Newsletter

SUMMER 2025

A Message from our CEO

As of 1 November, we've entered a new chapter in aged care with the introduction of the Support at Home program.

We've worked hard to make this change as smooth as possible. Inside this newsletter, you'll find more information about the program and how you can share feedback about your experience.

As we move into this new era, we're also saying farewell to Cherylin, Neighbourcare's dedicated, compassionate, and caring General Manager.

We thank Cherylin for her time. I know her dedication to caring for the Dungog community has left a profound impact.

Thank you,

John Baillie **CEO**
Dungog & District Neighbourcare, part of ADSSI Limited

A Message from Cherylin

How do you say goodbye?

It is with a mix of emotions, gratitude, pride, and excitement for what comes next, that I share my farewell. My time with Dungog Neighbourcare has been an immensely rewarding season of my life, one I will always treasure as I retire at the end of this year.

I have deeply valued the respect and compassion our staff show, not only within our team but also in supporting local people to remain living at home as safely and comfortably as possible. I will never forget witnessing how our services connect with and strengthen our small, close-knit community.

Working with people toward one purpose and one goal can be challenging at times, but those challenges are far outweighed by the meaningful changes achieved when individuals allow us to walk beside them on their life's journey, often during moments of vulnerability, transition, or profound significance.

Thank you to everyone who has chosen Neighbourcare services, and thank you to every member of our dedicated staff for making this such a special place to work. I look forward to watching you all continue this vital work in our community.

With kind regards,

Cherylin Brown **General Manager**

DUNGOG & DISTRICT Neighbourcare
Part of ADSSI Limited

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Keep up to date with our news & services via email

SCAN ME!

neighbourcare.org.au/email

Beat the Heat!

Hot weather can cause **serious health problems** and some people in our community are at greater risk than others.

The people most at risk are:

- over the age of 75,
- overweight or obese,
- not very mobile,
- not drinking enough water,
- living by themselves or homeless,
- living with a chronic illness,
- living with an acute illness,
- taking medications that impact how they experience warm weather.

If you fall into one of the categories above, it's important to **speak to your GP** about how you can best be supported in the heat.

You can also **let our team know** - and we'll support you with the best advice.

How to protect your health in hot weather

- ☑ Stay **hydrated**. Refer to the urine colour chart for a guide. Your GP can also provide advice on recommended fluid intake.
- ☑ Wear **light, lose-fitting clothing**.
- ☑ Do household chores or outside activities **in the morning**.
- ☑ Use your pre-prepared **cool packs**, and **sit in the coolest room** of the house doing **something light** like watching TV, knitting or reading.
- ☑ **Avoid cooking** on the stove or oven.

For more information visit:
health.nsw.gov.au/environment/beattheheat

A note on prescription medications

Many **prescribed medications** can make the risk of heat-related illness worse. Also, medications can become **less effective** or occasionally more toxic **when stored in the heat**. Discuss with your pharmacist and GP if you're unsure.

How to prepare for hot weather

- ☑ Check that your **fridge, freezer, fan** and **air-conditione**r work properly and that the air-conditioner is set to cool.
- ☑ Locate the **coolest room** in your home, usually east or south facing.
- ☑ Have a plan to **stock up on food** before the hot weather comes to avoid having to go out.
- ☑ Put **cool packs** in the fridge or freezer.
- ☑ Check your **emergency kit** in case of power failure. This may include a torch, batteries, candles, matches and a battery-operated radio.
- ☑ If you live near bushland, consider your **Bush fire survival plan**. Call the NSW Rural Fire Service on 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737) for more information.

Neighbourcare News

SUMMER | 2025

Bottled Water now in Vehicles

All Neighbourcare vehicles will now be stocked with **bottled water in cool bags** for your convenience. Please don't hesitate to **ask your driver** if you require water, especially during the warm summer months.

Meals on Wheels Reminder

Due to food safety regulations, we are not permitted to leave your meal in an esky or cooler unattended at your premises.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you can't be home to accept the delivery so we can make other arrangements.

Services on Public Holidays

On public holidays, our office will be closed with only essential services taking place.

These dates are:

December

January

Domestic Assistance (DA) services are **not provided** on public holidays. If you would like to reschedule a DA service that falls on a public holiday, please speak with your care team. We'll gladly accommodate your service at a later date.

We'd also appreciate you informing us as soon as possible of any changes to your schedule over the festive period.

