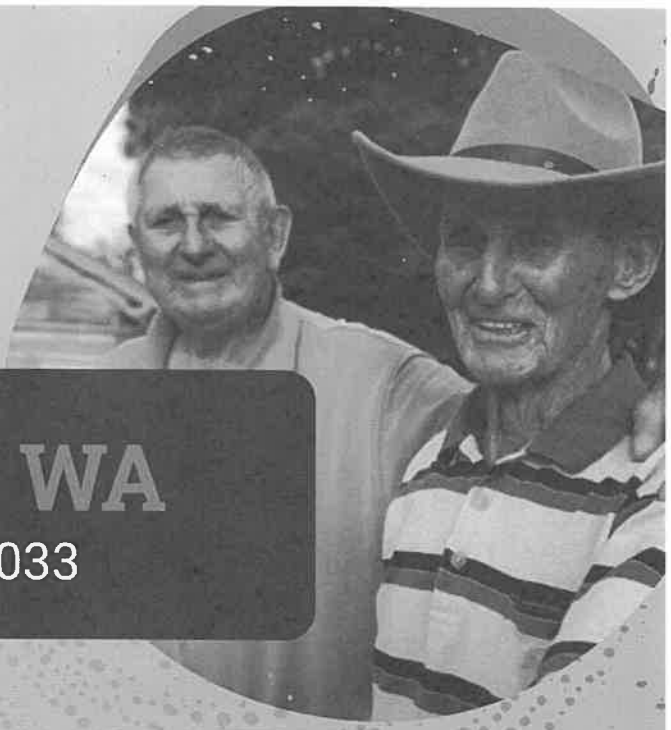
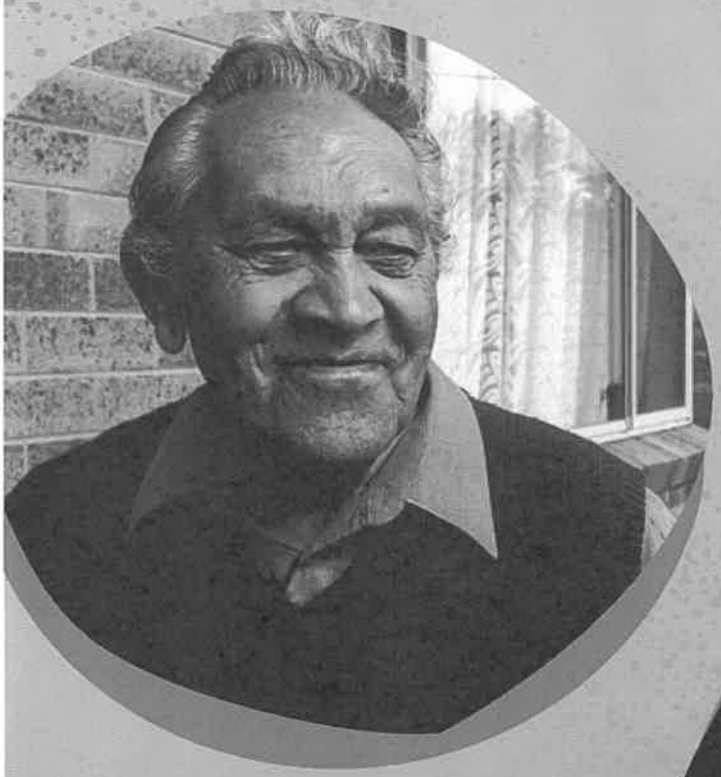
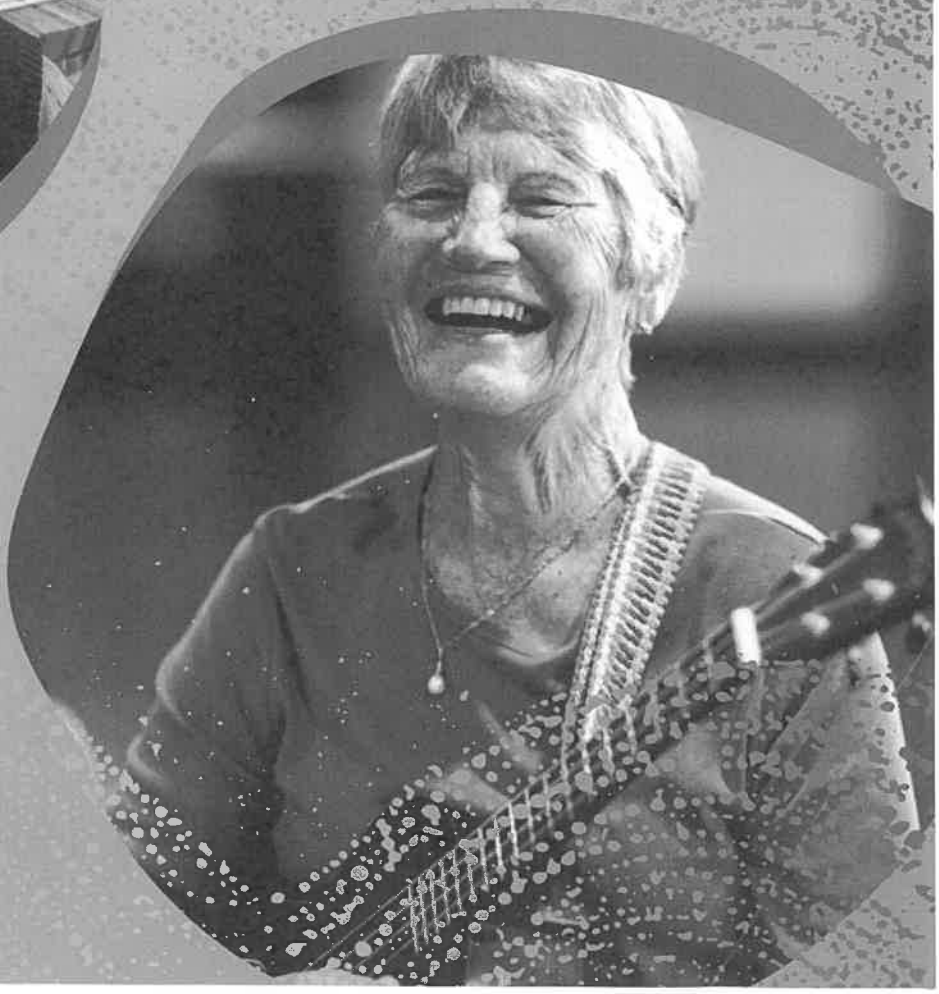
Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**



