BUCKETTS WAY Neighbourhood Group Inc.

October 2026 Newsletter



ARE YOU MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SUPPORT AT HOME BUDGET?

If you receive funding through *Support at Home* your budget is there to help you **live safely, independently and well at home**. If you have funding available in your budget, now is a good time to think about whether there are additional supports that could make everyday life a little easier.

You might be surprised by the range of things your funding can help with. Depending on your individual plan, this could include:

- Help with showering, dressing and other personal care
- Cleaning, laundry and meal preparation
- Transport to appointments, shopping or community activities
- Support to get out and stay connected with your community
- Assistive technology or equipment
- Home modifications to make your home safer and easier to manage
- Support that can provide family carers with a break

There is also an important change to personal care under Support at Home: as discussed in further detail to the right, there is no longer a participant co-contribution for personal care services.

If you have been holding back from using support because you were worried about the cost, or you're simply not sure what your budget can be used for, have a chat with your Care Partner.

Your needs can change over time, and your Support at Home budget is there to support you when they do.

Don't be afraid to ask: "What else could my budget help me with?" We'd much rather help you understand your options and find supports that are genuinely useful to you than have you miss out on assistance that could make a difference to your everyday life.

CO-CONTRIBUTION FEES WAIVED FOR PERSONAL CARE

If you receive personal care services through ***Support at Home***, there is some good news!

From 1st October 2026 participants are no longer required to pay a personal care co-contribution fee.

This means that services such as assistance with showering, dressing, grooming and other personal care needs are fully funded through your ***Support at Home*** budget, with no additional fee payable by you.

Please note, your contribution towards other ***Support at Home*** services may still apply, depending on the type of service you receive and your individual circumstances.

If you have questions about your fees or would like to understand how your ***Support at Home*** budget is being used, please speak with your Care Partner.

We're here to help you understand your options.

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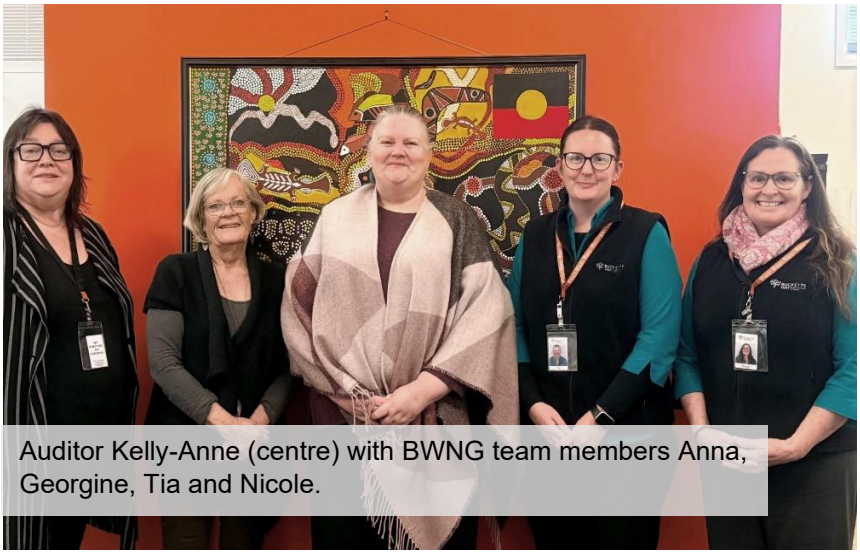
PLAN NOW FOR THE SUMMER HEAT

With summer just around the corner, now is the perfect time to start preparing for the warmer months ahead. Hot weather can pose serious health risks, particularly for older people and people living with disability or chronic health conditions.

Don't wait until the first heatwave to discover your air conditioner isn't working! Taking a few simple steps now can help you stay safe and comfortable when the temperatures start to rise.

