

## Generous donation to the Community House Garden Group



When Nagambie resident Michelle Andrews decided to shave her hair off as part of a fundraiser for different community groups, most members of the House probably didn't even know about it. Instead we found out

as the unselfish and incredibly brave initiative had already been carried out. Michelle then contacted coordinator Anna Close and said she had some money she wanted to donate...

"The community garden always make me smile when I walk past

it and I'd love to give it some extra TLC", she stated and the garden group were incredibly excited to hear the good news! For the donation, both a new wheelbarrow and some soil was purchased. Michelle stopped by for a cuppa and we hope to see her soon again!

Nagambie Lakes Community House Inc.

7 Prentice St. Nagambie, VIC 3608

Email: [nlchouse32@gmail.com](mailto:nlchouse32@gmail.com) Phone: 0437 - 347 203 (Anna's phone)

Open weekdays between 10.00am and 3.00pm - Except during pandemics

Website: [nagambielakescommunityhouse.org](http://nagambielakescommunityhouse.org)



# Update from the Committee of Management

**D**ear friends and members,

In the light of the development of the Covid-19 pandemic and the State Government regulations and recommendations, the NLCH Committee of management has felt compelled to make a new decision in regards to the opening of our House.

We take everyone's health and well-being very seriously, and have therefore decided to remain closed, even for drop-ins. Coordinator Anna Close will be working from home and can be reached either via Facebook, email or phone: 0437 347 203.

We will be making a new decision and hopefully open up again sometime after the 12th of July when the Victorian Government will once again be reconsidering restrictions.

Big thank you to you all for standing together with us through this crazy time... I and the whole committee feel so very grateful to be a part of this community and extended family! Stay safe! - And if you feel like it; don't forget to make a square for our community quilt! (Read more about the quilt on page 4.)

*Coordinator Anna Close, on behalf of the NLCH Committee of Management*



*L-R: Sally Fyfield, secretary., Wendy Keenan, President, Carmel Sidebottom, treasurer. The other members of the committee are Nicky McKeown, Des Mason, Gaye Bond, Anne Turville, Robyn Northey, Bob Arnold and Edna James, who is also Vice President.*

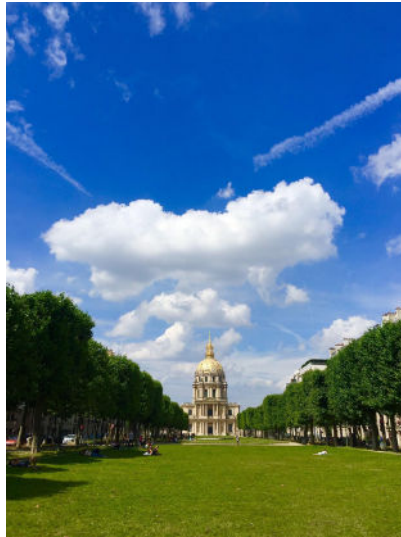
# Upcoming events

## New possible courses and groups

**A**lthough we're in the midst of a pandemic doesn't mean we can't still learn, grow and share! Many of our groups are finding new creative ways of meeting and right now we are looking at possible starting one or more new groups! Do any of the below sound interesting to you? Please send Anna Close an email on [coordinatornlch@gmail.com](mailto:coordinatornlch@gmail.com) or via phone: 0437 347 203.

### Want to learn how to speak French or Italian?

Are you interested in learning Italian or French? Or did you take some classes ages ago but would like to brush up your language skills? Would you be willing to try an online course via Zoom or a similar platform? Or are you maybe a retired language teacher looking for a new challenge? If language is your thing, don't hesitate to contact us!



### Interested in Tai Chi?

Thai Chi is an internal Chinese martial art practiced for both its defence training, its health benefits and meditation. Now, the Community House is thinking about running a small course. Interested? Please let us know!



### Want to learn to garden without the use of pesticides?

Our excellent Garden Group has recently made the decision to garden without the use of any pesticides. We are now looking to see if more members would be interested in learning how to "go green" when growing. Does this sound like a course you would want to attend, please contact coordinator Anna.





