

COUNCIL ON THE AGEING

COTA

victoria

the voice
of older victorians

TRANSPORT ACCESSIBILITY AGE FRIENDLY RIGHTS
AGE DISCRIMINATION POVERTY VOICES HOUSING
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ANNUAL REPORT 2010

COTA

victoria

COUNCIL ON THE AGEING

Vision

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria's vision is to contribute to a just, equitable and humane society in which older people are able to age with dignity and purpose.

Mission

COTA Victoria's mission is to resource and mobilise older people and shape a society that enables people to age well.

Board of Management

Janet Wood

Bob Barron

Ian Jungwirth

Russell Green

Elizabeth Jensen

Anne O'Shaughnessy

Patrick Moore

Alva Purkiss

Klaudia Vainshtein

President

Deputy President

Chair Policy Council

Treasurer



President's Report

Where to begin? This past year, much of the energy and effort of COTA Victoria's Chief Executive Officer, staff and volunteers has gone towards the holding of a very successful International Federation on Ageing conference. More than 1100 people from 56 countries came together in May to consider issues of age and ageing under the broad theme of *Climate for Change: Ageing into the Future*. As with any conference, its success can be judged by the event itself but also by its outcomes.

For COTA, one of the outcomes has been a renewed emphasis on the need to change out-moded paradigms about ageing. Our vision statement looks to a 'just, equitable and humane society in which older people are able to age with dignity and purpose.' Our task is to recognise and name the obstacles to achieving this and so we name ageism as the deepest, widest and most persistent of these obstacles.

COTA's policies and programs emphasise the great good fortune of a community in which more people live for more years. It advocates for governments, bureaucracies, the media and the community at large to recognise this and to give up the presumptuous negative stereotypes that drain older people of their identity as skilled and experienced individuals.

COTA also pledges itself to offer older people opportunities to name issues of importance to them, to debate, discuss and develop policies for improvement, and to be active advocates for change. One aspect of this in this past year is a more focussed attention on gaining and keeping members. COTA is committed to being an organisation whose work is informed by its members and by the wider constituency of older people.

I congratulate the Chief Executive Officer, Sue Hendy, staff and volunteers for the many ways in which they affirm that commitment. Deep appreciation is extended to the members of the Policy Council who have been required to think through issues from smart meters to MYKI to men's health. That appreciation extends also to COTA Board members who take on governance responsibilities for the ever-expanding role of COTA Victoria.

Janet Wood
President



Victorian Senior of the Year, Senior Achievers and other Award winners.

From left standing: Father Bob Maguire, Janet Wood (COTA), Albert Clarke, Sister Angela Caine, Lisa Neville, Mrs Jan & Professor David de Kretser, Leslie Williams, Navaratnam Shanmuganathan, Reginald Pollard, June Burrell and Peter Caligari

From left to right seated: Joy Clarke, Kenneth Lyons, Ted Kitto and John Vincent.

Treasurer's Report

On behalf of the Board I have great pleasure in presenting the Treasurer's Report for the financial year ended 30 June 2010.

The final result was a good balanced budget, despite a challenging year with the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) 10th Global Conference, plus a global financial crisis and the Icelandic volcano eruption. We were also able to consolidate our work within the organisation by implementing last years financial systems review outcomes and further developing our financial policies and procedures to ensure a secure future.

Apart from the items above, we have experienced a fairly stable financial year and the organisation continues to undertake important work within its financial constraints.

The following table has been provided to give an overview of the key income and expenditure items of the organisation for the 09/10 year and a comparison with the prior year's results.

The table highlights the result from ordinary activities before depreciation. This shows a surplus of \$3,915 a decline on last year's result by \$100,000. The operating result after depreciation is a surplus of \$58,000 compared to \$149,312 last year. Please refer to the financial statements and notes enclosed with this Annual Report for a more detailed explanation of the financial position as summarised in the table.

