



Newsletter
March 2026

AT YOUR SERVICE
HOME CARE
HOME CARE DONE RIGHT



CENTENARIAN PORTRAIT PROJECT



WHAT'S INSIDE

- EMERGENCY MEDICAL ID PRODUCTS
- CAN MY FUNDING PAY FOR PET CARE?
- AFTER-HOURS DOCTORS
- GETTING A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Embraced Centenarian Portrait Project by Teenagers

If you haven't heard about the Centenarian Portrait Project, you're in for a treat!

It's the nation's most significant intergenerational arts initiative, where teenage artists across every state and territory in Australia teamed up with centenarians to paint their portraits.

Connecting 465 one hundred-year-olds with 465 teenage artists to paint their portraits was no easy feat! But this heartwarming intergenerational initiative by Embraced, brought together members of the community who might otherwise never have cross paths — breaking down loneliness, smashing stereotypes, and challenging negative perceptions of ageing.

The pairs were supported to get to know one another over a number of months, with artists undertaking a unique artistic and social journey with their centenarian sitter. Not only did they learn history first hand, but they also developed empathy while sharing a little of their lives with each other. At the end of the initiative, each artist then gifted their final portrait to their centenarian subject, much to their delight!

And after 7 years on the road, a collection of 100 portraits were selected to have their artwork displayed in a gallery for one final exhibition, showcasing the students work and celebrating the friendships they formed along the way.

If you'd like to see the highlights of **100 Canberra: The National Exhibition**, featuring 100 portraits of 100+ year olds, simply click the link below:

<https://www.embraced.com.au/100-canberra-virtual-exhibition>

We hope this project celebrating our nation's most senior citizens inspires you to deepen your own intergenerational connections. 😊



Laura Hunt by
artist Charlotte Frencken

Being Shingle minded!

You may have seen the TV campaign to alert people to the risk of developing Shingles, but did you know that people over 60 years of age are up to 10 times more likely to get Shingles than younger people?

Anyone who has ever had chicken pox already carries the inactive virus that can activate at any time to cause Shingles, which means almost all of our participants are potentially at risk of developing this very painful condition.

Most commonly appearing on the chest and abdomen, it can also develop on the torso, arms, thighs, or head (including in the eyes or ears).

Common symptoms of Shingles may include:

- Localised pain; a burning, tingling, or itching sensation
- Fever, chills, headache and fatigue
- A stabbing sensation; sensitivity to touch
- Followed by a painful rash that may develop into blisters lasting for 10-15 days.

Shingles can be very debilitating and can interfere with everyday activities like getting dressed, walking, and sleeping for a significant period of time, not to mention the continual nerve pain around the rash site.

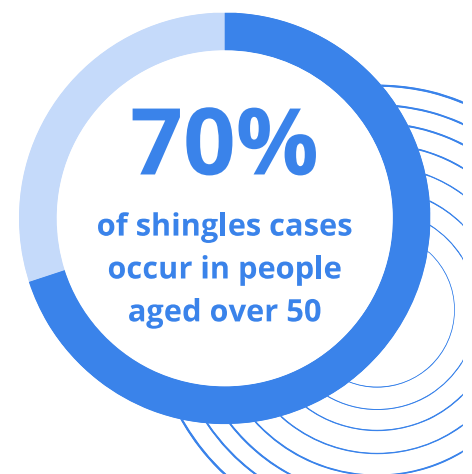
While there is no cure for Shingles, there are anti-viral medications which can be prescribed at the first sign of a Shingles rash - so acting quickly if you experience any of these symptoms may help reduce the severity of the virus.

We encourage you to speak to your GP about your Shingles risk and preventative vaccines to potentially avoid having to experience the pain and discomfort of the virus.

You can use your funding to help you get to and from medical appointments, so please call us to arrange some assistance and to ensure you have the correct service approvals for transport in place.

Learn more at:

<https://www.knowshingles.com.au/>



Did you know that after-hours home visiting doctors can be bulked billed?