# Upcoming events

## Last chance to make a square for the Community Quilt

Originally we put the deadline to contribute to the Community Quilt to the last of June, but due to the great interest we've had we will extend it by two more weeks!

So if you're sitting at home wondering if you shouldn't try and put something together, then YES, you definitely should! :D You don't have to be super skilled or talented, just be willing to give it a go! Just

remember, 25x25cm, and leave a bit of an edge for us to sew it all together!

Below you will find some of the amazing, creative, fun and inspiring squares we've received so far!



# A little story about friendship

By Robyn Northey

A big part of what the Community House is and does, centers around friendship. It's about nurturing the friendships we have but also about daring to reach out and make some new friends; perhaps finding those who are new to town, have gone through changes in their personal life or is simply ready for a bit of adventure.

From here on, we would like to encourage anyone who wants to, to share a story of friendship with us in the newsletter. It can be a new friend, an old friend or someone you simply miss terribly. Just send your contribution to [coordinatornlch@gmail.com](mailto:coordinatornlch@gmail.com) and I'll make sure to feature it! :-)

The story below is written by Robyn Northey and tells how she first met our much appreciated and beloved Community House member Iris Staples...

## Age is merely a number from nought to one hundred!

That remarkable little English lady, Iris Staples befriended us not long after we moved into Kelvingrove Village, as she and husband Frank lived in the caravan park next door, and had done so for thirty five years or so.

We first met when she was collecting for the Good Friday Appeal in April 2010, and this little "pommie lady" knocked on our door, asking for a donation, which we gladly gave. As we had lived on the road for just over two years travelling Australia in our caravan, we made the mistake of saying that we wanted to join in and belong to the local community, so we were willing to volunteer somewhere. That was when Iris recruited us into the Nagambie Lion's Club of which she was a member. Of course our answer was yes and we were committed before we knew it, thanks to that dynamic little lady! We had over two interesting years helping the club raise funds for local charities, until family issues intervened and we were

forced to resign; thankfully that great little club is still going with a number of original members! Every Christmas there was a card in our letter box from Iris and Frank.



*Iris Staples*

Iris was/is a crafty lady, with many skills such as knitting, crocheting, patch working until arthritis in her hands limited her flexibility and she was forced to stop her craft. Several operations allowed her hands to work in a limited way once again, hence her contribution to the N.L.C.H quilt. She was

also a Committee member of the house for some time, even though well into her eighties; age was merely a number which could not slow this lady down!

Riding my bike along the service road just last week, I encountered first of all husband Frank in his motorized scooter, a hundred metres ahead, then Iris scooting along in her "Surrey with the Fringe on Top". I just happened to say, "Frank's no gentleman, leaving you behind like that," and she replied, "I can go faster than him and I'll catch up soon!" Now it's a fair hike from the caravan park to the doctor's clinic, but Iris bravely tackles it in this freezing weather, as well as shopping trips to the supermarket. Good on you GIRL, keep up the good work and don't let social distancing prevent you from talking to the many Nagambians who know you so well.

***Love and Best Wishes, Robyn & Bill Northey.***



# Reports and Recaps

## Walking Group

The Walking Group have not yet resumed their group walks, but leader Wendy Mason have been encouraging everyone to continue walking, if yet on their own! Some members are now sharing photos from their individual walks so we can all take part and perhaps even be inspired to venture out on our own adventure! Have a look at these grand pictures below... Have any photos from a great walk you've done? Please send them on to coordinator Anna Close so she can feature them in the newsletter!