An Age-Friendly WA

State Seniors Strategy 2023 – 2033





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Acknowledgement of Country

The State Government is proud to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and recognises their continuing connection to their lands, families, and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures and to Elders past and present.

The first step in living alongside and working with the Aboriginal community[1] is built upon establishing respectful relationships. Crucial to these respectful relationships is acknowledging the history of Aboriginal people and recognising the importance of connection to family, culture, and country.

1 Through this report, the Department of Communities uses the term 'Aboriginal' respectfully to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as the preferred usage by Aboriginal people in WA.

Minister's Foreword

It is a great honour to introduce WA's first ever seniors' strategy, 'An Age-friendly WA: State Seniors Strategy 2023–2033' (the Strategy) to support older people in WA to enhance their quality of life.

Happiness is central to living well, and seniors in WA want to live a happy life filled with purpose and connection. The State Government is committed to honouring this and building communities that are inclusive and supportive of all Western Australians including seniors.

With the proportion of older people in our state increasing rapidly, it is more important than ever to ensure that we are a community which recognises and values seniors for the contribution they have made – and continue to make – to our social fabric.

The Strategy is a commitment to the 428,000 seniors who make up such a vital part of the WA community.[2] It provides an opportunity to focus our efforts over 10 years to support older Western Australians to live in ways that are meaningful and important to them.

This Strategy sets out our whole-of-government and whole-of-community priorities and commitments to achieve this. Four pillars for building a good life for seniors are identified:

- Thriving physically, mentally, and spiritually
- Safe and age-friendly communities
- Staying connected and engaged
- Having views that are heard.

Across the four pillars, we have critical work to do to ensure WA is a place where everyone feels empowered and supported, regardless of their age.