At balance date, COTA's net cash position is \$713,122. In conclusion, these reserves currently provide an adequate safeguard against unexpected significant future costs or sudden decline in income.

Another productive year and a special thank you to the finance team for their ongoing dedication and hard work in managing the finances of COTA.

Key results

	09/10	08/09	Variance
	000's	000's	000's
Income			
Govt Grants	2,453	2,142	311
Investment Income	60	65	(5)
Program fees	14	53	(39)
Membership Income	313	246	67
Other Income	34	1	33
Total Income	2,874	2,507	367
Expenditure			
Staff costs	1,702	1,584	118
Other operating	1,114	774	340
Total Expenditure	2,816	2,358	458
Total Ordinary Operating profit/(loss) before depreciation	58	149	(91)
Less Depreciation	(54)	(45)	(9)
Total Operating profit/(loss) inc depreciation	4	104	(100)

Ian Jungwirth
Treasurer

CEO's Report

An exciting year for COTA Victoria, with all areas of our work making a difference in the lives of older people and influencing the way government and our community see ageing. Our key areas for the year have been to refine our focus on age-discrimination, human rights, age-friendly communities and participation by older people in our society, including COTA Victoria.

We have again worked closely with many partners, ensuring we value each others work and add to the outcomes in the process. In particular we appreciate the support of the Office of Senior Victorians, Department of Health, Sport & Recreation Victoria, Victoria Legal Aid, National Prescribing Service, *beyondblue*, National Ageing Research Institute, Monash University, Uniting Care Community Options, Municipal Association of Victoria, YMCA Victoria, Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, Department of Environment and Sustainability, Commissioner Kate Auty, Norton Rose Australia, PILCH, Eastern and Loddon-Campaspe CLC's, VicHealth and VCOSS.

We have been working closely with our interstate and national bodies to continue to increase our influence and program reach in all parts of Australia. We have also recently launched new individual and organisational memberships - both are being well received.

A significant focus for this year was the successful hosting of the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) 10th Global Conference in May, which attracted nearly 1100 delegates from 56 countries and featured over 500 hours of presentations from 200 presenters. The topics were many and varied; housing, independence, physical activity, elder abuse, chronic conditions, life long learning, and many more, including a significant focus on human rights and the need for an international convention. Help Age International Asia Pacific ran a two day pre-conference gathering which was supported by the IFA conference to enable people from poorer countries in our region to attend a great gathering - and indeed many of the participants stayed on for the IFA conference and made a significant contribution.

And finally the great team of COTA Victoria Board, Staff and Volunteers who make it all happen. Their skill, enthusiasm and commitment is inspiring and enables us to make a difference.

Chief Executive Officer
Sue Hendy

Our Work

Represent the View of Older Victorians – Advocacy and Policy Development

COTA Victoria's Policy Council, comprising Board members, COTA Victoria's CEO and interested seniors, governs our policy directions and activities. The council meets monthly to share information, monitor the work of policy working groups and staff, and decide our policy positions.

At its annual planning meeting for 2010 the Policy Council identified two strategic priorities that were accepted by the Board as our primary focus for work for the year:

- Human Rights
- Green Sages (Climate Change)

These are key issues on the political and social agenda, with significant implications for the well-being and participation of older people in our community. While these key areas focus our proactive policy development and actions, work is also undertaken in response to ageing issues at the national, state and local levels.

Some of the major developments and achievements in these and other areas of advocacy and policy development include:

Poverty and Financial Disadvantage

Householders can expect significant price and cost increases in water and energy in the coming years. At the same time increases in food and fuel prices can also be expected. Pensioners and seniors on low incomes will be amongst those most affected by

these increases. Although a cap for water concessions was announced in the State Budget, this will not cover the average 14% increase in water costs, and the roll out of Smart Meters is having immediate cost impacts on households. COTA has been participating in the Department of Primary Industry's Customer Consultative Working Group on the issues

Our Work

around Smart Meters. While the Government has placed a moratorium on the introduction of Time of Use Tariffs, the longer term outcomes for some groups, particularly low income and other disadvantaged groups, are still uncertain. COTA continues to work with other consumer organisations in advocating for protections and an adequate concessions' framework to protect those who are most vulnerable to the rising costs.