*Photo taken at the Australian Native Botanic Garden in Shepparton on the 16th of June by Heather Higgins.*



*Wendy Mason at Sherbrooke Forest Dandenong Ranges*



*Des Mason at Tathra Wharf Walk, NSW.*



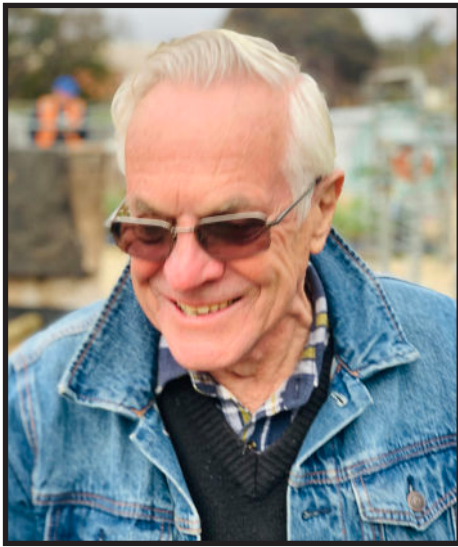
*The Queen's Birthday weekend, with reduced restrictions, walking at Bournda National Park NSW*



# Reports and Recaps

## Garden Group

One of few groups who have been able to resume their work is our Garden Group! If you haven't passed by the House in a while, you should pop in and have a look at all the yummy vegetables the group is growing! If you would like to buy anything, please remember to swing by on Monday mornings between 10.00am and 12.00noon. As some people have recently decided to help themselves, we would also like to remind those who might have forgotten, it is just a gold coin donation for some organic, local and very yummy greens!



Bob.



Noel.



Wendy.





# Reports and Recaps

Garden Group

## How did your garden grow during Covid-19?

**O**nce our world came to a standstill in mid-March, did you decide to grow your own food or flowers or a combination of both? Coronavirus lockdown took everyone by surprise and changed our way of thinking about where our fresh food comes from and how we can to begin to grow our own. **DID YOU SUCCEED?**

Suddenly plant nurseries, large and small ran out of winter vegetable seeds and seedlings because of the pandemic, as many householders decided to grow their own Brassicas, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Kale as well as Chinese Cabbage, Bok Choy, Silver beet, Spinach. AND if you are really keen "Brussel's sprouts", which take six months to grow and need to be planted in February/March. Just delicious picked small and fresh and gently poached in Balsamic

Vinegar, with honey and herbs!

We guess that one of the problems would have been "preparation of the soil" and not just digging up a patch of lawn in the back yard and throwing your seeds or seedlings into the ground expecting them to germinate and grow into food.

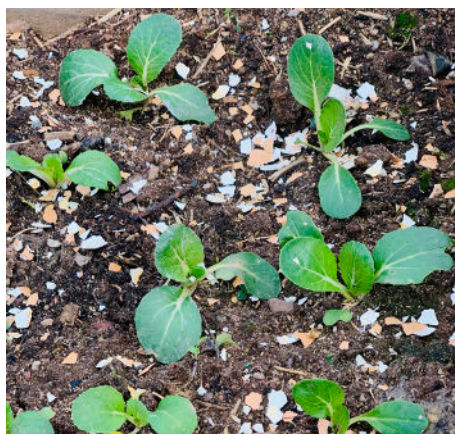
IF you are keen to continue growing your own food, but are unsure how to go about it, the Nagambie Lakes Community House garden group are happy to offer advice and information, all for free. **WE ARE NOT EXPERTS**, which translates as a "drip under pressure", but through our years of experience we can help to point you in the right direction re growing your own food. Hands on experience are probably the best teachers!

**IDEAS:** Preparing your soil, composting, worm farming, companion planting, beating insect pests naturally, best watering systems, seasonal

vegetables and lots, lots more! **WHAT** seeds are best direct sown, what seedlings are you wasting your money on buying from the **BIG** stores? For example carrots, parsnips, beetroot, radishes are best direct sown and thinned out later on. Those in punnets rarely survive or thrive once their delicate roots are disturbed! Please let us know if your store bought seedlings are surviving and thriving, or did they succumb to the cabbage white moths, the grubs, slugs, snails and other invaders? Frosts have hit early this year and some vegies will not survive unless they are frost tolerant.