I wish to thank the thousands of WA seniors who contributed to this Strategy. This Strategy sets a platform for ongoing action in the areas most important to seniors in WA. Their views were essential in its development and will be fundamental to supporting its implementation over the next 10 years.

While the Department of Communities will oversee delivery of this Strategy, creating an age-friendly WA is everyone's responsibility. This Strategy sets the direction and brings together and coordinates action across State government, local governments, and the community.

I look forward to working together to put this Strategy into action and to build a community where seniors are supported and thriving.

Hon Don Punch MLA

Minister for Disability Services; Fisheries; Innovation and ICT; Seniors and Ageing.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Population: Census

Director General's Foreword

The Department of Communities is proud to release 'An Age-friendly WA: State Seniors Strategy 2023–2033' and to embark on realising its vision, that 'Western Australian seniors feel valued, safe, and empowered to lead happy and fulfilling lives in age-friendly communities'.

Extensive consultation with a broad range of stakeholders was undertaken to develop this Strategy, including:

- consultation with over 2,600 seniors across WA through online surveys, a postcard paper survey, focus groups, and phone interviews
- written submissions from peak bodies and community organisations, as well as Local Government Authorities (LGAs)
- dedicated consultations with regional and Aboriginal communities
- targeted discussions with experts and leaders who have worked with seniors and/or have been instrumental in developing and delivering seniors' initiatives.

This level of interest and contribution demonstrates the significance of this Strategy and the opportunities it presents in building a state where we all feel connected, valued, and heard.

We all have a responsibility to respect the valuable and diverse insights of WA seniors and to foster opportunities for their active engagement and involvement in our community. For this reason, a whole-of-government and whole-of-community approach is essential to bringing this Strategy to life.

Accompanying the Strategy is the first Action Plan, which sets out the blueprint for action for the next five years. As the lead agency for this Strategy, the Department of Communities will oversee the implementation of the Action Plan by driving and monitoring whole-of-government and community efforts.

I look forward to continuing to work together to achieve our joint aim of enhancing the quality of life of WA seniors, for the benefit of all Western Australians.

Mike Rowe

Director General,
Department of Communities

Building the State Seniors Strategy

Seniors are integral to the social fabric of our communities across WA. As 16 per cent of our population, they bring a diversity of experience, skills and perspectives that enrich WA and the communities in which they live.[3] An Age-friendly WA: State Seniors Strategy (the Strategy), brings the rich diversity of seniors' views to the front and centre. The Strategy will guide how we will support and empower all seniors across WA over the next 10 years.

Direct insight into the lives, views, and experiences of WA's seniors underpins this Strategy.

We have engaged extensively with seniors over the past year to ensure that this Strategy reflects the diversity of experience of WA seniors. In developing the Strategy, we have:

- heard from over 2,600 seniors through online surveys, a postcard paper survey, focus groups, and phone interviews
- received and reviewed written submissions from peak bodies and community organisations, as well as Local Government Authorities (LGAs)
- conducted dedicated consultations with seniors living in regional areas, and with Aboriginal seniors across WA.

We also conducted targeted engagement with experts who design, plan, and/or deliver seniors' services and initiatives, providing additional insights into the strengths, as well as the challenges facing seniors in WA. This Strategy brings together what we heard during these consultations: what it is like to grow older in our state, what seniors need to live well, and how better we can support seniors in WA to enhance their quality of life.

We would like to thank everyone who took part in the development of this Strategy, particularly seniors, for providing open and honest insights into what it means to grow older in WA, and what we as a community can do to best support seniors. To everyone who contributed, whether through sending us your thoughts on a postcard, by completing an online survey, or by attending a focus group in your local community, thank you for ensuring that we have been able to build a Strategy which truly represents the views, experiences, and aspirations of seniors in WA.

Research supports and builds on our engagement insights.

This Strategy reflects research into national and international trends and best practice in supporting positive ageing across our communities. Research into trends and initiatives has provided both confirmation and inspiration for how WA can continue to support positive ageing across our communities.

