



# BUCKETTS WAY

Neighbourhood  
Group Inc.

March 2025 Newsletter



Kerry, Naomi, Nicole, Felicia and Anna

## MY AGED CARE REPRESENTATIVES VISIT GLOUCESTER.

With the upcoming changes to Australia's Aged Care System, BWNG team members Anna, Nicole, and Kerry were pleased to recently meet with Naomi and Felicia from the Northern NSW regional team of the Department of Health and Aged Care.

Thank you, Naomi and Felicia, for traveling to Gloucester to connect with us.

## ADVANCE CARE PLANNING WEEK – YOUR CHOICES MATTER

National Advance Care Planning Week, 17 – 23 March, is the perfect time to have a conversation with your loved ones and health providers so they know what matters most to you and respect your treatment preferences.

Advance care planning means planning for your future health care. It enables you to make some decisions now about the health care you would or would not like to receive if you were to become seriously ill and unable to communicate your preferences or make treatment decisions.

Ideally, advance care planning will result in your preferences being documented in a plan known as an Advance Care Directive, and the appointment of a substitute decision-maker to help ensure your preferences are respected.

Once you have an Advance Care Directive in place it is a good idea to leave copies with your doctor or health care provider, substitute decision maker, and family or carer.

For advice or to order a free starter pack, call the **National Advance Care Planning Support Service on 1300 208 582** from 9am - 5pm (AEST/AEDT) Monday to Friday.

More information is available through the website: [www.advancecareplanning.org.au](http://www.advancecareplanning.org.au) or by scanning this QR code with your smart phone:



## Advance Care Planning Australia

An Australian Government initiative

## CAP SCHEME

More than 4.8 million Australians have bladder or bowel control problems.

If you need some support managing continence, you can apply for the Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS).

CAPS is an Australian Government program. It provides a payment to eligible people, to help with some of the costs of buying continence products.

CAPS helps people from age five with permanent and severe incontinence.

The payment may increase or decrease a little every year following the Government's budget process, but the payment rate for 2024–25 is \$694.80 so it is well worth applying for.

To apply, or to find out if you are eligible for the scheme please call **1800 239 309**

or scan this QR code with your smart phone to visit the CAPS information page of [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)



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## THREE EASY STEPS TO DIRECT DEBIT

Direct Debit is a payment option where the amount owing on your statement is debited directly from your bank account on the due date, saving you the hassle of travelling to our office or calling to pay over the phone.

To make use of this payment method for your BWNG account:

1. Contact our team and ask for a *Direct Debit Request Form* from BWNG
2. Read the Service Agreement on the *Direct Debit Request Form* to decide if this option is right for you, then;
3. Complete and return the *Direct Debit Request Form* to BWNG.

Once your *Direct Debit Agreement* is in place, you should check your bank account after each payment to verify that the amounts debited from your account are correct.

You can change, stop, or defer an individual payment, or cancel or suspend the Direct Debit arrangement at any time by providing BWNG with 14 days' notice, either in writing or over the phone.

## THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB: PROVIDING EQUIPMENT AND PRODUCTS FOR YOUR SERVICES

We're here to help you maintain a clean and comfortable home while supporting your independence. BWNG's Support Workers can assist with essential household tasks such as vacuuming, mopping floors, bathroom cleaning, dusting and light laundry.

To ensure the best service, we kindly ask that you provide the necessary cleaning products and equipment, including:

- ✓ Everyday cleaning products (e.g. white vinegar, general purpose cleaning spray, cream cleaners, disinfectants)
- ✓ A wide-based or string mop with a suitable bucket for wringing
- ✓ A dry mop to help prevent slips and falls
- ✓ Disposable cloths or sponges
- ✓ A lightweight vacuum cleaner with adequate suction (stick or cordless preferred)
- ✓ A clean, safe-to-use toilet brush

### Helpful Extras

While not essential, these items can make cleaning even easier:

- ✓ Electric or battery-powered blower vac
- ✓ Long-handled brooms
- ✓ Steam mops

### Safety First

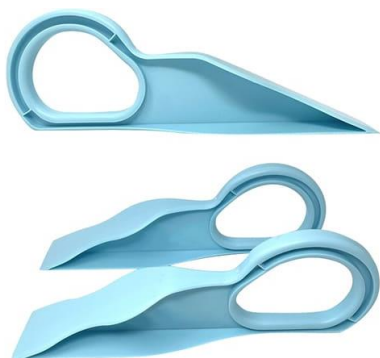
To keep both you and our Support Workers safe, please note that they are unable to:

- ✗ Perform heavy cleaning (e.g. window washing, oven cleaning, moving furniture).
- ✗ Use ladders or steps to reach high areas (e.g. cleaning smoke alarms)
- ✗ Use corrosive chemical cleaners (e.g. Exit Mould, bleach, Domestos or methylated spirits).
- ✗ Use abrasive pads or steel wool.
- ✗ Chemicals not stored in their original container.