If you ever need urgent, non life-threatening medical care in the wee hours of the night, or a weekend or public holiday when your normal GP is closed, it's helpful to know there are options available.

While your regular GP or family doctor should always be your first port of call, sometimes things can't wait until your regular clinic opens.

Not only are after-hours home visiting doctors a convenient alternative to the lengthy wait times at hospital emergency wards, they also provide a much less stressful experience for people living with dementia.

Most doctors also carry small amounts of common medications, so in many cases you can start treatment immediately while waiting for an appointment with your usual GP.

While home visiting doctors offer a convenient service from the comfort of your own home, it's important to know that depending on their patient schedule and travel time, it could still take several hours before they arrive.

Although we don't endorse any specific service, here are a couple of examples of organisations that offer after-hours, bulk billing, home visiting services:

<https://13sick.com.au/>

<https://www.13cure.com.au/>

(Covers many regional areas in NSW and QLD)

Please let us know if we can assist you with locating an after-hours service ahead of time, so that you'll have peace of mind should the need arise.



Emergency medical ID products

When an emergency medical situation occurs, being able to communicate the details of any pre-existing medical conditions, including allergies and medications is vital.

While providing this information to first responders can enable them to speed up life-saving treatment, the nature of an emergency may not always make it possible to be able to communicate clearly.

This is where a medical ID can help.

A medical ID can take the guesswork out and speak for you in situations where a sudden injury, illness or traumatic situation may prevent you from being able to communicate.

Available in a range of products, here are just some of the options:

- Wrist bands and watch bands
- Necklaces, bracelets, charms and key-rings
- Wallet cards, stickers and mobile phone pockets

<https://www.emergencyid.com.au/>

All orders come with complimentary engraving and also include a free online MyID profile.

MyID is a comprehensive medical ID solution that provides an easy way to store your medical history, including any doctors and specialist details and the contact details of anyone you'd like to be notified in an emergency.

These products come with a scannable QR code and PIN number that is unique to you and can be accessed by medical staff 24/7.

<https://www.emergencyid.com.au/product-category/myid/>

Seniors card holders receive a 20% discount by using this code:

SENIORSCARD



What is an Assistance dog?

Whilst dogs can bring us joy, unconditional love and emotional support, there is a distinct difference between animal companionship and specialised assistance animals. [Assistance Dogs Australia](#) helps us understand how each of these dogs can support and assist us in our daily lives.



Assistance Dogs

Highly trained and registered dogs, wearing the recognisable 'blue vest', help people who are living with physical disability, autism or Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). They have advanced skills, and special public access rights, to support their owner to engage in activities that may otherwise be too difficult or challenging.



Companion Dogs

A dog who began training for life as an Assistance Dog but for one reason or another was released from the program before graduating and they are better suited to life as a pet. They still have plenty of love to give and can still assist in providing structure and routine for their owners.



Therapy Dogs

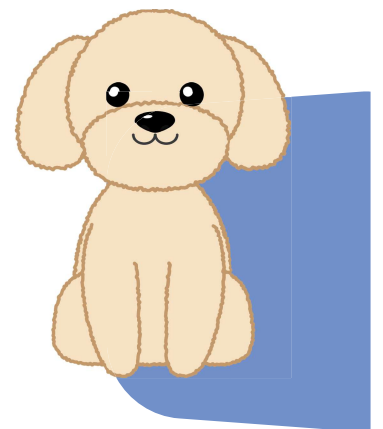
These dogs are trained under professional guidance to provide comfort and support to people who are feeling anxious, sad or socially isolated. The dogs and their handlers often visit people living in residential aged care or they can be booked to visit people in private homes as well.



Emotional Support Dogs

In essence, this describes any dog that makes us feel better just by being there. They are often wonderful, loyal and long-term companions that give a sense of joy, security and love to their owners, but they are not recognised by law as specialised assistance dogs.