In addition, low income groups, including seniors, commonly have less energy- and water- efficient housing and appliances, and their utility bills can take up a higher proportion of their spending. People in rental accommodation may be even more vulnerable. Better thermal efficiency of homes will reduce the extent of heating and cooling required, and therefore the costs for households. It will also protect vulnerable people from extreme temperatures. COTA has joined with a coalition of organisations in the *One Million Homes* campaign, in seeking improved standards for new homes and significant upgrading of the water and energy efficiency of existing homes to help reduce greenhouse emissions and the impacts of climate change on those least able to bear its costs.

Human Rights

With 2010 marking the 10th anniversary of the International Year of Older People (IYOP), COTA undertook a project with funding from VicHealth, to examine the outcomes of the projects funded under the IYOP Positive Wellbeing for Older People (PWOP) funding program. The projects we followed up on, produced outcomes that have endured the 10 years; have contributed to older people's equity in service access; highlighted ageism in our society and taken giant steps to eradicate such views; influenced inclusive policy development; and had impacted on many thousands of older people across the diverse Victorian communities.

Climate Change and Older People

In July 2010 COTA Victoria received funding from the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability to implement our *Green Sages* project. COTA has been concerned for some time about the impact that climate change will have on older Victorians and has been concerned that there is no policy framework to address this issue.

With this new funding, COTA is engaging older Victorians, finding out what they know about climate change and their capacity for reducing and coping with its effects. COTA is forming partnerships and links with a number of government and non-government organisations, community groups and individuals who are assisting us to meet with a wide cross section of the community. These meetings will ensure that older Victorians have a chance to have their say on climate change and the impact they see it will bring to their lives.

This information will allow COTA to examine and report on the necessary policy framework required at Government level to protect older people from the impact of climate change. It will also assist us to determine how senior Victorians can be enabled to build their capacity to act on these issues.

The *Green Sages* project was launched at the IFA conference that has been developing its implementation plan and will be the key theme of the Senior's Conference this year. We are working closely with Dr Gary Haq from the Stockholm Environment Institute UK, who has been engaging older people as agents of action on climate change. The aim of the work is to ensure that older people's views and needs are included in all actions and decisions about climate change.

Accessible and Affordable Housing

Appropriate and affordable housing for low income seniors continues to be a critical issue.

COTA and other organisations that comprise the Victorian Universal Housing Alliance contributed to the State Government's process to regulate for universal housing standards. The measures to be put in place will achieve significant benefits for seniors and people with disabilities.

However, the plight of older people in the private rental market continues to worsen. Many older people are particularly vulnerable to escalating rental costs and lack of appropriate accommodation and older women, in particular, have been identified as at risk of becoming homeless for the first time in their lives. COTA is working closely with housing and homelessness services to raise awareness of these issues.

Submissions and Representation on Committees

COTA Victoria developed and provided input into submissions on a number of State and Commonwealth policy initiatives and inquiries, including:

- A National Framework for Advance Care Directives
- Climate Change Roundtable
- Productivity Commission's Review of Aged Care
- HACC Triennial Planning
- Law Reform Commission's Review of the Guardianship and Administration Act
- Men's Health and Wellbeing Policy
- National Credit Reform Green Paper
- Parliamentary Inquiry into Public Housing in Victoria
- Review of HACC Social Support and Respite Programs
- Universal Housing Regulatory Impact Statement
- Women's Health Policy
- Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Reference Group

COTA Victoria has represented older people and directly contributed to many different government and stakeholder reviews, reports and committees:

- Statewide Reference Group on Elder Abuse
- Advanced Metering Infrastructure Customer Consultative Working Group
- Yarra Water Community Consultation Committee
- Home & Community Care (HACC) Departmental Advisory Committee
- Public Transport Users Advisory Committee
- CAV Working Together Forum
- Retirement Villages Issues Group
- Accessible Housing Alliance
- VCOSS joint discussions and action on issues impacting on older people
- Insurance Council of Australia

COTA also makes presentations to many conferences and seminars.

