

CEO's message



Henrietta Podgorska:
Umbrella CEO

A Season of Growth, Resilience, and Connection.

As we step into the second quarter of 2025, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the way our Umbrella community has embraced a season of change and growth.

We've had a strong start to the year—launching

new projects, welcoming more clients than ever before, and filling our spaces with laughter, music, and joy through our social support programs. From surprise Valentine's Day kittens to community celebrations of Easter and culture, it's clear that connection remains at the heart of everything we do.

Of course, the aged care reform journey continues. We're working through the changes with focus and care—balancing compliance with what matters most: our people, our culture, and our community values.

I want to acknowledge the patience and trust you've shown as we navigate the complexities together.

While we adapt to new systems, we're also speaking up—making sure the voices of multicultural and LGBTIQ+ communities are not only heard but embedded in the future of aged care.

Our team is growing, our volunteers continue to amaze, and the spirit of advocacy and compassion that defines Umbrella is as strong as ever.

I hope this edition brings a smile and reminds you of the incredible impact we create together.

Thank you for being part of our Umbrella Family.

Board message



Anna Harrison:
Umbrella Board President

Navigating Change with Purpose and Care.

As Board President, it's a privilege to witness the energy, warmth, and resilience that define Umbrella—whether it's at joyful community celebrations like our Easter gatherings or in the thoughtful planning to prepare for aged care reform.

The Board continues to focus on strong governance and

financial sustainability to ensure Umbrella remains well-positioned for the future. We have established a dedicated subgroup to oversee compliance, risk, and long-term financial planning—essential work as we navigate a changing policy environment.

At a national level, I have had the opportunity to advocate in Canberra for stronger financial support for aged care organisations like Umbrella. In particular, I have advocated and highlighted the vital role of social support programs in reducing isolation and promoting wellbeing—especially for multicultural and LGBTIQ+ communities.

We are committed to staying connected with our clients and staff, and many of our Board members were delighted to join recent community events.

We look forward to continuing this engagement throughout the years to come.

Thank you for your trust, and for walking alongside us on this important journey.



Launching the Cyber Savvy Seniors Program

Umbrella is proud to launch the **Cyber Savvy Seniors series**—free, practical workshops designed to help older adults navigate the digital world with confidence and security.

In collaboration with *Magoo IT* and *TADWA*, these sessions cover everything from spotting scams and securing devices to protecting personal information online. Whether you're new to technology or want to boost your skills, our sessions offer a supportive and friendly space to learn.

The first workshops were a great success, with strong attendance and positive feedback. We're excited to continue empowering seniors to stay connected and safe in today's digital world.

Please see the upcoming session details below—we'd love to see you there!

**CITY OF MANDURAH**
1:00pm–3:00pm, 27 May 2025
Mandurah Seniors Club

**CITY OF BELMONT**
12:30pm–2:30pm, 16 Jun 2025
Ruth Faulkner Library—Innovation Lab

**CITY OF ROCKINGHAM**
12:30pm–2:30pm, 8 Jul 2025
Mary Davies Library & Community Centre


**CITY OF KALAMUNDA—Session One**
10:00am–11:00am, 12 Aug 2025
High Wycombe Library

**CITY OF KALAMUNDA—Session Two**
11:00am–12:00pm, 12 Aug 2025
High Wycombe Library

**CITY OF BAYSWATER**
9:30am–11:00am, 11 Sep 2025
Bayswater Community Centre

These workshops are free to attend, but places are limited, and registration is essential. More sessions will be announced soon.

Scan the QR Code to Register Your Attendance:



What's new in the library at Umbrella?

Our Multicultural Library continues to grow—and we're excited to share that we've recently added a fantastic collection of new *Polish books*!

Whether you're looking for something to read in your language or want to explore stories from all over the globe, our shelves are always expanding with something for everyone.

Our library is open to all clients, staff, and volunteers—and we encourage everyone to make use of this vibrant space.

Come visit Ela, or Bronek—on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for personalised recommendations and a friendly chat. Or pop by during the following times and one of our wonderful library team will be there to help you find a great new read;

Monday to Thursday: 10am-12pm



Elizabeth Halladin



Bronek Tabaczynski

We're always looking to expand our collection and welcome *donations in all languages and genres*. If you have something to contribute, please bring it in—we'd love to add it to our collection and share it with the community.

What does the reform mean for me?