There is a wrong and a right time for many vegies and we are here to help anyone interested. Contact the N.L.C.H if you'd like to learn more or join our very friendly group.

**By Robyn Northey**





# Reports and Recaps

Craft Group



*Beryl Dukes knitting away...*



*According to Denise, this beautiful sweater "only took 2 years and Covid-19".*



*Baby blanket with Teddy, by Sally Fyfield.*



*A colourful throw by Denise Smith.*



# Reports and Recaps

## Neighbourhood Watch

Below is some very useful information from our Neighbourhood Watch group. Just like with the Corona virus, it's all about being smart and taking on a few simple preemptive measures. Have a read and think about what you can do! Thank you Peter Prygodicz for sending this through!



### Keeping your place safe

The criminal is looking for an opportunity, with low risk and high reward. And they only need 10 minutes to go through your place to find jewellery, technology and cash.

Keep valuables out of sight to reduce the temptation. Curtains shut and blinds down reduces the risk for the thief of being seen. There are a few other factors that thieves look out for when picking a house to break into.

### Unlocked Door or Windows

In almost a third of residential burglaries the thief uses an unlocked door. One of the first things a thief will look at when picking a house to break into will be whether the doors or windows are unlocked.

### No dog

Having a dog is a significant deterrent for breaking into a house. Many thieves won't take the opportunity to break into a house if they think they will be confronted by a noisy dog. If you don't have a dog, having a visible "Beware of the Dog" sticker can be enough to make a thief walk right past your place.

### Overflowing Mail

Many thieves look at the mailbox to see whether someone is home. Some crafty thieves can also put flyers in a mailbox to see if the owners are away on holiday.

Clean your mailbox regularly and ask a trusted neighbour or friend to grab your mail if you are planning on heading off on holiday.

### Overgrown Bushes or Hedges

Unruly bushes or untrimmed lawns can tell thieves that your home is vacant. Having overgrown hedges can also give thieves a cover when breaking into your home.

### Empty Driveway

Having a car in the driveway is one of the most visible signs that someone is home and it a good way to ward off opportunistic thieves. Residential burglaries are more likely to happen during a weekday when the thief thinks no one is home. As well as locking up, make it look like someone is at home and the opportunistic - lazy - thief will move on.

These are only a few of the suggestions contained in the "How Safe Is My Place" free online quiz. The quiz takes 5 minutes or so to do and it will provide you a report of the simple things you can do to avoid becoming a victim of crime. Visit [www.howsafeismyplace.com.au](http://www.howsafeismyplace.com.au)

How Safe Is My Place is an initiative of Neighbourhood Watch Victoria. For information about Nagambie and District Neighbourhood Watch, see our website: [www.nagambienhw.com](http://www.nagambienhw.com)



# Reports and Recaps

Writing Group

## Reflections on isolation

*By Carol Wallis*

**Let it go, let it out  
Let it all unravel.  
Let it free and it can be  
A path on which to travel.**

This poem penned by Michael Leunig sums up my personal journey through the recent mandatory social isolation in Victoria due to the coronavirus. My husband Terry and I began social isolating early in March once we accepted that the virus was potentially deadly for those in our age group. My mindset in the early weeks was one of resentment, self-entitlement, frustration, powerlessness and confusion.

I felt that spending a long period of time at home in isolation would be like serving out a prison sentence. I missed my social interactions at line dancing, playing golf, visiting children and grand children, shopping for non-essential items, bike riding etc. I was so disappointed that our holiday overseas in August had to be cancelled. My thoughts centred round the phrase; why now and why me?

As I learnt to 'let it go' and ceased resisting the change to my daily life I began to see my situation as an opportunity to better myself. I realised I had time to explore interests which I had put 'on hold' prior to the pandemic. With the aid of the internet I was able to improve my understanding of the relevance of meditation to my mental health. I now begin each day with a 15min qigong routine which invigorates me as well as enables me to focus on being grateful for what life has to offer me. Qigong is an ancient Chinese exercise and healing technique that involves meditation, controlled breathing and movement exercises.