New Logos on Our Cars

As well as providing services to you as Dungog & District Neighbourcare our parent company, ADSSI Limited, operates as three other well-known local brands across the Hunter and Central Coast.

Over time, we'll be transitioning the **logos and branding** on our **company cars** to reflect all 4 locations. A single design allows us to use our vehicles across regions, **saving costs** and ensuring our resources are put where they are needed most, into providing **high-quality home care** to you.

There will be **no change** to the services you receive, it is only about the way our vehicles look.

Electronic Statements and Billing

We're exploring ways to improve the efficiency of distributing statements and invoices.

If you or a family member has an email address where your statements can be sent, please contact our office, and we can arrange this for you.

If you haven't set up **Direct Debit** and would like your accounts to be automatically deducted when due, please let us know and we'll send you a form.

Thank you for helping us streamline our processes and reduce paper use!

Registered Supporters

A new part of the Act includes a way to choose people you **trust** to help you make and communicate aged care decisions, these people are known as **'registered supporters'.**

Registered Supporters may help you by supporting your daily aged care decisions, and helping you **access**, **understand** and **communicate** information with people like My Aged Care, assessors, and aged care providers.

You are in control, and you can end a registered supporter relationship **at any time.**

Aged Care

Support at Home is the Australian Government's new program for in-home aged care and is part of the new Aged Care Act 2024. It replaces the Home Care Packages (HCP) program and brings all services together under one **simpler**, more **consistent** system.

There are different (and increased) levels of funding available, including special pathways for **Assistive Technology and Home Modifications** (AT-HM) and **End-of-Life** (EOL). If your needs have changed, you may benefit from a reassessment through My Aged Care.

If you are receiving Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) supports

If you currently receive services under the CHSP, nothing has changed yet. CHSP clients will not move to Support at Home until July 2027.

Feedback and Complaints

We want you to feel **safe**, **respected** and **listened to**.

In line with the Statement of Rights, we **welcome** feedback in the form of **compliments**, **suggestions** and **complaints** at any time.

We'll acknowledge your complaint within **two business days** and aim to resolve it within **ten**. If it takes longer, we'll explain why and keep you updated. You'll never be treated unfairly or lose services for speaking up. Serious matters may be referred to the regulator, and all complaints are handled **confidentially**, **fairly**, and **promptly** to achieve the best outcome for you.

There are many ways you can contact us:

- **Talk directly** to our staff providing services.
- **Phone us**.
- **Post us** a letter to your local office.
- **Drop in** at our office during business hours.
- **Leave a message** using the contact form on our website.

While would always prefer to resolve your complaint directly, you can also make a complaint to the **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission** by visiting agedcarequality.gov.au or calling 1800 951 822.

Reforms

You can request a new assessment at any time by calling My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.

A reassessment can help ensure you're receiving the right level of support now and may open the door to additional or more tailored services.

If you need assistance, our team is **here to help** you with this process.

If you were receiving a Home Care Package (HCP)

If you were previously on a HCP, you have now automatically moved to Support at Home. Your services will continue, and there is nothing you need to do. We've worked hard behind the scenes to make your transition as smooth as possible, and your care team remains the same.

DUNGOG & DISTRICT
Neighbourcare

(02) 4992 3348
62 Hospital Road
Dungog NSW 2420

info@neighbourcare.org.au

You can receive support to provide feedback. This could be from a Registered Supporter or an independent advocacy agency such as the **Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN**) by visiting opan.org.au or calling 1800 700 600.

Statement of Rights

The Act includes a new **Statement of Rights**, setting out how older people should be treated when receiving government-funded care.

It places older Australians at the **centre of care**, ensuring they are treated with **dignity**, **fairness** and **respect**, and have genuine **choice** and **control** in decision making.

If you are receiving services, you have the right to:

Independence, choice and control
To make your own decisions about the care and services you use, how and when you receive them, and who provides them. You also have the right to support in making these decisions if you need it.

Fair access
To a fair and accurate assessment that respects your culture, background, and life experiences, and to receive the care you need, when you need it - including end-of-life care.

Safety and quality
To access safe, high-quality care from trained and qualified workers and providers who meet legal standards, and to be free from abuse, neglect, and discrimination.

Privacy and information
To have your personal information kept safe and private, and to access clear information about your care, costs, and rights.

Communication that meets your needs
To get information in a way you can understand, use your preferred language or communication method, and provide feedback at any time.

Support to raise issues
To speak up, make complaints, and receive a fair and timely response without fear of punishment.