The Strategy reflects the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age-friendly Cities Framework.[4]

WHO's Age-friendly Cities Framework (the Framework) provides a guide for how we will promote an age-friendly WA. The Framework outlines eight interconnected domains that jointly contribute to the wellbeing and participation of seniors. These domains have informed the vision for this Strategy and have also helped us to identify and address the barriers to the wellbeing and contribution of seniors.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Population: Census

4 World Health Organization. The WHO Age-friendly Cities Framework

An Age-friendly WA

As a community, we are spending more of our lives in older age

In Australia, we are living longer than ever before. This means that we will likely spend more of our lives in older age than previous generations.[5] As a result, seniors are a growing proportion of our communities and are projected to make up nearly one-fifth of our population by 2033.[6] As our demographics in WA change, individuals, communities, and our service systems must be responsive and reflect the unique needs of seniors to ensure that we are all well supported to live well as we age.

We all play a role to contribute to an age-friendly and inclusive WA

Seniors are an integral part of our social fabric across WA, as well as active members of their own communities. We must all play our part to ensure our communities are age friendly and inclusive. Our State and local governments must do their part to ensure policies and activities are age friendly and promote communities where seniors and their contributions are valued and respected. It is crucial that our communities and service systems work together to address known challenges and ensure seniors can fully participate and contribute. By promoting an age-friendly WA, our community will experience the benefits of their full contributions to society.

There are many different ingredients that make up a good life for WA seniors

An age-friendly community ensures that its structures and services are accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and ability, which in turn benefits everyone in the community, regardless of age.[7]

5 Australian Government (26 Aug 2011) *Australians Living Longer and Living Better*

6 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Population Projections, Australia

7 World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide. World Health Organization

WA has a strong record of valuing and elevating the needs of seniors

The State Government has a strong record of supporting seniors across the state to live their best lives. WA adopted the WHO Age-friendly Cities and Communities approach (outlined in Figure 1 on the next page) in 2006 and was the first Australian jurisdiction to introduce an age-friendly community strategic planning framework.[8] Since then, the State Government has continued to recognise the importance of strong partnerships and collaboration in creating age-friendly environments as an Affiliate of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. It also provides a range of strategies in specific areas impacting the lives of seniors including, but not limited to, health and mental health, housing and homelessness, disability, carers, and volunteering.

This Strategy is designed to further support government agencies and the community to work together to coordinate efforts and maximise benefits for seniors. The development of a dedicated seniors strategy is the next step in supporting opportunities and responding to the challenges facing our diverse, ageing population. It represents a strong commitment – from State and local governments, and from the WA community – to achieve better outcomes for seniors.