Represent the View of Older Victorians – Seniors' participation in policy

Increasing opportunities for seniors to participate and contribute to our policy development is a key component of COTA's policy work.

Have Your Say

This year has seen the continuation of the Have Your Say sessions across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

In 2010 we produced another in our series of publications 'the voice of older people...'. Our first publication in 2009 on Independence gave us valuable insight into what independence means to senior Victorians. In the new series of engagement sessions, we took up research done by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, in which older people were asked 'what makes a decent life for them?' We held rounds of open discussions with seniors' organisations including University of the Third Age and Older Women's Network, along with action and multi-cultural activity groups.

This process revealed that, for many older people in Victoria, a decent life is about social connections. These connections cover friends, family, social contacts and cultural activities. They provide the backbone for a real sense of belonging, respect and living a useful life.

Leadership and Older People

In 2009-2010, we have carried forward our work on older people and leadership. This year sees the completion of Never Too Late, a community resource for people who are involved in local activities for change. This resource gathers the wisdom from participants at the 2009 Seniors Conference on effective ways of working for social change at local levels.

COTA Victoria will be continuing its leadership activities into 2011. Three areas are the focus of action research projects:

- being an effective member of an older person's advisory group
- learning and improving skills for projects and local campaigns
- increasing online opportunities for older leaders in outer metropolitan, regional, rural Victoria.



Our Work

We operate under principles of the empowerment of older people and recognition of their rights, and provide information, advice and support relating to elder abuse and issues relating to ageing to older Victorians, and their friends and family members. This is done through telephone information and referral, specialist legal services, individual short-term advocacy and support. SRV has a central response team based in Melbourne at COTA. Regional response teams are based in Bendigo at LCCLC and the outer eastern suburbs at ECLC. Pro bono clinics are coordinated by PILCH at a number of sites in Melbourne located in health service settings.

SRV engages in law reform, systemic advocacy and policy reform activities to advance the rights of older Victorians at risk of experiencing abuse.

In the past financial year, the telephone information, assistance and support service located at Seniors Information Victoria (SRV Elder Abuse Helpline) received approximately 1585 telephone calls related to elder abuse.

Of the calls referred to SRV for advice and casework, financial abuse accounted for 42% of abuse reports, making it the most prevalent type of abuse, with emotional/psychological abuse accounting for 37%.

Of the elder-abuse related calls to the SRV Helpline 33% were made by older people themselves, followed by 29% by a friend or relative (29%).

Emotional/psychological abuse was the most common type of abuse that advocacy clients were assisted with (70%). Incidental data suggests this may be because older clients often have complex care needs that may require coordination of existing services or referral to support services, e.g. HACC, CACP, housing etc. The majority (46%) of advocacy clients were aged between 80–89 years.

In the past financial year, a total of 73 community education sessions were run throughout of Victoria. Professional information sessions were presented to 535 individuals at 28 sessions, 11 in regional Victoria.

Law Reform.

SRV Committee of Management Chair Janet Wood presented SRV's submission to the National Human Rights Consultation Committee in Canberra (June 2009), and the Committee's report, released in September 2009, included nine references to SRV and two direct quotes.

SRV presented a formal submission to the

People at Centre Stage Project

COTA is one of the partners in the People at Centre Stage (PACS) research project, which is testing a model of 'Self Directed Care' for community aged care packages. COTA has partnered with Carers Victoria to establish, coordinate and facilitate Peer Facilitated Discussion Groups for clients and carers, as part of the larger PACS project.

People receiving aged care services through Uniting Care Community Options, Uniting Aged Care, Strathdon and Brotherhood of St Laurence (Southern), and/or their carers, participated in the four month Discussion Group Pilot phase. Participants were encouraged to explore their service options and learn from each other about self-directed care at meetings run by two volunteer Peer Facilitators who were recruited and trained by COTA.