After the **1st of July 2025**, the way you access your home support may change. The Home Care Package program (HCP) will be replaced by the Support at Home program. The changes have been implemented to benefit the quality and flexibility of the services you receive.

Things that don't change

- If you already have a Home Care Package or are waiting on one (as of 12 September 2024), you will transition to Support at Home with the *same or lower financial contributions* as you're paying now.
- There will be no changes to your funding levels or the fees you currently pay for your services.
- If you currently receive HCP services, you do not need to be reassessed, your services will remain the same.
- The level of care and support you receive will remain consistent with your current care plan. Your current care arrangements and services will continue without interruption.
- Any unspent funds from your current HCP package will be carried over to Support at Home.
- If you are currently receiving CHSP (Commonwealth Home Support Program), none of these changes affect your services.
- Umbrella doesn't change, our focus on your care remains our highest priority.

What Will Happen To My Unspent Funds?

We know many people have saved money in their care budget over time—this is called **unspent funds**. These funds are safe, and you will not lose them. The Australian Government has introduced a “**No Worse Off**” policy to ensure that existing HCP recipients do not experience financial hardship or disruption when Support at Home begins on 1 July 2025.

Under this policy, all current HCP clients will retain the unspent funds they've already accumulated up to 1 July 2025 and continue to use them as needed when

Support at Home begins.

Here's what you need to know:

- You keep all your current unspent funds after July 2025.
- You can still use these funds for services, equipment (like walkers or chairs), or home changes (like grab rails or ramps).
- You must use your saved funds first before asking for more money if your needs increase and your package amount goes up.

Tip: Talk to your Umbrella Home Support Coordinator to plan how to use your unspent funds in a way that suits your needs.

Assistive Technology and Home Modifications

Good news! There will be **extra money available for equipment and home changes to keep you safe**. This funding is separate from your quarterly care budget, meaning you won't have to wait or sacrifice other services to access the equipment and changes you need.

Funding tiers include:

- **SMALL ITEMS:** Non-slip mats or shower stools (up to \$500)
- **MEDIUM ITEMS:** Walkers or mobility aids (up to \$2,000)
- **BIG CHANGES:** Bathroom upgrades or ramps (up to \$15,000 or more)

Note: You'll need to use your unspent funds first before you can access this special funding.

Example: How Unspent Funds Help

Margaret, 82, had a Level 2 package and saved some unspent funds. When her mobility changed, she moved to a Level 5 package. Thanks to her savings, she was able to:

- Book extra physio sessions
- Buy a shower chair
- Get more help at home straight away

This shows how useful unspent funds can be when your needs suddenly change.

Will I Have to Pay More?

Some services will now have small costs based on your income:

- *Clinical care services* (like nursing or physiotherapy) will remain *free*.
- *Independence services* (e.g., personal care or transport) will require a *moderate contribution*.
- *Everyday living services* (e.g., gardening or cleaning) will have a *higher co-contribution*, as these services are not typically fully funded.

Contributions will be assessed based on your income and assets using the Age Pension means test. Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders will pay less than other self-funded retirees.

While this is a shift, the government’s aim is to ensure the program remains sustainable while continuing to prioritise essential services that keep people safe, independent, and out of residential care.

Call your coordinator to clear up any confusion on: (08) 9275 4411.

Anyone who is on the waitlist from 13th of September 2024 to the 30th of June 2025 will have the usual levels 1-4 but will have to contribute towards their services if the standard income testing applies.

A Single, Simpler Assessment

No more multiple assessments for different programs. Just one aged care assessment to determine your care level and needs — making access quicker and easier. If your needs change, you can request a re-assessment at any time.

Need Help or Have Questions?

Umbrella is here for you. If you’re unsure how to use your funds or want to get ready for the changes in July 2025, speak to your Umbrella coordinator.

For now, you can:

- *Review Your Current Care Plan:*
Take some time to review your current care plan and identify any areas where you might want to use your unspent funds.
- *Discuss with Your HSS Coordinator:*
Have a conversation with your HSS Coordinator about how best to utilise your unspent funds before the transition.
- *Stay Informed:*
Keep an eye out for further updates and information sessions about the Support at Home program.

We’ll help you understand your care, your funding, and how to make the most of what you have.

Contact: You can also call *My Aged Care* on 1800 200 422 for more information.

Your new statement of rights — July 1, 25

New Statement of Rights

The new Aged Care Act will include a new Statement of Rights which will replace the Charter of Aged Care Rights, outlining the rights that older people will have when accessing aged care services. The rights will help to ensure that older people and their needs are at the centre of the new aged care system.