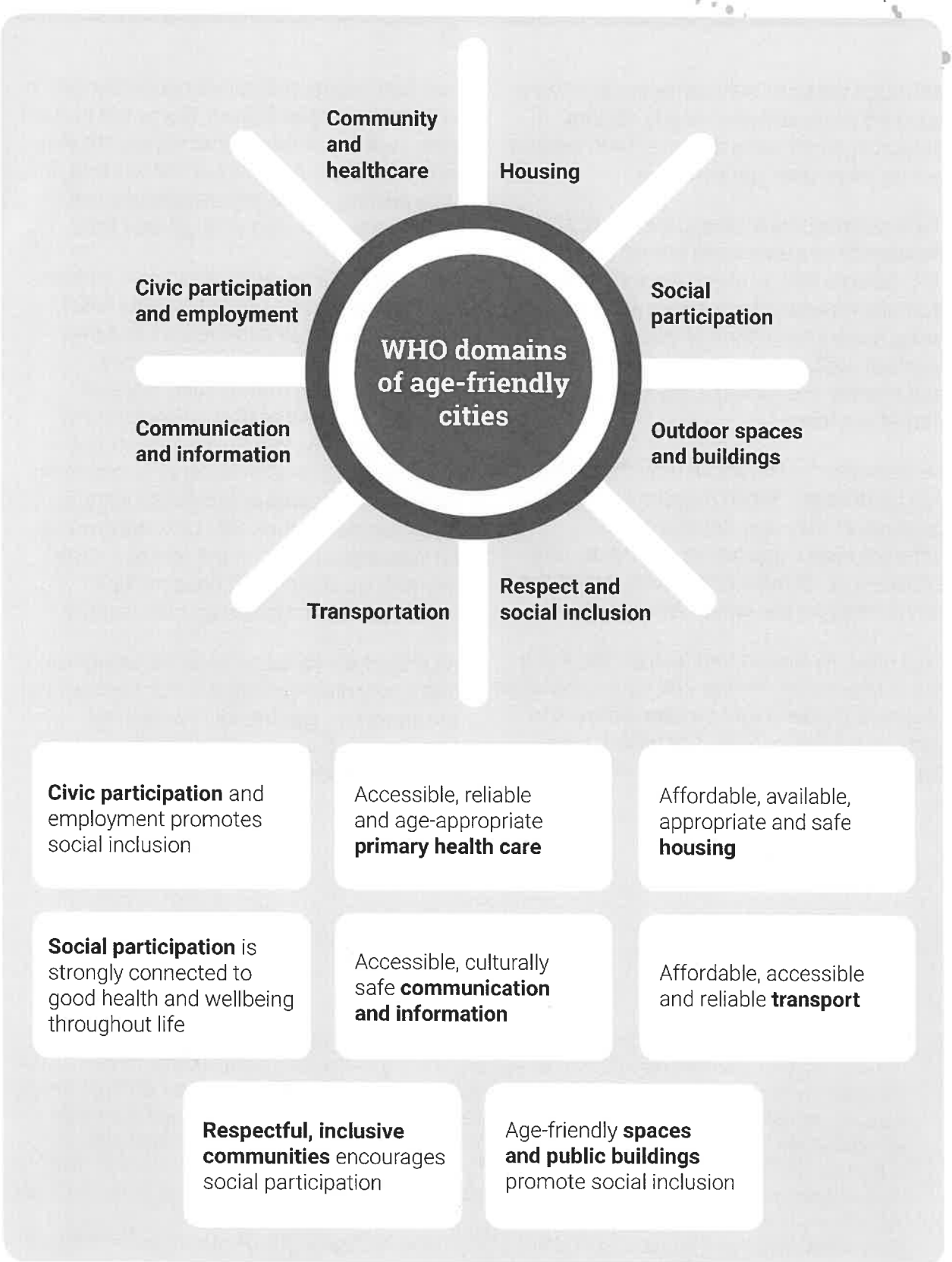
How we do this looks different for different people

WA is a geographically vast and culturally diverse state, and with this comes unique opportunities, as well as challenges, in how we support seniors to live and age well. WA seniors are not a homogenous group – they are a diverse cohort, with equally diverse needs and aspirations. This diversity is both a great strength and a challenge: it enables us as a community to learn from and share experiences across our varied cultures and backgrounds, but also means that our approach to supporting and empowering seniors must acknowledge this diversity and ensure that community supports can cater to a broad range of needs and aspirations.

Seniors' needs may change as they age; the care and support someone might need at 65 years may be very different to when they reach 85 years of age. This means that each person's needs differ from another, and as well change and evolve over time. Through this Strategy, we aspire to understand and respond to the varying and evolving needs and preferences of seniors, and to make sure that every senior is well supported to lead a happy and fulfilling life.

8 World Health Organization (2017) Age-friendly World: Government of Western Australia

Figure 1 WHO domains for age-friendly cities and communities



Who are WA seniors?

Although the term 'seniors' refers to anyone aged 65 years and over, or any Aboriginal person aged 55 years and over,[9] WA seniors are far more than just their age.

In developing this Strategy, we spoke to thousands of seniors and pre-seniors across WA. Seniors told us about the fundamentals that are important for them to age well like being supported in their physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing, being connected to family and friends, and having a say in decisions that affect them.

Seniors also told us about how their lives can be different. While they are connected because of their age, seniors have different needs, aspirations, interests, and experiences. Seniors collectively reflect the rich diversity of the whole WA community.

This diversity means that as a senior, if you live in regional or remote WA, your experience of growing older might be very different to someone living in Perth. For others, your experience may change based on how you live. Some seniors live independently. Some are carers or grandcarers. Some live in aged care facilities or need extra support to stay at home. Many seniors are still working and volunteering. These circumstances and preferences can also change over time.