The evaluation of the pilot supported the idea that, as a result of attending these meetings, all participants felt more empowered to take more control of their support arrangements, which was the primary intent.

Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV)

SRV seeks to empower older Victorians so they can take steps to live in safety, with dignity and independence. It provides leadership across Victoria by addressing and responding to older people experiencing abuse. Abuse may be physical, sexual, financial, psychological, social and/or neglect. Elder abuse is any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust: such as family and friends.

SRV is an unincorporated joint venture between four parties; Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria as the lead and employing agency, the Public Interest Law Clearinghouse (PILCH), Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre (LCCLC) and Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC).

President's Review of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, and made a submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Law Reform Committee Inquiry into Powers of Attorney.

Seniors Information Victoria (SIV)

February 2011 will be the 10th anniversary of the launch of Seniors Information Victoria as a *shopfront* information service. In that time, SIV has responded to over 150,000 enquiries, making it a key point of contact for seniors in Victoria.

COTA has operated the information service for 47 years. SIV believes that access to information is empowering – enabling one to clarify issues and identify options. The service also provides an avenue for COTA and the Office of Senior Victorians (OSV), to stay informed about emerging issues for older people – which can then support policy development and advocacy.

Ageing in Victoria: A plan for an age-friendly society 2010-2020, recently released by OSV acknowledges the need for comprehensive and reliable information to assist older people with critical decisions and to remain engaged and active in their communities. Through this plan, OSV will work with SIV to explore opportunities to improve seniors' access to information.

SIV staff respond to a wide range of requests, by phone, email and in person. People can phone SIV for the cost of a local call across the state - and now by mobile – or visit the shopfront to collect information and/or speak to an information officer. There is now a searchable online directory on COTA's webpage. Volunteers support the work of SIV by maintaining the information resources essential to providing a comprehensive service.

The *Need to Know* information series, which SIV introduced in 2004, continues to attract interest, with requests for particular topics to be repeated. SIV identifies new topics from enquiries and participants' feedback. This year issues included public transport, scams, grandparenting, the costs of residential care, palliative care and social dancing. A highly popular initiative is the one-on-one session, held each month at the shopfront.

Physical Activity

Living Longer Living Stronger™

Living Longer Living Stronger™ (LLLS) celebrated its 10th birthday in March 2010. It was an opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved – this was captured beautifully by Sonja Rutherford, a participant from the very beginning, who credits LLLS for her progress from 'struggling to hang out the washing' to internationally successful power lifter, with a record of 310.5 lbs in dead lift.

The considerable progress made over the ten years to increase the access for older people to strength training was particularly evident in the programs nominated for the inaugural *Strength Training for Older People* Innovation Awards, presented as part of the birthday celebrations. From a strong and varied field of nominations, Richmond Recreation Centre (Metropolitan Program) and Ballarat Community Health (Rural or Regional Program) were chosen to receive awards – both demonstrated effective strategies for engaging hard-to-reach older people and maintaining high levels of participation.