I have also rediscovered the cartoons and poetry of Michael Leunig. Though not valuing or understanding all of his work I have admired how Michael has expressed his social commentary through his drawings and poems. Whilst living in Shepparton in the late eighties and nineties my then parish priest had introduced his congregation to Leunig through incorporating his most recent cartoon published in *The Age* into his sermons. So impressed by these I had even bought a hard cover book of Leunigs so I could revisit his work at my leisure (This was impressive for me as I had rarely ever spent money, which then was in short supply in our growing family, on a hard covered book for myself.)

Hopefully we are in the last stages of isolation. As I emerge from this historic period of time I feel I am better for having had the experience. I am more grateful for my life and more aware of the fragility of life itself. I know myself better and have set new personal goals for the future. In my opinion this final poem again by Leunig expresses clearly how I have learnt to be happy by just being myself and spending time by myself.

**Come sit down beside me  
I said to myself  
And although it doesn't make sense  
I held my own hand  
As a small sign of trust  
And together I sat on the fence.**



# Reports and Recaps

Writing Group

## Saturday Night

*By Heather Higgins*

We are now at home on Saturday nights as a result of Covid19 lockdown, or Iso. Or, whatever you want to call it. It has, in some ways, changed the way we live our lives. Some, including me, say it has been for the better. So instead of usually spending Saturday night in another town at another motel or going to bed early to set off very early to yet another bicycle race on the weekend we have been spending Saturday nights at home.

And, I have been able to persuade my husband to indulge in another form of a competition. This has also included turning off the television for the night, and actually doing something together. At first it was under duress on his part, but now it has firmly become entrenched in Saturday night activities. The desire to win has again raised its head.

An early dinner is scheduled. Washing up done, table cleared I collect the box and the book from the desk. I open the square box lid and place in the centre of the table the green stand. Under the stand are 100 cream coloured tiles with letters printed in black on them. I make sure they are all turned face down and set up the two tile holders. There are four in the box, but we only require two. I set the book on His side of the table as he tends to use it a lot more than me.

A glass of red finds its way to the table as well, earlier or later. Otherwise it is a cup of tea to start with, and the red appears when he starts to get frustrated. I am in charge of scoring.

The game is Upwords, a version of scrabble. "The 3-dimensional word game that really stacks up". That is what the title on the box reads. Instead of scoring by getting points from the number on the tile, you only get one point for

each letter, but can change the score by adding to a word already on the board. You can also change a word as long as you use one of the original letters. The tiles cannot be higher than five. So the score can add up quite quickly, as the object of the game is to build words to score the most points.

The book, ah, the book. It is the official scrabble dictionary, and anything located within the pages can be used. I use the book just to check the spelling, but my competitive opponent searches diligently to find a word using some of the seven letters on his rack. The first few weeks he was not that enthusiastic, but now the challenge is well and truly on. Last week he actually won three games, two by just one point, but as he says "A Win is a Win", and "Winners are Grinners". Prior to this he always stated at the beginning of the game. "I know you will win anyway", but now, it is really a fight to the end. So it has now become best of three games.

He did not let me forget for a few days that he won the competition last week. However, last night it was a different story when I nearly doubled his score in one game but is now eager



# Reports and Recaps

Art Group



"A sunny day in Graytown National Park" by Bob Eaton.