Connection with others
To stay connected with your family, friends, community, pets, culture, and Country.

Have Your Say - Join our Consumer Advisory Committee

With the Government changing the way aged care operates, your **input** and **insights** are **more important than ever**.

We're inviting clients and carers to join our **Consumer Advisory Committee** – a group that helps shape the way we deliver services across ADSSI. By sharing your **experiences** and **ideas**, you'll play a key role in helping us continue to provide **safe, high-quality care** that truly meets the needs of our community.

As a member, you'll:

- Provide feedback on the care and services you receive.
- Help inform ADSSI's planning and service delivery decisions.
- Be part of discussions that drive real improvement across our organisation.

Meetings are held around three times a year (mostly online), and support such as transport or technology access can be arranged if needed.

Interested? Let us know by filling out a short application form.

Expanded Eligibility for Veterans'

Are you a **veteran**, a family member of a veteran, or know someone who is? Eligibility rules for support have recently changed so it's worth checking to see if you are now entitled to **additional services** from the **Department of Veterans' Affairs**.

For more information, call the DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

Farewell to Volunteer Peter Smee

In September, we bid farewell to longstanding volunteer driver, **Peter Smee**. Peter has been volunteering with Neighbourcare for **10 years**, transporting our clients around the area.

We sincerely thank Peter for his dedication and service, and we wish him all the very best for the future.

Get to know the Neighbourcare team

Louise

What is your role?
Support worker.

How long have you worked here for?
16 years!

What keeps you motivated?
My clients.

What are your greatest strengths?
Compassion, empathy.

If you could visit anywhere, where would you go?
Tasmania.

Describe your perfect day.
Sleeping in and no ironing.

Debra

What is your role?
Transport Coordinator and WHS Officer.

How long have you worked here for?
30 years!

What are your greatest strengths?
Patience, organisational skills.

What keeps you motivated?
My passion for being able to get clients to appointments and shopping, and ensure they are safe.

If you could visit anywhere, where would you go?
Switzerland.

Describe your perfect day.
Being around family/grandkids.

Managing a Busy Festive Season at Home

🥗 **Eat Well and Hydrate**
Festive foods are delicious but can be rich and salty. Balance treats with nutritious meals, fruits, and plenty of water. Avoid skipping meals to "save room" for big dinners.

💬 **Stay Connected**
If you live alone or family is far away, plan phone or video calls, or attend local community events. Staying socially connected can lift your mood and reduce feelings of isolation.

💤 **Prioritise Rest and Recovery**
Busy social calendars can be tiring. Schedule quiet days between events.
Listen to your body — it's okay to say no to some invitations!

Festive Recipes

Classic Prawn Cocktail

No Australian festive celebration is complete without prawns, and while trends come and go, some things never go out of fashion, like a fabulous prawn cocktail.

Ingredients – Makes 4

- A good helping of fresh cooked peeled prawns. About 400g
- 2 cups of lettuce, sliced
- Lemon, cut into thin wedges

Sauce

- 2/3 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp tomato sauce
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp jarred horseradish
- ¼ tsp tabasco sauce

Instructions

Mix sauce and cover prawns. Place lettuce in bowl or glass, top with prawns, garnish with lemon.

Easy Cookie Mix in a Jar

If your family or friends love cookies but there will already be an abundance of sweets over the holidays, give them the gift of cookies when it's convenient with a cookie mix in a jar!

All they'll have to do is mix with 1 large egg and 125g of butter before placing in a preheated oven for 10 minutes at 170°C.

Ingredients – Makes 18, fits in a 1L jar

- 2/3 cup sugar (any will do)
- ¾ cup plain flour
- ¾ tsp baking powder (omit if using self-raising flour)
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup quick oats
- 1 cup dried fruit (cranberries, blueberries, currants, raspberries)
- 1 cup chocolate chips

