

# ECHO GAZETTE

Helping our community enjoy independent lives in their own homes.

## A few words from the CEO



### The ongoing incidence of COVID-19 and influenza in the community is concerning.

Some of ECHO's clients and staff have been ill recently and we all need to help minimise the spread of these infections.

COVID-19 and influenza can cause similar symptoms: cough, runny nose, sore throat, fever, headache, and fatigue.

The World Health Organisation tells us these viruses spread more easily in poorly ventilated and/or crowded indoor settings and where people linger, because infectious particles remain suspended in the air.

Progress continues toward the start of *Support at Home* on November 1, with the Commonwealth bringing forward some 20,000 new Home Care Packages nationally by that date.

Until next time ...

**Stuart Diggins**  
CEO

## It's nearly here.



### A period of change is heading our way.

Preparation for the start of *Support at Home* on 1 November is gathering pace.

From that date, *Support at Home* will replace Home Care Packages (HCP).

If you are an existing Home Care Package recipient, you will

automatically be transitioned to *Support at Home*, and assigned a budget equivalent to your existing approved package level when one becomes available.

If you were on a Home Care Package before 12 September 2024 and you have Unspent HCP Funds, the Government's portion of the Unspent HCP Funds can be used to pay for Services



when permitted under the Aged Care Act 2024.

If you are yet to enter the HCP program, you'll need to get an assessment of your eligibility for the program.

To arrange your assessment, start by registering with *My Aged Care*, either by phoning or going to their website.

A Single Assessment System has been established by the Government to check eligibility for an assessment. This can be done online at *My Aged Care*, or by calling 1800 200 422.

If your application is successful, you will be referred for an assessment, which is done in person, at your home.

When accessed as eligible for the *Support at Home* program, you'll get a *Notice of Decision* letter and an individual support plan to share with your provider.

This will contain:

- A summary of your aged care needs and goals
- A classification with an associated quarterly budget and a list of your approved services; and/or
- An approval for short-term supports.

There are even changes to the reporting we must do for CHSP clients continuing in that program, though the CHSP program is to remain in place until 1 July 2027.

## Would you like to be a part of ECHO's Consumer Advisory Body?

We're forming a Consumer Advisory Body to provide advice to our Board on service development and performance.

This Advisory Body will meet quarterly for 1-2 hours.

Membership will be a voluntary role, and members can include consumer advisors who have had direct or indirect experience with ECHO's services as a client, carer, family member, friend, or any other nominated representative of a client.

We want the Body to represent the diversity of our client base.

To express your interest to join the ECHO Consumer Advisory Body, please write to:

Stuart Diggins,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
ECHO Community Services,  
72 Toowong Street,  
Bayswater WA 6053,

or email: [stuart.diggins@echocommunity.org.au](mailto:stuart.diggins@echocommunity.org.au)

## We need volunteer bus drivers, bus assistants and client transport drivers.

We need more volunteers to help us help others. • Drivers to drive and support our clients on our 12-seater buses. • Assistants to help with any client needs on a bus outing, or on our twice-weekly shopping bus expeditions to local shopping centres. • Client transport drivers using their own vehicle or one of ours. **If you, or someone you know, would like to help out, email [volunteer.coordinator@echocommunity.org.au](mailto:volunteer.coordinator@echocommunity.org.au) or phone 9271 7011.**

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**ECHO**