

# Real Care the Second Time Around

Issue 1 • July 2020

Hello and welcome to our first newsletter for the Real Care The Second Time Around Project!

The Real Care The Second Time Around Project commenced in 2019 and is funded by the Commonwealth Government until June 2021. This important project has been developed with Forgotten Australians\* by Helping Hand, in partnership with Relationships Australia South Australia (RASA) and Flinders University.

The project is working towards improving the access to quality aged care services for Forgotten Australians. These now older Australians experienced the physical and emotional trauma of being placed in institutional care as children during the 20th century.

An estimated 500,000 children and child migrants experienced care in institutions or outside a home setting in Australia.

The overall aim of the project is to develop aged care responses to ensure that Forgotten Australians can access the care they want as they age. We are working with Forgotten Australians to develop resources to assist them to engage with providers and to understand the aged care sector. Helping Hand, Flinders University and RASA are also developing and trialling models of care to respond to this group's needs and to raise awareness of those needs with the wider aged care sector.

Helping Hand is delighted to be working with Forgotten Australians to support their access to real care this time around and to increase the understanding in the sector about the barriers to support that they are experiencing.

Thank you to all of the committed Forgotten Australians and everyone who is involved in this project!

We hope that you and your family are remaining safe during this challenging time.

\*Forgotten Australians include people who were harmed in state, out of home and institutional care during their childhood, former wards of the state, former child migrants and care leavers, in addition to the Stolen Generations. We respect that not everyone will identify with this terminology.



# What's happened so far

## Important milestones for the project

Two forums were held last year with Forgotten Australians that identified six priority projects for the Real Care The Second Time Around project. Some of these projects have already commenced and others are being planned for the next financial year. Projects identified were:

**1) Lived Experience Training:** Two of five sessions have already been held to build participants' capacity to share their knowledge, insights and personal reflections in order to build connections with others. This training will help increase advocacy skills through storytelling, which is a powerful means for healing, teaching and influencing change. It is important for people with lived experience to be included in any organisational planning, particularly policy and program development to ensure that their experiences are shared and included.

**2) Advanced Care Planning (ACP) Workshop 1:** An ACP workshop will be held this year to provide information for Forgotten Australians about the preparation of wills, funerals and enduring power of attorney.

**3) Advanced Care Planning (ACP) Workshop 2:** Another ACP workshop will focus on end of life planning, completing Advanced Care Planning Directives and who needs to be involved in decision-making.

**4) Aged Care and Disability:** The aged care and disability sector can be confusing and difficult for people to understand. An aged care and disability workshop will be held later this year for Forgotten Australians to provide information on in-home support services, home care packages, NDIS for older people, the range of concessions and what support is available for carers. A number of speakers have indicated an interest in talking to the group on these topics.

**5) Safe and inclusive aged care for Forgotten Australians:** Flinders University's College of Medicine and Public Health was funded to conduct partnership research to explore the key health impact needs, experiences, hopes, preferences and barriers to accessing aged care for Forgotten Australians. As part of the Real Care The Second Time Around project, Helping Hand will use the recommendations to trial training, tools and new approaches for

Forgotten Australians. The Flinders University research team included Alison Smyth, a Forgotten Australian. Alison said that *"the research is vital to us because, having been abandoned as children to live in an institution with strangers, facing institutional care once again as aged people is terrifying"*. Dr Monica Cations from Flinders University is finalising the recommendations for aged care providers. These recommendations will be discussed in upcoming forums with Forgotten Australians from Helping Hand's project.

**6) Trauma-Informed Care Training:** RASA, in partnership with Helping Hand Aged Care, is developing Trauma Informed Care (TIC) training for Helping Hand's frontline staff, including aged care support workers and hospitality services staff. Trauma-informed care is a framework for providing services that are based on an understanding of how trauma impacts on peoples' lives. Trauma can affect how people relate to other people and situations because they may feel fearful and lack trust. It is important for service providers to be trauma-informed in order to support survivors of trauma to feel safe. The TIC training will aim to ensure that our staff are aware of the experiences and barriers to care for Forgotten Australians. The TIC training will include videos of personal stories from Forgotten Australians and exercises, assessments and resources to support understanding. The training will be evaluated by all participants with the aim that the TIC training be rolled out in the future to the wider aged care sector.

*"The concept of trauma-informed care is about building an understanding of the traumatic impacts survivors will face at all levels of an organisation or system"*, Mr Philip Reed, CEO, Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2016



Alison Smyth



Dr Monica Cations

## Navigator Trials

The Navigator Trials offer new ways to find support and information about aged care services for older people who face barriers to access support. Council of the Ageing (COTA) has partnered with 30 other organisations to pilot and evaluate 62 different Navigator activities across Australia and will report back to the Department of Health on the best ways to share aged care information with vulnerable older people. This project, due to finish in June this year, has been extended for another year. The Navigator Trials will be evaluated to assess the best approaches to provide information. COTA and Aged Rights Advocacy Service have offered to provide an information session about the Navigator Trials as part of our Aged Care and Disability workshops later this year.