Summer Crossword

ACROSS

3. Garden waterer.

7. Jolly swagman's shade tree.

10. Sunburn soother.

11. Frozen summer treat.

12. Christmas seafood favourite.

DOWN

1. Wind-shaped sand hill.

3. Evening outdoor pest.

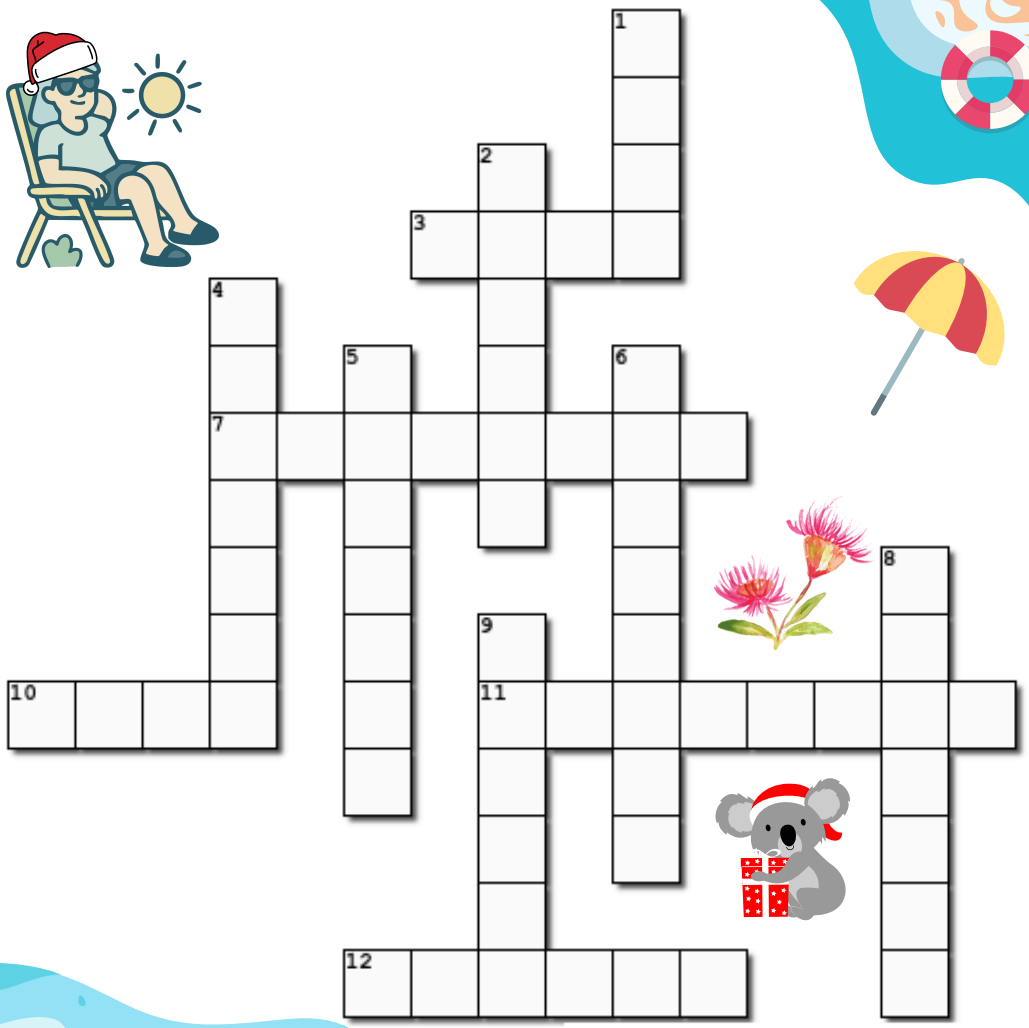
4. Air rotating around low pressure.

5. Six white kangaroos.

6. Swim shirt for sun safety.

8. Picnic cloth.

9. Summer insect singer.



Important contacts

• **My Aged Care**	**1800 200 422**	**myagedcare.gov.au**
• **Carer Gateway**	**1800 422 737**	**carergateway.gov.au**
• **The Older Persons Advocacy Network**	**1800 700 600**	**opan.org.au**
• **Seniors Rights Service**	**1800 424 079**	**seniorsrightsservice.org.au**
• **NSW Ageing & Disability Abuse Helpline**	**1800 628 221**	
• **1800 ELDERHelp (Elder Abuse)**	**1800 353 374**	
• **Beyond Blue**	**1300 224 636**	**beyondblue.org.au**
• **Lifeline**	**13 11 14**	**lifeline.org.au**
• **Mental Health Line**	**1800 011 511**	**health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth**

ADSSI Limited T/A Dungog & District Neighbourcare

62 Hospital Road, Dungog NSW 2420

@ info@neighbourcare.org.au neigbourcare.org.au (02) 4992 3348

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we operate. We pay our respects to the Elders, past, present and future, and recognise their continuing connection and contribution to this land. We extend that respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we provide our services to, including their carers, families and all who support their care.

We affirm the right to equity, respect and fairness for all people.