



Elder Rights Advocacy Update—March 2011

Information for residents, families and staff in aged care.

ERA celebrates 20 years...

Elder Rights Advocacy (ERA) is celebrating 20 years of protecting the rights of older people in Victoria. At a recent celebratory function, Mary Lyttle, ERA Chief Executive Officer, stated “An ageing population has meant a rise in people receiving aged care services, which has become an increasingly complex and sometimes overwhelming system.”

Mary encouraged older people or their families, and aged care service providers and staff, to contact ERA for assistance when queries or problems arise. Advocates at ERA can provide written information about consumer rights and entitlements, and can also provide direct support, including meeting with an individual client and their service provider to resolve problems and complaints.

ERA President, Sue Healy, said “We are Victoria’s leading independent aged care advocacy organisation with a track record over 20 years, and are well positioned to continue to increase our role and effectiveness in supporting older people in their journey through the maze of aged care provision.”

ERA is a free and confidential service for people living in a Commonwealth funded residential aged care service, or receiving a Community Care Package, or Extended Aged Care at Home package. It is funded by the Australian government as part of the National Aged Care Advocacy Program and is independently managed by a voluntary Committee of older people with a focus on consumer rights.

Hot topic...

We are finding many people are confused about the functions of enduring powers of attorney. For example, some family members believe that if they hold a financial power of attorney they can restrict visitors to residents, including other family members with whom they are in dispute. This is not the case and we would recommend that you contact the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) for correct information about the various powers of attorney and what they cover. You can contact OPA by telephoning 1300 309 337 or see their website: www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au .

On the road...

ERA advocates have already travelled widely throughout Victoria in 2010–11, both to assist individual residents and home care recipients with problems, and to provide information and education sessions for groups of residents and families or staff. You may have seen one of us at a home in the Yarra Valley, Kilmore, Seymour, Geelong, Drouin, Tatura, Shepparton, the Latrobe Valley or the Mornington Peninsula, as well as throughout Metropolitan Melbourne.

We have further education trips planned before July to visit homes in the north east of Victoria, the Grampians region and Mildura, so if you live in another rural area of Victoria we probably won’t be able to visit you until later in the year. Do let us know though if you would like an advocate to come and hold an information session for the residents at your home, or provide education for the staff. It helps us to plan our future country travel.

Empowering older Victorians

Elder Rights Advocacy is the registered business name of Residential Care Rights Inc. (ABN 63 367 539 827) which is part of the National Aged Care Advocacy Program - an Australian Government Initiative.

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You can do this by filling in and returning the education request form enclosed with this newsletter. We ask you for your preferred dates and times and do our best to meet all requests for ERA to visit aged care homes and services.

Information about the specialised education topics we provide for aged care staff is included. We are also able to provide resources to support Residents and Relatives Committees.

If you live or work in a home in the Melbourne area, we may be able to come in the next few months to talk to your residents and staff. Again, let us know your preferred dates and times.

On the page...

We are still experiencing great demand for our informative publications: *It's Your Right—Living in an Aged Care Facility* (for residents and families) and *Rights In Practice—Working in an Aged Care Facility* (for staff).

We've also just had new stock of our *Cultural Care Kit* printed. Prior to the reprinting we reviewed the Contacts and Resources section and revised the listing to the key contacts. For anyone with an earlier edition of the *Cultural Care Kit* we are making this page available free of charge. Go to the *Cultural Care Kit* page under "Publications" on the menu bar on our website (www.era.asn.au), and then click on the link at the bottom of that page to download and print the revised list of key contacts and resources to update your kit.

We have included information and order forms for all our publications with this newsletter, and don't forget the many useful fact sheets on our website.

Also enclosed is a brochure called *Aged Care Advocacy*, produced by the Department of Health and Ageing to provide information about the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) it funds. ERA is the NACAP service in Victoria.

On the move...

If you have received information or products from ERA lately you have probably noticed a change of address. In 2010 we moved to a more compact but still easily accessible office in central Melbourne. The new office location and postal address is shown under "Contact ERA" below — our telephone, fax and email address remains unchanged.

Contact ERA

Contact us for more *Aged Care Advocacy* brochures, information on current costs, or to organise sessions for the residents and staff in your home. We also invite you to register your interest in particular topics, and/or the provision of a seminar for the aged care staff in your area, which will assist our forward planning.

Website: www.era.asn.au

Email: era@era.asn.au

Phone: (03) 9602 3066, 1800 700 600

Mail: Elder Rights Advocacy
Level 2, 85 Queen Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

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