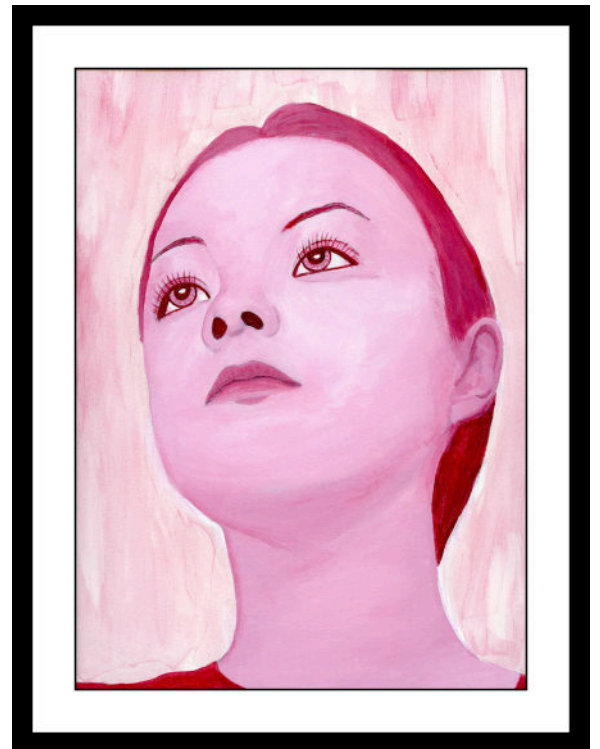
Susan Loughnane 16 yrs of age, by Sonia Aspinall.  
Oil painting



Sunset by John Fielden.



Flowers by Val Monigatti



Tillee, monochrome portrait, By Wendy Cook.



# Covid-19 Information

Information from the Australian Psychological Society



## Coronavirus (COVID-19) anxiety and staying mentally healthy

FOR OLDER ADULTS

As the number of COVID-19 cases rise across Australia, the level of anxiety within the community is likely to increase. It is important to take reasonable precautions, however, we also need to learn to manage our stress before it turns into more severe anxiety and panic. The following tips may help older Australians to keep stress and anxiety at bay during this challenging period.

### Learn the facts (but limit media exposure)

Stay up-to-date with factual information from reliable sources such as the [Australian Government Department of Health](#), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), or the [World Health Organization](#), and follow their recommendations. However, a constant influx of information and media coverage about COVID-19 will actually make us feel more anxious and concerned. Try to limit how often you are exposed to news updates on COVID-19. Take breaks from both media coverage and COVID-19 conversations throughout the day so you can focus on other things.

### Take reasonable precautions and keep things in perspective

As the pandemic continues to develop, we all worry about how this is going to affect our own and our family's health, work and finances. Try to keep your concerns in perspective. Rather than imagining the worst-case scenario and worrying about it, ask yourself:

- What are the actual levels of risk and are there other facts that are important to remember in this situation?

Current evidence suggests that older adults are no more likely to contract COVID-19 than younger adults. Among those who do contract COVID-19, those over the age of 60 are at greater risk of serious or life-threatening health complications that may require medical intervention. However, even with this increased risk, the large majority of older adults who contract this illness will recover.

Remember there are qualified professionals working to keep people well and policymakers are working on strategies to manage the spread of COVID-19, and create economic support packages to assist people. Health professionals are working hard to help people recover. The scientific community is working on understanding the illness, and developing treatments.

Be familiar with the difference between symptoms of COVID-19 and cold/flu symptoms, but also try limiting how often you monitor changes in your physical sensations. For example, don't excessively check your temperature if you are otherwise feeling well.

- Am I overestimating how bad the consequences will be and underestimating my ability to cope?

Consider how you (or your family) have gotten through difficulties in the past, and whether these coping skills might help you to get through this situation. Also remind yourself

# Continuing from previous page...

that even though things might be difficult now, many of the consequences are time limited (ill health, financial burden, supply shortages etc.), and will eventually improve.

Change some of your routine if needed. For example, discuss whether you should postpone non-essential doctor appointments, including wellness visits. If available, telehealth consultations can be a reasonable substitute. Call your pharmacist to enquire about access to prescription medications and alternative methods of collection if necessary.

Have respectful and open conversations with your family and caregivers about your health concerns. Ask about what precautions they are taking to reduce your health risks, and what to do if you are concerned about your health.