- **Service your air conditioner:** Arrange to have a local electrician or air conditioning contractor check that your air conditioner is clean, working properly and cooling your home effectively.
- **Check your fans:** Make sure fans are clean and working correctly. Some ceiling fans have different settings for summer and winter.
- **Check your fridge and freezer:** Ensure they are keeping food at a safe temperature, particularly during hot weather. Some appliances have a summer and winter setting.
- **Have your car air conditioning checked:** If you own a car, have a mechanic check or service the air conditioning. This is often in high demand as the weather heats up so it's a good idea to organise this early in the season.
- **Keep the sun out:** Check that curtains and blinds are in good condition and ready to block out the afternoon sun.
- **Have a plan:** you live alone or need assistance with everyday activities, it's important to have a plan for hot weather. Talk to family, friends or neighbours about checking in on you during heatwaves and make sure you know who to contact if you need help.

Remember, if you need help to prepare for the summer months or give your house a good spring clean, have a chat to your BWNG Care Partner. We can either assist you with these tasks or refer you to someone who can.



Auditor Kelly-Anne (centre) with BWNG team members Anna, Georgine, Tia and Nicole.

SUCCESSFUL MID TERM NDIS AUDIT

We're pleased to share that BWNG recently completed a successful mid-term National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) audit.

A mid-term NDIS audit is an independent review conducted halfway through the provider's registration period (usually about 18 months) to make sure the provider is continuing to meet the NDIS Practice Standards and delivering safe, high-quality supports to people with disability.

During an audit, an approved quality auditor reviews the organisation's systems, policies, records and day-to-day practices. They also speak with staff, participants and carers of participants to gain an understanding of their experiences and how services are being delivered.

More than simply a compliance exercise, audits also provide an opportunity for organisations to reflect on what they are doing well, identify areas where they can continue to improve, and ensure that the people we support remain at the heart of everything we do.

Although there is a lot of extra work behind the scenes to prepare for an audit, BWNG welcomes opportunity to demonstrate the quality of work we do every day to support the rights, safety, wellbeing and independence of our NDIS participants.

We're proud that the audit was successfully completed and grateful to our NDIS team and support workers for their hard work, professionalism and commitment to providing quality services.

A successful audit is a great achievement for BWNG and reinforces our commitment to safe, respectful and person-centred support for people living with disability in our community.

A FRIENDLY REMINDER ABOUT SCHEDULING YOUR SUPPORT

We understand how important your support services are to you and how much your regular routine can mean. Having your support arrive at a familiar time, on a particular day, or with a preferred Support Worker can make a big difference to your week.

We also understand that things change. You may need to request a different time, swap a service, or make a change to your regular schedule. While a change to your schedule might sound like a simple adjustment, there are several things our team needs to consider before we can confirm a change.

Our Scheduling Officer needs to balance:

- **Your needs and preferences** – making sure your support continues to meet your individual needs.
- **Staff availability** – finding a Support Worker who is available and has the right skills and qualifications for your support.
- **The SCHADS Award and employment requirements** – our staff have employment conditions that we *must* follow, including requirements around working hours, breaks and rostering.
- **Other people we support** – our Support Workers provide services to many people across our community, so changes to one person's schedule can sometimes affect another person's service.
- **Travel and location** – particularly in our rural community, travel time between services must be taken into consideration.

For these reasons, we may not always be able to accommodate a requested change straight away, or at the exact time requested. We will always do our best to find a suitable solution and will communicate with you about what is possible.

If you know you need to make a change to your regular services, please give us as much notice as possible. This gives our team the best opportunity to work through the options and find a solution that works for you, our staff and the wider community.

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we work behind the scenes to keep your services running safely, fairly and reliably.



'PERSPECTIVE' ART EXHIBITION - PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

BWNG is excited to announce *Perspective*, an upcoming exhibition at Gloucester Gallery that celebrates the creativity, imagination and individual expression of people living with disability.

We encourage any local people living with disability to get involved and submit their artwork. Every piece has a story to tell, and we'd love to help you share yours.

