



Clarence... a brighter place

Discussion Paper

World Health Organisation

Global Report on Ageism

May 2021

Purpose

The purpose of this report is for the Positive Ageing Advisory Committee (CPAAC) to brief Council on the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Report on Ageism, including the global strategies and recommendations for action.

Ageing is a natural and lifelong process. From the day that we are born, to the day that we die, we are all ageing. Which ages are considered youthful or old, and the perceptions of these, all contribute to how segregating ageism can be across a lifetime.

Proudly Tasmania's first WHO Age Friendly City and Community, this report shows how council is tracking against these strategies and provides recommendations to council for future action.

Background

- In 2016 the World Health Assembly asked World Health Organisation (WHO) to lead a global campaign to combat ageism.
- WHO collaborated with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the United Nations Population Fund, to develop the Global Report on Ageism 2021.¹
- While COVID-19 has affected people of all ages, it has also amplified the attitudes and behaviours that existed prior to the pandemic i.e. older people being seen as uniformly frail and vulnerable, and younger people being seen as invincible, or as reckless and irresponsible.
- Ageism takes on different forms across the life course or lifetime:
 - Stereotyping = how we think
 - Prejudice = how we feel
 - Discrimination = how we act
- The vision in this report is a world for all ages, one in which age-based stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination do not limit our opportunities, health, wellbeing and dignity.
- We all have a role to play in preventing and responding to ageism. This report provides the evidence for stakeholders including governments, to help the WHO vision become a reality through concrete actions.

¹ <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/combating-ageism/global-report-on-ageism> ISBN 978-92-4-001686-6 (electronic version) ISBN 978-92-4-001687-3 (print version)

Why is combatting ageism so important?

- Age is one of the first things we notice about other people.
- Ageism arises when age is used to categorise and divide people in ways that lead to harm, disadvantage and injustice and erode solidarity across generations.
- Ageism starts early and is reinforced over time.
- Ageism damages our health and wellbeing and is a major barrier to enacting effective policies and taking action on healthy ageing. The impact is associated with:
 - shorter life span
 - poorer physical and mental health
 - slower recovery from disability and cognitive decline
 - reduction in quality of life and increase in social isolation and loneliness (both of which are associated with serious health problems)
 - restricts ability to express sexuality
 - may increase violence and abuse
 - contributes to poverty and financial insecurity
 - reduces younger people's commitment to the organisation they work for
 - costs society economically
- Ageism often intersects and interacts with other forms of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, including ableism, sexism and racism.

How big is the problem?

- Ageism pervades many institutions and sectors of society, including health and social care, the workplace, the media and the legal system. Some examples include:
 - Health care rationing on the basis of age is widespread.
 - Older adults tend to be excluded from research and data collection efforts.
 - Older and younger adults are often disadvantaged in the workplace.
 - People get angrier about crimes committed by younger offenders, rather than older, and see these crimes as more serious.
 - Ageism shapes how statistics and data, on which policies are based, are collected.
- Globally, one in two people are ageist and against older people.
- In Europe, the only region that collects data, one in three report having been the target of ageism, and younger people report more perceived age discrimination than other groups.

- Factors increasing the risk of being ageist against older people: being younger, male, anxious about death, less educated.
- Factors increasing the risk of being a target of ageism: being older, care dependant, having a lower life expectancy in your country and the types of work you do. A risk factor if you are a younger person is being female.
- Factors reducing the risk of being ageist against older and younger people: certain personality traits and more intergenerational contact.

WHO Strategies to reduce Ageism

- Policy and law – discrimination, inequality, human rights
- Educational interventions – empathy, misconceptions, prejudice
- Intergenerational contact interventions – most effective strategy is investment in interactions between the ages, in particular in reducing ageism against younger people.

WHO Recommendations for Action

- ✓ Invest in evidence based strategies to prevent and tackle ageism – priority given to the strategies above and scaled up.
- ✓ Improve data and research to gain a better understanding of ageism and how to reduce it.
- ✓ Build a movement to change the narrative around age and ageing.