THE STATEMENT OF RIGHTS INCLUDES THE RIGHT FOR EVERY PERSON TO HAVE:

- *Independence, autonomy, empowerment and freedom of choice.*
- *Equitable access.*
- *Quality and safe funded aged care services.*
- *Respect for privacy and information.*
- *Person-centred communication and the ability to raise issues without reprisal.*
- *Advocates, significant persons & social connections.*

You have the right to make decisions about the things that affect your life including decisions about:

- Aged care services you want to use
- Who gives you aged care services
- How you get aged care services

Scan for more: "A new rights-based Aged Care Act"



New Aged Care Act

The new Aged Care Act will commence on 1 July 2025. All providers will have to ensure their actions are guided by the Statement of Rights.

The new Act will provide a revised set of provider obligations including conditions on registration.






- New Aged Care Quality Standards to apply.
- Providers will have to comply with new financial and prudential standards.
- Providers will have to ensure their workforce meets revised worker screening requirements.
- Providers will be subject to new statutory duties.

Scan for more: "A New Aged Care Act — Fact Sheet "



New Aged Care Quality Standards

As a home care provider, Umbrella be audited periodically by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission against the new strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards:

-  STANDARD 1: The Person
-  STANDARD 2: The Organisation
-  STANDARD 3: The Care and Services
-  STANDARD 4: The Environment
-  STANDARD 5: Clinical Care

We want to reassure our clients, families and carers that Umbrella is committed to meeting the new

standards for aged care when they come into effect on the 1st July 2025.

We will continue to make sure that client rights are respected as we continue to provide high-quality care to ensure that you receive safe and personalized care and services.

We will regularly check our services by speaking with our clients, family members and representatives and conduct surveys to look for opportunities to improve.

SEA Social Support Group Launch

Umbrella is proud to expand our programs to better reflect the rich diversity of our community with the launch of our first South East Asian Social Support Group – SEA Home@Home.

Bringing together individuals from Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia, and Laos, this vibrant new group offers a culturally inclusive space for connection, support, and belonging.

As our Founder Anna Harrison once said, “Our clients are the foundation of our communities.” The launch beautifully reflected that spirit—celebrating shared culture, language, and stories. A heartfelt thank you to *Philip and the WA Burmese Association* for your warm support and to all who made the day so special.

To join or book a free trial, call us on (08) 6155 6793



WA Volunteer of the Year Awards 2025

We're thrilled to share that Umbrella is a finalist in the 2025 WA Volunteer of the Year Awards for the **Inclusive Volunteering Award**, proudly presented by the **Minderoo Foundation**.



This honour recognises the incredible work of our *Australian Community Visitors Scheme (ACVVS)* —a program that builds friendships and supports the wellbeing of seniors from multicultural and LGBTIQ+ backgrounds through meaningful social connection.

Led with heart by Gosia and supported by Nat, Elicia, and Barbara, the ACVVS team continues to grow inclusive volunteer pathways that reduce isolation and celebrate diversity.

A heartfelt thank you to our amazing volunteers—your compassion and dedication are what make this program shine. This nomination is a tribute to your impact. We're also grateful to Volunteering WA and The Minderoo Foundation for recognising the power of inclusive volunteering—we can't wait to celebrate together in May!

Navigating aged care together

Umbrella's Care Finder team continues to make a meaningful impact, helping seniors from diverse backgrounds better understand and access aged care services.

In March, we hosted a successful session for the *Vietnamese community* at the Koondoola/Girrawheen Senior Centre, in partnership with *Services Australia*, covering MyAgedCare, Centrelink, and available aged care supports.

Later, we teamed up with the *Perth Bahá'í Community* to run a session for *Farsi-speaking seniors* at the Bahá'í Centre of Learning. With interpreter support, participants received culturally tailored guidance in navigating aged care.

Our *monthly Indian Community Drop-In Sessions* at ISWA in Willetton continue every second Monday. The next session is on *June 9, 2025, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM*.

To register or learn more, contact us on email at: cfs@umbrellacommunitycare.com.au

Thanks to the support of *WA Primary Health Alliance*, these sessions help ensure equitable access to aged care for all.



Supporting Cancer Council WA

This May, Umbrella is proud to host *Australia's Biggest Morning Tea* in support of *Cancer Council WA*—raising vital funds for cancer research, prevention, and support services.