## COVID-19

2020 has been a challenging year so far, with the COVID-19 restrictions around social isolation which have also impacted on our project timelines. We are strongly aware of the safety needs of our community, particularly our vulnerable older people during this time. Therefore, some of the planned meetings and group work have been postponed or been by phone. With restrictions now lifting as we move into Step Two in the Roadmap to ease COVID-19 restrictions, we look forward to catching up with everyone in person soon!

## Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

The Royal Commission was set up by the Australian Government in October 2018. It is looking at the quality of residential and in-home aged care and whether these services are meeting the needs of the Australian community. Members of the public and organisations can make submissions to the Commission or attend community forums held across the country. The Commission also holds hearings where people identified by the Counsel Assisting appear as a witness and give evidence. In October 2019, the Commission held a series of hearings focusing specifically on diversity in aged care, including the needs of, and services available, to Care Leavers / Forgotten Australians and other special needs groups under the Age Care Act, 1997.

### Forgotten Australians at the Hearing

Two older Forgotten Australians presented at the hearings. Ms Janette McGuire spoke about her background and life experience. She said:

*"The government and aged care sector*

*need to be educated about the needs of Forgotten Australians. We need them to understand who we are, what we have been through and how they can help us. Forgotten Australians don't want much. We just want the government and the community to understand the trauma we suffered as children. This will inform people's ability to care for us when we again enter into a vulnerable time of our lives in old age"*.

Ms Heather Brown also spoke of her background. She is involved in training for child safety officers (CSOs) who provide assessment and case management for children at risk. She said:

*"I do it to help CSOs and the police understand what life was like in care and the impact it can have on someone"*.

Ms Brown also said:

*"There should be a training program like the CSOs for aged care workers. This would help them to understand Forgotten Australians. Training would help workers understand how to handle a situation with a Forgotten Australian who might be triggered or distressed. Forgotten Australians need access to clear information about all aspects of support and services both in aged care facilities and for independent living"*.

Ms Helen Radoslovich from Helping Hand also appeared before the Commission and was asked a series of questions about Helping Hand's diversity work with cultural communities, LGBTI and Forgotten Australians. Commissioner Briggs asked specifically about Forgotten Australians' fear of moving into residential aged care and whether home care would be different or better. Helen responded that it is important to let Forgotten Australians know all the aged care services that are available to them. She said that we need to raise awareness with them that they can receive support in their own homes as well as in an aged care facility. This will depend on their needs - and also what that care means in respect to their rights, privacy, respect and safety.

The Royal Commission published an Interim Report in November 2019. This report was finalised in September 2019 in order to meet government reporting requirements. It does not report on the findings of the diversity hearings. The Commission's next report is due in November 2020 and this should address issues for diversity groups including Forgotten Australians.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Royal Commission has suspended all public hearings from March 2020. This will be subject to ongoing review and public health advice.

It is with great sadness that we let you know that Hazel Raethel passed away at Easter. Hazel was one of the Forgotten Australians working with us on the Real Care The Second Time Around project and an equally valued member of the Elm Place community. Our sincere condolences are extended to all of her family and friends. May you rest in peace Hazel.

A sincere thank you to Diana O'Neil who will be leaving us after facilitating three more Lived Experience workshops with the Forgotten Australians. Diana's compassion and expertise is appreciated by all!

Welcome to Meg Schwarz who commenced with the project in May 2020 as the new Project Officer. Meg comes from previous project roles with special population groups. She identifies as a Forgotten Australian and understands the experiences and barriers that this group of people have.

Please feel free to contact Fran or Meg for further information. We welcome any stories for our next edition of the newsletter that are relevant to the project.

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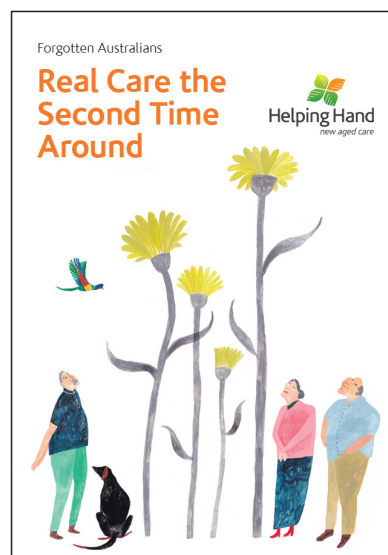


Fran Lovell and Meg Schwarz

## Real Care The Second Time Around Booklet

The booklet is the result of Helping Hand's *Listening and Responding to Forgotten Australians Project* to gain greater insights into the issues and challenges of Forgotten Australians. It aims to help aged care providers respond to and support this group's needs. It was developed with the help of Forgotten Australians and was launched last year. It has been circulated widely throughout the aged care sector.

The booklet is available to download from the Helping Hand website: [www.helpinghand.org.au/forgotten-australians-guide-launch/](http://www.helpinghand.org.au/forgotten-australians-guide-launch/) or contact Fran or Meg and they can send you a copy.



At the launch of the Listening and Responding to Forgotten Australians Project