives.

### Can you share a story where you made a significant positive difference in a client's life?

One client who stands out to me is a gentleman from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. He had been very active and fit before a health event drastically changed his life. When we first met, he struggled to walk and would tire quickly. Over time, through a tailored plan of regular physiotherapy and hydrotherapy, he began to regain his strength. His passion for swimming was a key part of his recovery. Today, he walks long distances daily, and I'm incredibly proud of how far he has come. His journey has taught me so much about resilience and the power of personalised care.

### What's the most valuable thing you have learned so far from the older people you work with?

The most important lesson I've learned is to not waste energy on worry. I've observed that many of my clients live by the philosophy that worrying about the future doesn't change anything, and it's better to focus on the present. They've taught me to live in the moment and to take opportunities as they come – like taking that holiday today, rather than waiting for tomorrow. 🌟

## Home Care Package update: wage and fee increases explained

The Fair Work Commission has approved pay increases for workers in the Aged Care sector. This is a positive step for hardworking people who are essential to supporting your care needs. The next pay increase is expected in January 2025.

As a result, some service providers will raise their hourly fees. To help with this, the government will

increase your Home Care Package funding, so you can continue to afford the care you need. They have also written to you about this.

Your Aged Care Advisor will contact you in December or January to discuss these updates, and any impact on your budget or services. 🌟

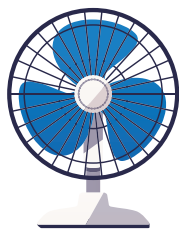
# Coping with extreme heat:

## staying safe in hot weather

As temperatures rise, it's essential to stay safe and healthy. Overheating can lead to serious conditions like heatstroke, which is a medical emergency. Extreme heat can also worsen existing medical conditions, so it's important to take precautions.

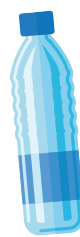
### Who is most at risk?

- Seniors (65+), especially those living alone
- People with medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease)
- Those on certain medications (e.g. antihistamines, blood pressure meds)
- People with mobility issues or those who are bedridden
- Pregnant women, young children, and those who are overweight
- Outdoor workers or exercisers.






### Tips for staying cool

- ✓ Stay hydrated
- ✓ Stay indoors in air-conditioned places when possible
- ✓ Use cool towels, take cool showers, or dip your feet in cool water
- ✓ Close curtains or blinds to block out the sun
- ✓ Wear loose, light-colored clothes made from natural fibers
- ✓ Avoid the sun during peak hours, wear a hat and take water with you if you go outside
- ✓ Eat light, cool meals like salads
- ✓ Avoid heavy physical activity during the hottest parts of the day.



### Preparing for heat

- ✓ Stock up on food, water, and medications 
- ✓ Ensure air-conditioning or fans are working and consider servicing them before a heatwave 
- ✓ Prepare for power outages with flashlights, a fully charged phone, and non-perishable food.

For assistance to prepare for the upcoming heat call AccessCare and see how we can assist you **1300 819 200.** 



 AccessCare

 1300 819 200

 [accesscare.org.au](https://www.accesscare.org.au)

Do you have any suggestions, questions or story ideas for AccessCare? Feel free to reach out via email at [info@accesscare.org.au](mailto:info@accesscare.org.au) or on 1300 819 200.

Follow us on social media for more stories from our community:

 [facebook.com/accesscarelbourne](https://www.facebook.com/accesscarelbourne)

If you have a spare moment, we would love it if you could leave us a review on Google by scanning this QR code:



AccessCare proudly acknowledges the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, and we pay our respect to their Elders, past and present.