In some circumstances, support with ongoing maintenance for specialised assistance animals may be approved as part of the AT-HM Scheme. The funding, once approved, is capped at \$2,000 p.a. and will be automatically allocated each year.



Can my funding pay for: Pet Care

Owning a pet can be a rewarding and delightful part of our lives, and many of us consider our pets to be like family because of the comfort, security and love they bring to us.

We understand that pet ownership, whilst generally joyful, can also be costly and we know that the rising costs of pet food, vet bills, boarding, dog-walking and grooming can put a strain on the finances of many of our participants. Some participants have asked whether their Support at Home budget can be used to assist with the ongoing care and maintenance of their beloved pets.

The Department of Health, Disability & Ageing provide some guidance about this matter which helps us to be consistent with the message we give when this question arises.

To make the correct decision, we must first determine whether the pet is a trained and registered assistance animal, or a companion animal. Support with training and ongoing maintenance of **registered assistance animals** may be considered an appropriate use of Support at Home funding, provided this support is not funded or partly funded through other government programs.

The Support at Home Program Manual is very specific about pet care responsibilities, and confirms that pet care is out-of-scope for funding because these costs are expected to be covered by a person's general income throughout their life, regardless of age.

We understand that this may cause stress or disappointment for some of our participants, but we hope this information provides some clarity around how spending decisions are made with regard to pet care activities and expenses.



‘How’s It Going?’

A new checklist for your health

We often talk with our participants about different ways to enhance their health and well-being, as well as how professionals can collaborate with us to identify the most effective strategies.

Maintaining independence, living a safe and comfortable life, and making personal decisions are top priorities for our participants and their supporters. So, we are pleased to share a new checklist from the ELDAC team, which focuses on assessing how you are managing different aspects of your daily life.

Allied health practitioners, such as physiotherapists, speech pathologists, dietitians, and occupational therapists, play a significant role in supporting Support at Home participants, and we work closely with them to ensure that their insights and recommendations align with government guidelines on approved Support at Home spending.

The checklist includes several questions across different allied health areas and helps identify potential health or functional concerns, or ‘red flags,’ where an allied health team member can offer strategies to improve your quality of life.

You can go through these questions on your own or include a family member, friend, support worker or care partner in the process so you can consider things from a range of viewpoints.

Based on your responses, we will update your care plan and ensure you have the necessary funding approvals and budget in place to access assessments, recommended services, equipment and modifications to meet your needs.

If you would like a copy of the ‘How’s It Going?’ checklist sent to you, please call us, or you can download it here:

<https://www.eldac.com.au/Toolkits/Allied-Health/Practising-in-Aged-Care>



Getting a good night's sleep

A good night's sleep is something most of us strive for every time we close our eyes at the end of the day, but the reality for most older people is that sleep is often interrupted and unpredictable, which can interfere with their daily activities and reduce quality of life.

Our internal body clock is sensitive to changes in our body, so hormonal changes and the onset of some medical conditions can make it harder to regulate and control our sleep. Common mental and physical health conditions such as depression, anxiety, diabetes, conditions causing pain (i.e. arthritis), and certain medications can contribute to poor sleep outcomes for many older people. Check out these facts from the [Sleep Health Foundation](#) below:

- Up to 70% of older people have chronic sleep issues
- Most people over the age of 80 nap for more than one hour each day
- Most wake frequently and spend less time in deep, refreshing sleep
- 25% of older people have sleep apnoea or limb movement disorders, which also disturb their partner

Creating healthy habits and a safe sleep environment are important ways to improve sleep and reduce the risk of trips and falls overnight.

Creating everyday habits	Creating a safe sleep environment
Spend time outdoors in the daylight every day	Remove trip hazards and create a clear path from your bed to the door
Take a walk or get some light exercise	Keep a phone by your bed
Create a sleep routine and avoid long naps late in the day	Use a wearable personal alarm device
Avoid (or manage your intake of) substances that may affect sleep, i.e. alcohol, caffeine, tobacco, long-term use of sleeping tablets	Install motion sensor lights in the hall or bathroom

If you are having difficulty with sleeping or need help to create a safe overnight environment, please get in touch with us so we can help to arrange relevant assessments, products or services to assist you.