## Practise physical distancing but ensure social connection

Current recommendations advise practising social distancing as a way to prevent or slow the spread of COVID-19. This means keep your physical distance from others where possible. Unfortunately this can also result in reduced social contact, which can be especially problematic for people who are already socially isolated or feeling lonely.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 39 per cent of people aged 65 and over live alone. Research has shown that social isolation and loneliness increase the risk of physical and mental health problems.

Engaging in social activities is still possible while maintaining physical distance, but it does take creative and flexible thinking. Switch to virtual catch-ups via videoconferencing technology (e.g., Zoom, FaceTime, Skype) instead of face-to-face. Send a text or email. Call your friends and family on the telephone if you do not have access to video-based technology. If you are part of a community group or volunteering agency, enquire what alternative activities you can complete from home. Explore more ideas online about how to maintain social connections during this crisis ([bit.ly/2UsdXcm](https://bit.ly/2UsdXcm)).

Social distancing doesn't mean locking yourself indoors. If you practise good hygiene and keep your physical distance from others, you can still enjoy your backyard, do gardening, sit on the porch, get your mail and talk to neighbours (from a distance).

## Tips for supporting older adults distressed by the COVID-19 outbreak

- Check in with older relatives/friends and ask how they are feeling
- Talk to them about how they are managing changes to their routine
- Offer practical and/or emotional support if needed (e.g., offer to set up videoconferencing technologies on their computer/tablet via FaceTime, offer to deliver groceries)
- Encourage them to do things they enjoy
- If you think they are not coping, or are overly isolated, suggest they seek help from their GPs, or encourage them to speak with a mental health professional (see below for contact information)
- Keep up contact with elderly relatives by writing emails, calling them on the telephone, talking via videoconference, send them videos to watch via email, send photos or drawings from children via email, or to the facility where they are.



### Remember...

There are steps you can take to help protect yourself and those around you. Practising good hygiene, enacting physical distancing, and following government recommendations will help you make a difference. You can do things to help those around you, whether that is preventing the spread of illness or by supporting others socially or emotionally. As a community, we can work together to get through this challenging time and we all have a role to play.

## Seeking additional support

If you feel that the stress or anxiety you experience as a result of COVID-19 is getting too much, a psychologist may be able to help.

Psychologists are highly trained and qualified professionals skilled in providing effective interventions for a range of mental health concerns, including stress. A psychologist can help you manage your stress and anxiety using techniques based on the best available research.

If you are referred to a psychologist by your GP, you might be eligible for a [Medicare rebate](#). You may also be eligible to receive psychology services via [telehealth](#) so that you do not need to travel to see a psychologist. Ask your psychologist or GP for details.

There are number of ways to access a psychologist. You can:

- use the Australia-wide [Find a Psychologist™](#) service. Go to [findapsychologist.org.au](https://findapsychologist.org.au) or call 1800 333 497
- ask your GP or another health professional to refer you.

## More information

### Australian Government Department of Health

The Department of Health has developed a collection of resources for the general public, health professionals and industry about COVID-19, including translated resources. [bit.ly/38OwHe](https://bit.ly/38OwHe)

### World Health Organization

The World Health Organization provides information and guidance regarding the current outbreak of COVID-19. [bit.ly/3cQUwCw](https://bit.ly/3cQUwCw)

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention




The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides reliable information about COVID-19 such as its symptoms, steps you can take to protect yourself, and what to do if you are affected.

[bit.ly/39MEml8](https://bit.ly/39MEml8)

## Acknowledgments

This resource was prepared by the APS Psychology and Ageing Interest Group Committee.

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## ***While Anna is on leave ...***

- July Newsletters have been emailed to all members. If you can't see yours in your inbox, check your "trash" as it is sent to a mailing list.
- Paper copies of the Newsletter are available from the entrance of IGA.
- Ring a member of the Committee if you need anything or just want to chat.
  - ◇ Wendy (President) 0459 595 908
  - ◇ Edna (V President) 0427 091 248
  - ◇ Carmel (Treasurer) 0429 991 839
  - ◇ Sally (Secretary) 0408 141 969
- The Pantry is always available. Just ring someone and we'll be there.