How council is tracking

Clarence City Council has actively been working with the community since 2002 in planning for and addressing population ageing in Clarence. Council became Tasmania's first WHO Global Age Friendly City and Community (AFCC) in 2014, in recognition of the well-considered future planning for its ageing population. There are thirty five WHO Global AFCC's in Australia.

Council's third and current plan, *Age Friendly Clarence Plan 2018-2022*² builds on these collaborative achievements, adopting a life course approach to age inclusiveness from birth to death. Continuous improvement, including progress reports back to the World Health Organisation are in-built in council's measures of success.

During May, the Clarence Positive Ageing Advisory Committee (CPAAC), a Special Committee of Council consisting of residents and some service providers, met to discuss the WHO Global Report on Ageism. Discussion were about how the report reflected on

² <https://www.ccc.tas.gov.au/community/community-services/age-friendly-city/>

council's progress, and what more could be done within the strategic context of council's existing *Age Friendly Clarence Plan 2018-2022* strategies and actions.

A snapshot of council's achievements against the WHO global strategies, and opportunities for future council action based on the WHO recommendations is attached to this report (attachment 1).

The snapshot indicates that council has already achieved a considerable amount in helping to reduce discrimination and inequality. In summary:

- Council's long term support of an inclusive community governance practice has a proven track record of positive results (i.e. Special Committees of Council and Network Forums). This model allows younger and older adults of all ages and abilities to work together with council on policy, program development and implementation, benefiting the wider community and meeting the objectives of council's Strategic Plan.
- Strategic engagement with educational institutions, businesses and community groups has strengthened council's community of practice and demonstrated great outcomes. We have better partnerships and networks, increased capacity across council to plan and respond to age inclusiveness, and increased capacity amongst individuals and communities to contribute their expertise.
- The promotion of empathy toward people of all ages and abilities, including investing in intergenerational and other programs targeted at breaking down ageist barriers between and against older and younger people, is a key achievement.

Discussion

Across our lifetime, it is reasonable to expect that most of us will experience and spread ageist attitudes. How we think, feel and act all contribute to this, especially when age is one of the first things we notice about people.

To help prevent division that breaks down harmony across the generations, council is demonstrating consistent progress and achievements against the WHO strategies to reduce ageism. The WHO recommendations for action align with the opportunity's council has to continue to combat ageism.

Council is already committed to evidence based strategies, research and data collaborations, and working toward changing the narrative around age and ageing. Of importance, is council's investment in supporting a community governance model. The CPAAC is one example of how council is working effectively with residents and achieving results that are meaningful and impact positively on the social capital of the communities in Clarence.

Additionally, it is worthy to note council's learnings over the past 18 months through the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictions during this time resulted in a new way of working that were challenging but rewarding. While council is still in a COVID-19 state of response, we

have remained nimble in our responsiveness to managing the unknown, to ensure methods of communication, adaptations to and new programs are provided.

There is always more to be done, and council is in the perfect position to capitalise on the strong foundations that have been laid. On this basis, a number of recommendations have been put forward for council consideration.

Recommendations

1. Council endorses this paper and provides through the Mayor, a copy to the WHO Global Age Friendly Cities and Communities Network.
2. Council gives consideration to pledging at a council meeting to 'EveryAGE Counts', an advocacy campaign aimed at tackling ageism against older Australians. <https://www.everyagecounts.org.au/>
3. That the opportunities outlined in attachment 1 are prioritised for future council action against the *Strategic Plan 2021-2031*³, and embodied in future planning for the next *Age Friendly Clarence Plan 2023-2027*.