By working together, we can help you enjoy a fresh and tidy home while providing our Support Staff with the tools they need to work safely and efficiently. If you have questions about the tasks our team can perform during your service, would like to check the appropriateness of your cleaning equipment or products or have any other questions please feel free to reach out to our team.







## THE BED MAKER AND MATTRESS LIFTER

We've heard very good things from the people who have so far purchased The Bed Maker and Mattress Lifter. This revolutionary product is designed to make bed-making easier and more efficient.

The Bed Maker has an ergonomic design that allows you to grip it in a number of different ways and reduces your likelihood of you or your carers sustaining injuries or discomfort while making the bed.

Lightweight and easy to use, the Bed Maker can be slid between the mattress and box springs like a wedge to lift your mattress, making easy access to tuck sheets in.

We at BWNG love the idea of this tool because it also helps look after our Support Workers, saving repetitive lifting and strains and protecting their backs and muscles.

The Bed Maker and Mattress Lifter can be purchased through BWNG for \$20 each. You can even use your Home Care Package funding to make this purchase.

For more details or to place an order please speak with your Case Manager.



## ENERGY ACCOUNTS PAYMENT ASSISTANCE (EAPA)

This NSW Government scheme offers payments of up to \$500 per household per financial year to help with the cost of energy bills.

You could be eligible for assistance through the EAPA Scheme if you are finding it hard to pay your electricity or gas bill due to short-term affordability issues or a crisis or emergency such as:

- unexpected medical expenses
- a loss of income
- high energy bills
- family illness or family crisis
- other unexpected expenses or bills.

The way it works is simple:

1. Through an appointment with BWNG's Safety Net officer your eligibility and amount of EAPA help available to you is identified.
2. BWNG processes your EAPA request online.
3. If successful, payments are sent electronically to your energy provider to apply to your account, usually within five business days.

BWNG may also be able to help organise a payment plan for the rest of the bill or connect you with other services such as Financial Counselling.

It is also a great idea to talk to your electricity provider to see what other NSW Government rebates and concessions you may be eligible for, including:

- Low Income Household Rebate
- NSW Gas Rebate
- Life Support Rebate
- Medical Energy Rebate
- Seniors Energy Rebate

To apply for assistance through the EAPA scheme please contact our team and make an appointment with our Safety Net Officer. Ph: 6558 2454.

## YOUR SAFETY IS OUR PRIORITY

We understand that experiencing an incident such as a fall can be confronting and upsetting, and you may not want people to 'make a fuss'.

Our Support Workers are committed to your well-being. As part of their *duty of care*, they are required to report any incidents to their Team Leader, including falls, injuries, or safety concerns, to ensure you receive the appropriate support.

If an incident occurs, our team must take the necessary steps to assist you and notify the relevant contacts if needed. Your safety always comes first, and by reporting incidents, we can help prevent future risks and ensure you get the care you need.



## THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND HOME MODIFICATIONS SCHEME EXPLAINED

As covered in our last two newsletters the *Support At Home* (SAH) program is scheduled to replace Australia's current aged care program from 1 July 2025.

A new feature under the SAH program will be a dedicated **Assistive Technology and Home Modifications (AT-HM) Scheme**.

The term *assistive technology* covers a wide range of devices and tools that are available to help older people with daily living, mobility and communication.

For example, it can include items such as tipping kettles, walking aids, toileting support, hearing devices, personal alarms and medication reminders.

*Home modifications* mean making changes to your home that improve safety, accessibility, and mobility and can range from minor adjustments such as handrails or easy access taps, to major renovations such as widening doorways or installing ramps and stair lifts.

The AT-HM scheme will provide three tiers (low, medium and high) of upfront funding **separate** from your quarterly home care budget.

This means that under the new program eligible people will be able to access additional funding to afford approved technology or changes to their home, rather than needing save up funds from their quarterly budget.

The Department of Health and Aged Care is also working on an *Assistive Technology Loans Scheme* (the AT Loans Scheme) which will support fast and fair access to assistive technology through a nationally coordinated equipment borrowing program.

The AT Loans Scheme is still being trialled. More information will be released from The Department of Health and Aged Care as the scheme is fine-tuned.

The AT-HM scheme will have a loan-before-you-buy principle for assistive technology. This means that if you are prescribed an item of assistive technology that is appropriate to be loaned, the prescriber will check whether the item is available to be borrowed through the AT Loans Scheme first, before you purchase it.

For an outline of the products, equipment and home modifications that will be available, or for more information on the AT-HM scheme you can scan this QR code with your smart phone to visit the Support at Home page of The Department of Health and Aged Care website.