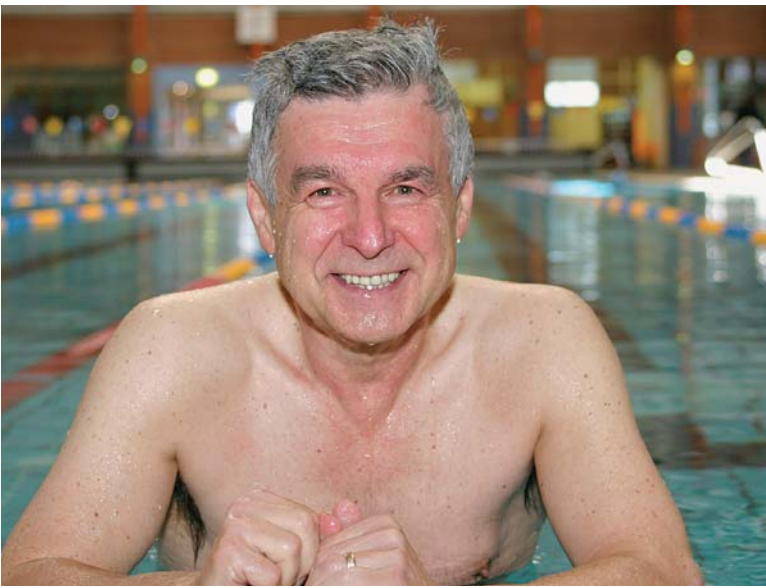
Approximately 17,000 people now participate in LLLS at over 120 venues across Victoria, with several providers adding new sessions to cater for increased demand. Our continuing challenge is to ensure that all older people, particularly those who are disadvantaged, have access to a high quality, affordable strength training program in their local area. COTA will continue to work towards this goal both through LLLS and our collaboration with the YMCA on the *Active Ageing Network*.

Back in the Game

COTA's sport and recreation program for older people is now offered regularly in Shepparton and Tatura. The 'multisport' version is particularly popular because it enables participants to try a range of games – including badminton, table tennis, tenpin bowling, volleyball and some less well known options, for example sacrifice ball and circle ball, which are both skill building exercises and great fun. Back in the Game providers can also choose to offer a specific sport or game. Whatever the format, games are non-competitive with modified rules to make them accessible and very enjoyable for everyone.

Seniors Festival 2010 sees the launch of *Back in the Game* in Oakleigh (multisport), Macleod (cricket), Mentone (tenpin bowling) and Blairgowrie (sailing), and it is anticipated that opportunities will continue to grow, both in

Our Work



terms of numbers but also in diversity, as each new program will reflect the specific interests of its participants.

Active at All Ages Awards

The 2009 *Active at All Ages Awards* were presented by Minister for Sport, Recreation and Youth Affairs, James Merlino at Parliament House in February 2010. In the participant category, three very worthy recipients were selected from over 50 nominations, across a range of activities that included hip hop dancing, bull riding, pistol shooting and skydiving as well as more 'traditional' activities such as hockey, cycling, athletics and swimming.

The awards aim to increase awareness of the range of sporting and active recreational activities in which older people participate, to recognise their contributions and to promote good practice by sporting and active recreational clubs and groups in engaging older people.

They also reinforce the enormous contribution that older people make to their communities, with most nominees being engaged in numerous voluntary activities in addition to their sporting pursuits.

The 2010 *Active at All Ages Awards* were launched during the Victorian Seniors Festival and will be presented early in 2011.

Older People in Bushfire Affected Areas

COTA is working with groups in the areas affected by the 2009 bushfires on the *Health and Wellbeing for Older People Program*. This initiative has been made possible by generous donations to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund. It will help to ensure support for older people, and provide leadership opportunities to enable them to maintain and improve their mental and physical health whilst helping to rebuild their lives and communities.

Community based organisations, such as U3As, Men's Sheds, neighbourhood houses and community health centres, are receiving grants to run activities that meet the needs of older people affected by the fires, including physical activity sessions, art projects, community gardening, computer classes and cooking demonstrations.

Moving More

COTA's *Moving More* volunteer peer educators presented to more than 20 groups, raising awareness of the benefits of regular physical activity, whilst also addressing some of the common myths and barriers and providing some tips to get started.

City of Yarra

City of Yarra and COTA's consultations with older residents about their physical activity needs and preferences have continued, with a particular focus during 2010 being grandparents caring for grandchildren – it is hoped a program can be developed that will offer activities for children and their carers to enjoy together.

COTA Cycling

The COTA Cycling group's regular rides have continued under the coordination of dedicated volunteer Janet Bennett and her team of assistant leaders. These cater for the varied interests of older cyclists providing an opportunity to share the enjoyment of Melbourne's great network of bicycle paths and some country trails, not to mention discovering some excellent coffee stops along the way.