Food allergies & safe labelling

Food allergies and food intolerances can have a significant impact on a person's life, as they need to be constantly mindful of what they eat or drink. There are new food labelling laws in Australia called Plain English Allergen Labelling (PEAL), requiring food producers to use plain and simple language to describe each ingredient and ensure all allergens can be easily identified.

In Australia, by law under the Food Standards Code, food packaging must display these most common food allergens: Peanut; tree nuts - almonds, cashews; egg; cow's milk (this includes all dairy foods); fish; crustacea (e.g. prawns, lobster); sesame seeds; soy/soybeans; cereals containing gluten and their products, namely, wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt and their hybridised strains (e.g. triticale); and lupin.

All food suppliers must show food allergen information on food labels using this format:

Statement of Ingredients

Summary Statement

Ingredients:
Water, vegetable oil, vinegar, sugar, tomato paste, capsicum, salt, **egg** yolk, thickener (1412), **almonds**, parmesan cheese (**milk**), garlic, **wheat** flour, flavour (**wheat** maltodextrin, **sesame** oil), antioxidant (320).

Contains: egg, almond, milk, wheat, gluten, sesame.

Source: 2021 Food Industry Guide to Allergen Management and Labelling for Australia and New Zealand

If you order home-delivered meals, it's important to communicate your food allergies and food intolerances clearly, to ensure they prepare your food safely.

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia have created **Food Allergen Reference Cards** that can be printed and shared with your support workers, especially if we're helping to shop for groceries or prepare meals for you in your home. Just let us know how we can help.

You can check out the cards here:

<https://allergyfacts.org.au/food-allergens/>





5-IN-1 LEAK & ODOUR PROTECTION

NEW



DESCRIPTION

DEPEND® Shields

DEPEND® Guards Level 2

DEPEND® Guards Level 3

ABSORBENCY

90ml

535ml

650ml

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FOR YOUR
FREE SAMPLE



Using your Support at Home funding after a natural disaster

Many parts of Australia are in the midst of sustained major weather events, with widespread heavy rain causing flooding in the north and bushfires raging across many other parts of the country. We will do our best to continue your ongoing services and to support you if you are affected, noting there may be unavoidable circumstances that interrupt your care and services, and many staff members will also be impacted by these events.

Experiencing flood water, fire, or smoke damage in your home can be a very stressful and difficult event, and there may be ways your Support at Home funding or other Government programs can assist you. Some costs may potentially be covered by your quarterly budget, but please always check with us *before* you make any purchases you intend to claim back:

- Light domestic cleaning by a Support Worker (excluding specialist cleaners)
- Minor or basic home maintenance (excluding major disaster recovery, high-risk or structural repairs)
- Replacing or repairing aids, modifications and equipment to the home
- Short-term hire of ageing-related appliances
- Transportation and/or accommodation costs in emergencies, if it ensures continuity of care (where no other options are available)

Please note: Insurance premiums, excess payments and replacement of regular household appliances **are excluded**.

Your ongoing quarterly budget or unspent funds can only be used to help you recover and clean up your home (as above) in a flood-affected or fire-affected area if the costs are not already covered by insurance and/or provided by your State government emergency management services, or if they could be funded under the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment (AGDRP).

Please also check your local and State government relief programs for financial and other assistance. You can call us for help to access these services or to discuss how your quarterly budget can assist. For information about Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments, please visit the following link:

www.nema.gov.au/our-work/disaster-recovery/disaster-recovery-payments

⋮ Couples with different Support at Home funding classifications

Couples with different care needs receive separate assessments, classifications, and funding under the Support at Home program, allowing each individual to receive tailored care and services. This may require some careful planning and management if one person in the couple is grandfathered from the old Home Care Packages program and the other person is not.