³ https://www.ccc.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/1639-CCC-Strategic-Plan-2021-V07_DIGITAL-VERSION.pdf

Attachment 1

Council's achievements against the WHO global strategies, and opportunities for future council action based on the WHO recommendations

WHO strategies	Council achievements	Opportunities
Policy and law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive/Age Friendly planning 2007-2022 • WHO AFCC status 2014 • Supported presentations at conferences and forums including International Federation of Ageing (IFA) Global Conference in Canada 2019 • Research partnerships UTAS/Wicking/QUT • Workplace legislation e.g. Anti-discrimination age in workplace, transition to retirement • Built environments and public open space – become more age and ability inclusive from a universal design perspective e.g. Access and Inclusion Toolkit • Supporting Federal and State resources to deliver the Clarence Community Volunteer Service (older adults and people with disabilities/chronic illness) and contributing council resources. • Universal Information – starting to develop inclusive and accessible information • Homelessness Project Stage 1 and 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide WHO this discussion paper/report • Re-focus next plan as <i>All Ages Clarence Plan 2023-2027</i> • Complete council's Indicators of Success project (UTAS), Social Inclusion and Child and Family Strategies • Ensure council's Workforce Development Plan includes vision on supporting all ages, all abilities – transition into and exiting the workplace • Ensure council's new Economic Development Plan incorporates the importance of council's Age Friendly City and Community status and what this stands for • Continue the conversations and advocacy for transport models that build on environment/public open space and adopt The Whole Journey continuous path of travel • Ensure the City Heart project supports council's life course approach to ageing well • Use the recommendations from Dr Peta Cook's Report 'Intergenerational needs and wants' UTAS • Build on LGAT and State Government partnerships – data/research • Housing models urban design – look to the future in housing models inclusive of younger and older people • Southern Regional Land Use Strategy (SRLUS) council has asked for a review of this – opportunity to look at the Planning Scheme, think

WHO strategies	Council achievements	Opportunities
		<p>outside the box on where housing goes and what types, to prevent urban sprawl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on recommendations and actions arising from Dr Lisa Stafford 'Planning Inclusive Communities' project QUT • Delivering the Inclusive Universal Information project for council • Future funding for the Clarence Community Volunteer Service is secured
Educational and Intergenerational interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting and facilitating council's CPAAC and YNAG volunteer ambassadors and Networks • Be Connected – digital literacy • aWake Before Death - end of life care • Our Shared Space program – Play Through the Ages/More Shared Stories Playback Theatre/intergenerational events • Food Connections Clarence - school/older community programs • Thursdays at Alma's programs – information and support including awareness and prevention of elder abuse • Graffiti reduction program including Piecing it Together project with COTA Tasmania • Aged Care Stigma/Ageism project (UTAS) • Community centres – more focus on all ages and abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater leveraging of council's WHO status • Consider Every Age Counts pledge • Develop an All Ages event bookended by Youth and Seniors Week • Build on UTAS project aged care and ageism and capitalise on connections with residential aged care facilities for further educational programs • Increasing dementia inclusivity • Seek to establish an annual World Elder Abuse Day activity in Clarence • Action the Safeguarding Volunteering in Clarence Strategy • Progress Alma's Activity Centre proposal • Continue to provide a focus on gentle exercise for all ages/abilities within individuals functional capacity • Neighbourhood watch – increase all ages opportunities • Aboriginal/First Nations and Migrant Elders – progressing community development programs and projects • Inclusive programs for older people with intellectual disability • Ensuring older adults and people with disability are adequately supported if experiencing homelessness

WHO strategies	Council achievements	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dementia Inclusive Cafes • Live Well. Live Long Program – health prevention • Increasing volunteering opportunities for younger people through the CCVS • Staying Stronger and Gentle Movement exercise classes in Rokeby and Risdon Vale – older adults/chronic illness • Fitness in the Park – predominately older adults • Awake Before Death – end of life care • All Ages Business project with COTA Tasmania • Get Going Guide – hard copy information on services available • Community gardens – i.e. Warrane Community Garden, Intergenerational Mosaic workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on place based project collaborations with community groups, organisations, and businesses • Work on recommendations that arise from the Aged Care Stigma/Ageism with UTAS