We warmly invite volunteers, staff, and community members to come together in a shared act of generosity and reflection—honouring those impacted by cancer and standing in solidarity with their families and carers.

This event also highlights our growing partnership with *Cancer Council WA* through the *Bridging Health*

Gaps project, supporting CaLD and LGBTIQ+ communities to access inclusive health education and services. Every dollar brings us closer to a cure. We look forward to seeing you there!

Scan the QR Code to Register Your Attendance:

Building inclusive volunteer spaces

Over the past few months, Umbrella has proudly launched *Empowering Connections*—a vibrant new initiative promoting inclusion, belonging, and personal growth for older volunteers from CaLD and LGBTIQ+ backgrounds.

Supported by the Department of Communities, the program offers free, inclusive events designed to reduce social isolation, build skills, and celebrate diversity. By creating culturally safe spaces, *Empowering Connections* encourages volunteers to share experiences, learn, and form meaningful connections.



What's Been Happening?

The series began with a relaxed paint-&-sip session led by one of Umbrella's talented artists, offering a space for creative expression and connection.

In April, a practical health education session focused on diabetes awareness and prevention, followed by an interactive evening workshop on mindset and communication—equipping volunteers with tools for resilience, confidence, and stronger client relationships.

Coming Up Next...
The next session, *It Starts with You: Dementia Awareness*, will explore how volunteers can support more dementia-friendly communities. Join us on *Friday, 16 May 2025, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM* at the *Umbrella Centre* in Belmont.

Register Your Attendance:
Or email Gosia at m.olszak@umbrellacommunitycare.com.au

Spreading the Rainbow in Geraldton

Umbrella's *Over the Rainbow* project is expanding its reach, recently delivering a series of educational sessions in *Geraldton* to support multicultural and LGBTIQ+ communities in regional WA.

Funded by the *Fred P Archer Charitable Trust*, the project raises awareness of the unique challenges faced by diverse individuals—especially in regional areas—while promoting inclusive, culturally safe practices. Led by Multicultural Manager *Fiorda*, the sessions brought together local service providers and community groups for powerful conversations around visibility, respect, and intersectionality. Attendees left with practical tools to better support their communities.

A special thanks to our partner, *Let's Queer the Air*, whose expertise and facilitation were key to the program's success.



Scan to learn more about the "Over The Rainbow" project

Championing inclusive healthcare

Umbrella is excited to launch *Bridging Health Gaps*—a new initiative improving healthcare access and literacy for CaLD communities and Rainbow Migrants.

In partnership with *Palliative Care WA* and *Cancer Council WA*, and funded by the *Office of Multicultural Interests*, the project addresses health inequities through education and culturally responsive care.

Many in these communities face barriers to healthcare. This project ensures everyone can make informed health decisions, no matter their background or language.

Key components include:

- *Workshops with Palliative Care WA*, promoting culturally sensitive end-of-life care.
- *Cancer Education with Cancer Council WA*—boosting access to cancer support & resources.

Umbrella CEO Henrietta Podgorska: *"Health literacy is key to equitable care. By breaking down barriers, we help more people get the support they need."*

Scan the QR Code To Learn More: "Media Release".

Or call (08) 9275 4411



Building Connection

It's been a busy few months at Umbrella, filled with a variety of exciting and enriching Social Support Group outings and activities that have brought our community so many joyful memories.

Some highlights include;

These are just a few of the fantastic experiences we've shared together recently, and our Social Support team are always creating new and memorable experiences for our clients.

If you want to join in on the excitement, make meaningful connections, and be part of our welcoming community, we invite you to get involved with our Social Support Groups.

Email enquiries@umbrellacommunitycare.com.au or Call (08) 6155 6793 to learn more about upcoming activities and how to participate.



Boorloo Bridge Walk, where clients took in stunning views while connecting with each other.



Breathtaking views from the Perth Tourist Wheel in Fremantle, which was an unforgettable experience.



Harmony Week—celebrating cultural diversity, embracing the richness of our backgrounds.



We celebrated International Women's Day to honouring amazing women in our community.



Rio Carnival Party that was a huge hit, with vibrant dance and lively entertainment from Fogo.



Pizza-making session with Chef Roberto. Clients had a blast creating their own delicious food.



A special theatre performance of "My Dad is Getting Married, A Comedy in Polish" by Mam Teatr. Our clients were treated to this light-hearted and hilarious theatre experience, which was arranged by our Team Leader, Ewa, and Board Member, Anna, who also played a starring role.