In this situation, the newer participant may be required to make out-of-pocket contributions, but their grandfathered participant partner does not. It may be prudent that shared services such as domestic assistance, and home and garden maintenance are allocated to the package held by the grandfathered participant in the couple, as these are the services that would otherwise attract the highest co-contributions from newer Support at Home participants.

Similarly, one person may have access to previously accumulated unspent HCP funds, and the newer participant may not. Using unspent HCP funds does not attract a contribution for any participant, so this is another option that can be explored before accessing services and supports that require a co-payment.

There will be some obvious limitations to where this type of pooling of services can apply, so care partners will work closely with the couple to plan the most suitable and acceptable arrangements, taking each person's individual needs, approvals and access to funding into account.

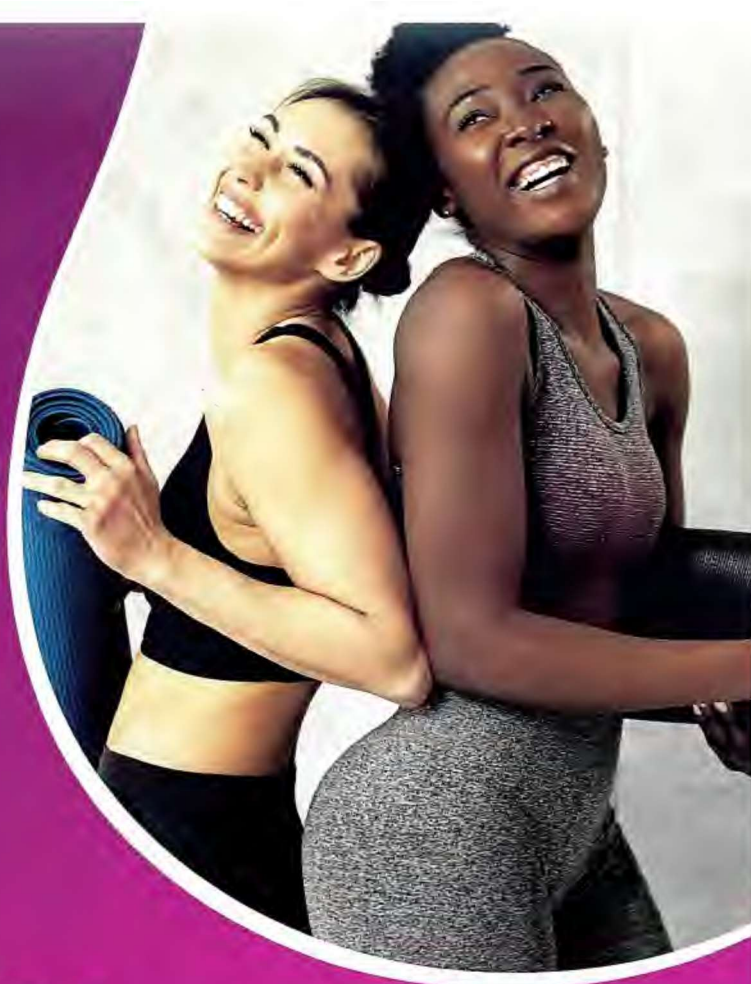


NEW



POISE®

LiveFree™



WEAK BLADDER? TRY OUR NEW ULTRATHIN PADS

5X Drier than Leading Period Pads

12 Up to 12 hour odour protection

 Unique **INSTA ABSORB™** Zone

 **Anti-Leak** Guards

 Available in **Wings** and **No Wings**

POISE® LiveFree™
Regular Pad 14 no wings
Absorbency: **110ml***
Length: **240mm**

POISE® LiveFree™
Regular Pad 14 with wings
Absorbency: **110ml***
Length: **240mm**

POISE® LiveFree™
Super Pad 12 no wings
Absorbency: **150ml***
Length: **280mm**

POISE® LiveFree™
Super Pad 12 with wings
Absorbency: **150ml***
Length: **280mm**



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Free online events for carers!