Enhancing Practice Program

2009/10 has been both an exciting and productive year in the Enhancing Practice Program. Highlights of our year have included:

Count Us In! Department of Health Grant

This funding was received to work with five residential aged care facilities in the Barwon South Western region to improve social inclusion opportunities for residents. An enthusiastic group of participants embraced the Program and developed some important changes for residents such as:

- rejuvenating an outdoor courtyard with raised garden beds and shade
- framed story boards to encourage a better understanding of the residents life history
- individualised bathing times including regular spa baths

Awareness Raising of Person-Centred Care

The team developed a half-day interactive awareness raising Enhancing Practice Program for the Brotherhood of St Laurence. A total of 10 sessions for managers and staff were held across the Northern and Southern regions with all sessions evaluated as being relevant and valuable. The aim of this Program was to improve the person-centred approach of the organisation.

We have given many invited workshops, conference and poster presentations around Australia during 2010. These include the International Federation on Ageing conference, the Rural Health conference and a series of presentations for the Aged Care Accreditation Agency. The focus of this work has been in the areas of practice change and improvement, person-centred approaches and in active ageing and ageism awareness.

Victorian Public Healthcare Award

The Enhancing Practice Program was the proud recipient of a silver award in the 2010 Victorian Healthcare awards in the category of *Responding to an Ageing Population*. This award recognised the important contribution the Program has made to the experience of older people and their carers in the health system. Since 2005, more than 1600 staff and 500 managers from over 35 agencies around Victoria have participated in Enhancing Practice.

Community Education

COTA's community education activities reached an estimated 6500 older people this year.

Our peer education model was adopted in a trial of a positive ageing program for Vietnamese and Arabic-speaking people living in the Cities of Yarra, Hume and Moreland. The federally funded project was undertaken in partnership with the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI).

Positive Ageing provides people aged 50+ who have chronic disease lifestyle risk factors with preventive self-management strategies. Beliefs, attitudes and understanding about health issues vary greatly across cultures and not surprisingly the findings emphasised a need for appropriate tailoring of such programs – content and methods of delivery – to ensure older people from all cultural backgrounds have access to the information they need to age 'positively'.

Partnerships with *beyondblue* and National Prescribing Service for funded community

education sessions have continued, with funding for both now secured until 2013.

beyond maturityblues has completed another successful year of awareness-raising sessions about depression, including the establishment of a program catering for the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups. Italian peer educators are now working closely with their community groups and organisations, and Greek, Chinese and Vietnamese presentations will be offered during 2010-11.

Medicines and You is the new topic being presented through the *Quality Use of Medicines Program*. This fresh approach to a popular topic highlights issues, strategies, sources of information and the impact of managing medicines.

Our peer educators have also been involved in more than 20 events and expos over the past year, raising the profile of COTA programs and delivering community education sessions.

HACC Training Program

COTA Victoria auspices the Home and Community Care (HACC) Regional Training Program of the Western Sector of the North West Metro Region (NWMR), which is funded by the North Western regional office of the Department of Human Services.

The introduction by the Department of Health of the HACC Active Service Model, which focuses on person-centred care and positive ageing, has brought the HACC system into closer alignment with COTA's vision and mission. It has also increased the need for a training program which equips HACC staff and volunteers to maximise the independence of their clients. One of the ways in which COTA contributes to this objective is by regularly offering our peer-educator led course, *Myths and Stereotypes of Ageing*, as part of the HACC Training Program.

In total, 55 training courses were delivered in 2010, 27 in Semester 1, and 28 in Semester 2. More than 800 staff and volunteers participated in the training courses. We ran a one-day forum on new approaches to chronic illness, including self management, for 70 people. Speakers included people living with chronic illness and their carers, as well as health professionals.

In addition to this, a total of 23 courses were run in association with the education unit of the Royal District Nursing Service, with over 250 people participating in these courses.



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