Whether you're an experienced artist or someone who simply loves creating, this is your opportunity to share your work, tell your story and show the world how you see things through your own eyes.

Art has the power to inspire, connect and challenge the way we see the world. The *Perspective* exhibition is about celebrating the unique voices, ideas and creative talents of people with disability.

Terms and conditions:

- Entry is FREE!
- If your work is sold, Gloucester Gallery will deduct a 20% commission from the sale price.
- The exhibition runs 2 - 27 December 2026
- The Gallery is open to the public Tuesday - Saturday 10 - 2 PM, Sunday 10 - 1 PM.
- Works must be delivered between 23–26 November 2026
- For your work to be included in the exhibition you **must** complete an entry form. If you need help to complete the form please contact our team Ph: 6558 2454.
- Any works that need to be hung must have two D rings attached on the back.
- Please drop your works off to Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group at 88 King Street Gloucester between 23 - 26 November 2026.
- After the exhibition, works can be collected from Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group from Monday 11 January 2027.



Gordon in the role of Safety Net Administrator.

GORDON TAKES ON A NEW ROLE

You may already know Gordon as one of our friendly and dedicated Support Workers, but on Thursdays, you'll find him taking on an additional role here at BWNG.

Gordon has recently undertaken the role of Safety Net Administrator, where he assists local people who may be doing it tough and need a little extra support to make ends meet.

In this role, Gordon helps people afford essential costs such as food and electricity, including support through the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) program.

He can also provide information, advice and referral for other problems including homelessness or domestic and family violence.

We've found Gordon to be a great fit for this role, as it utilises his existing skills and his passion for helping people in a different way, while continuing his important work as a Support Worker throughout the rest of the week.

We're pleased to have Gordon taking on this additional role and expanding the ways he can support our local community.

If you need a hand with the cost of essentials, our Safety Net team may be able to help. Get in touch with BWNG to find out what support is available.

DEHYDRATION – DANGERS & PREVENTION

Dehydration occurs when your body loses too much fluid. It can be very serious, even life threatening.

Hydration is fundamental to a healthy mind and body. If our water levels are too low our brain cells cannot function properly, which can lead to cognitive problems. Studies have found that people who are dehydrated are at higher risk of dementia and those with dementia are at a higher risk of dehydration!

As we get older our sense of thirst naturally diminishes. A person living with dementia is more likely to forget or even lose the ability to drink.

So, what are the effects of being dehydrated?

It may make you more tired, cranky, dizzy, nauseous, forgetful, give you headaches, and make you confused. It can also increase your risk of falls. It may make your mouth dry, give you low blood pressure, constipation and your urine may be dark with a strong odour leading to potential urinary tract infections. It may also change how your medicines act on your body.

So, what can you do?

Some easy ways we can make sure we're all getting enough fluids each day are:

- Always have a glass of water readily available when at home and carry a water bottle when you go out.
- Chilled drinks can stimulate thirst and your appetite.
- Try smoothies, milk shakes, yoghurt, ice blocks or foods with high water content. E.g. soups, watermelon or jelly.
- Have regular drink breaks aiming for 6-8 glasses of fluid a day.

As we age, thirst is a less reliable indicator of hydration due to our brain becoming less sensitive to the thirst sensor, so some older adults particularly those living with dementia may need to be monitored.

If you care for someone living with dementia, offer gentle reminders and make drinking a social and engaging experience. E.g. sit and have a drink together. You can place water and other fluids in familiar cups in easy to access locations, and use brightly coloured lightweight cups that are easy to handle and offer a range of drinks can increase interest and intake.

With advanced dementia swallowing thin fluids such as water can become dangerous. If a person coughs or chokes after drinking, please seek medical advice as thickened drinks may be recommended.

By implementing these strategies consistently, we can ensure that we are significantly reducing the risk of dehydration and therefore improving quality of life.