March 25th - Carer Gateway services and supports

An overview of the tailored supports and services available to carers, including counselling, planned and emergency respite, access to carer directed packages and in person peer support. [Learn more >](#)

March 26th - The importance of planning ahead for the future

Planning for the future can be challenging for carers, many of whom avoid thinking about future needs for themselves and the person they care for, until they are facing a crisis. This session provides an overview of the legal, medical and financial considerations in planning for the future, as well as a free handbook with helpful tools and resources. [Learn more >](#)

April 7th - Dementia Australia - Understanding changes in behaviour

This informative session will provide an introduction to dementia and changes to the brain, as well as the impacts of changed behaviour. It will introduce problem solving models, including strategies to minimise and respond to changes in behaviour. [Learn more >](#)

April 9th - Creating a dementia friendly home

This event provides information about dementia and the likely impact of the symptoms on a person's perception of, and ability to successfully navigate their home environment. [Learn more >](#)

April 16th - Practical relaxation techniques for carers

If you've been feeling overwhelmed and could benefit from some well deserved 'me time', this interactive workshop will provide you with practical relaxation techniques to help you manage stress and restore balance. [Learn more >](#)

****Need help getting online? The Good Things Foundation can help:**

<https://goodthingsaustralia.org/learn/>

Word Search:

Aged Care Council of Elders

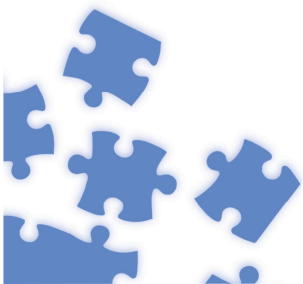
J	W	K	Q	X	H	C	B	J	R	Q	E	U	F
R	A	R	A	E	Z	X	C	X	X	C	Q	J	A
W	H	E	G	C	N	I	Y	S	N	E	C	S	C
L	I	F	E	H	U	D	Z	E	A	L	B	H	C
A	A	O	D	U	Y	L	U	T	V	D	W	A	H
I	D	R	B	J	W	L	T	R	C	E	L	R	G
N	V	M	E	B	F	C	C	U	C	R	D	T	K
C	O	S	L	N	N	O	U	A	R	P	B	W	B
L	C	L	I	O	O	U	P	L	R	A	F	J	G
U	A	W	Q	N	E	N	W	D	R	E	L	D	D
S	T	E	X	L	S	C	N	R	I	G	H	T	S
I	E	L	X	J	R	I	O	Y	F	A	S	I	M
V	H	L	L	L	L	L	Z	X	B	K	Z	T	K
E	P	H	C	H	O	F	I	O	L	D	E	R	K

Find the 12 hidden words by searching for only the words in bold

•**Council** of Elders •quality of **care** •ageing **well** •navigating My **Aged** Care
•**older** Australians •**influence** on government •**advocate** •**cultural** diversity
•**rights** and dignity •**elder** abuse •**inclusive** •aged care **reforms**

Connect with the Council of Elders:

www.facebook.com/groups/agedcarecouncilofelders/





Your presence
made our
Valentine's
celebration even
sweeter

We're lucky to
have shared this
special day with
you



We're grateful you
shared your heart
and time with us.



Valentines Day

Tuesday 10th February, 2026



You made our
hearts full just
by being here

Your smile was
the sweetest
Valentine's gift

Thanks for being
part of our love-
filled celebration

AGENDA

APRIL | 26

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Check out the events this month:

1

April Fools Day

3

PUBLIC HOLIDAY: Good Friday

5

Easter Sunday

6

PUBLIC HOLIDAY: Easter Monday

23

EVENT: Movie Time



ayshomecare.com.au



@atyourservicehc

AGENDA

MAY | 26

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Check out the events this month:

1 international Workers' Day

7 EVENT: Mothers Day High Tea & Biggest Morning Tea

10 Mother's Day



ayshomecare.com.au



@atyourservicehc



MOVIE DAY OUT



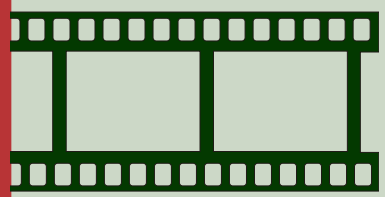
A CURATED DAY OF CONNECTION, DINING, AND A COMFORTABLE
CINEMA OUTING, COMPLETE WITH UNLIMITED SNACKS AND THE
SUPPORT OF OUR TEAM THROUGHOUT.



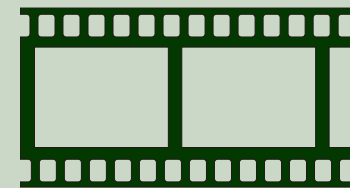
THURSDAY 23RD APRIL
RSVP TO CASE MANAGER

Hoyts | Watergardens
399 Melton Hwy, Melbourne Victoria 3038





MOVIE DAY OUT



✦ This all-inclusive day out features a quality meal, tea or coffee, unlimited cinema snacks, and the warmth of sharing the experience with other seniors in a supported group setting. A relaxed, enjoyable outing from start to finish.

Tickets are \$115. Plus-one companions may join for \$50 cash.

✦ Please RSVP at your earliest convenience so we can choose a film that everyone will enjoy together

THURSDAY 23RD APRIL

RSVP TO CASE MANAGER

Hoyts | Watergardens

399 Melton Hwy, Melbourne Victoria 3038



Friendly Digital Support for Everyday Life

We offer gentle, one-on-one help with everyday technology so you can stay connected, informed, and independent



- Using smartphones and tablets
- Sending emails and messages
- Video calls with family
- Online shopping and banking safety
- Setting up MyGov, Medicare, or My Aged Care
- Understanding apps (photos, maps, reminders, etc.)
- Password support and safe browsing
- Connecting to Wi-Fi and managing devices

**Enquire to your
Care Manager**



1300 952 860

The invitation card features a white oval center with a thin gold border. This oval is set against a background of a repeating gold-colored leaf pattern. Large, stylized gold flowers are positioned at the top, bottom, and right edges of the oval. The text is centered within the oval in a gold, serif font.

YOU ARE INVITED TO
THE GOLDEN PEN PALS

Golden Pen Pals

Engage in a fun, safe
and supportive
community with fellow
seniors

Simply sign up, and we'll
match you with a friendly
phone penpal. Connect once a
week or as often as you
would like for fun
meaningful conversations.

Contact your Care
Partner today



NOW WITH UP TO 12-HOUR LEAK & ODOUR PROTECTION



	DESCRIPTION	SIZE	WAIST SIZE	ABSORBENCY
Womens	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Underwear	Medium	71-102cm	920ml
	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Underwear	Large	97-162cm	920ml
	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Underwear	X-Large	122-162cm	920ml
	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Underwear Super	Medium	71-102cm	1320ml
	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Underwear Super	Large	97-162cm	1320ml
	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Underwear Super	X-Large	122-162cm	1320ml
	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Night Defence Underwear	Large	97-162cm	1350ml
Mens	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Underwear	Medium	71-102cm	1320ml
	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Underwear	Large	97-162cm	1320ml
	DEPEND® REAL FIT® Night Defence Underwear	Large	97-162cm	1350ml

NEW LOOK, EVEN BETTER PROTECTION

*Up to 12 hours.

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HAPPY WITH
OUR SERVICES?

We appreciate your feedback!

[**CLICK HERE TO LEAVE A GOOGLE REVIEW**](#)

Leave us a Google Review and receive a FREE Gift Bag as
a thank-you from our team! 🎁

Your support helps us grow—and we love showing our
appreciation.

★ Just show your review to a staff member to claim
your gift!