For many seniors, ageing can also intersect with multiple parts of their identity which can influence their experiences and their individual needs. Seniors in WA may: be Aboriginal; be from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) background; have a disability; identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, or asexual or otherwise identify as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community; be veterans; or take on the role of a carer. Sometimes seniors will have multiple intersections that make up their identity.

As a Strategy for all seniors, we recognise that many different ingredients are required to support an age friendly WA, so that seniors are empowered to live life in a way that they choose.

9 In line with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, this Strategy considers Aboriginal seniors as Aboriginal people who are 55 years or older to reflect the significant difference in life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. This difference is a result of multiple factors, including chronic health conditions, the impacts of social dislocation and economic disadvantage. As a result, Aboriginal people in Australia have an average life expectancy of 8.6 years shorter than non-Aboriginal people for men, and 7.8 years shorter for women. This discrepancy in life expectancy is the most fundamental gap which the Closing the Gap National Agreement is intended to address. Sources:
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021) Older Australians: Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
Productivity Commission. (2023) Closing the Gap Information Repository. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives.

Aboriginal seniors

Aboriginal people make up 3.3 per cent of the population in WA and the majority live in regional and remote areas.[10] About 12.8 per cent of Aboriginal people are seniors.

Aboriginal seniors are pillars of their kin and communities. Through their deep knowledge and experiences of the key issues within their communities, Aboriginal seniors provide kinship and guidance, and pass down cultural knowledge.[11]

Disadvantage continues to impact on life expectancy and outcomes. Aboriginal people are more likely to live in regional and remote areas, have higher rates of disability, and be in lower socio-economic groups. This intersectionality leads to greater disadvantage which impacts their life outcomes, for example less access to specialised health services, transport and other supports as they age due to their remote location.

Culture and connection to Country are critical to ageing well. Aboriginal seniors told us they want culturally appropriate services, that respond to their needs, experiences, and dimensions of wellbeing. Aboriginal seniors also said they want the choice to remain on Country for care and support as they age, and to enable them to maintain cultural connections and support their own wellbeing.

This Strategy aligns to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap,[12] recognising the importance of genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in policy development. Under the Strategy:

- Aboriginal seniors will be acknowledged, supported, and celebrated for their significant contributions
- government will prioritise Aboriginal designed and led services and supports for Aboriginal seniors, including support to remain on Country.

> **Being connected to country is vital for our social and emotional wellbeing**
>
> Aboriginal senior

10 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Census Productivity Commission. (2023) Closing the Gap Information Repository. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives.

11 Narang Bir-rong Aboriginal Corporation. Our elders: Essential to our community.

12 Closing the Gap (2020). National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Culturally and linguistically diverse seniors

About 31.4 per cent of our seniors come from a CaLD background, which here refers to seniors born in a non-main English-speaking country.[13]

Social connection reduces isolation for CaLD seniors. Whether it be through volunteering, engaging in hobbies or simply taking time to connect with one another, we heard that being part of a community helps CaLD seniors to engage with other people from the same cultural backgrounds and reduces the risk of social isolation.[14]

Language can be a barrier to accessing services and support. CaLD seniors told us they can face cultural and language barriers when navigating community and government services.[15] It is important that services are delivered in languages that seniors can understand and relate to adequately.

This Strategy aims to reflect the diverse experiences, knowledge and needs of CaLD seniors, and to ensure our communities are welcoming and supportive of their unique strengths and challenges. Under the Strategy:

- We will work with partners in government and community organisations to ensure that CaLD seniors have strong opportunities to engage with one another and with the community more broadly.
- We will be guided by the Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework to ensure services, policies and supports are culturally appropriate and responsive to the needs of all Western Australians.

> **Government should account for the needs of different cultures and people**
>
> CaLD senior

13 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Cultural Diversity: Census

14 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021) Social isolation and loneliness

15 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021) Older Australians: Culturally and linguistically diverse older people.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, or asexual seniors and those who identify as members of the LGBTQIA+ community

Seniors make up 5.3 per cent of people in same-sex couples in Australia.[16]

LGBTQIA+ seniors have faced historical and ongoing prejudice. Many seniors grew up in a time where LGBTQIA+ identities were not accepted in society.[17] Some seniors still feel uncomfortable (or are unable) to be open about their sexual identity.

Community and representation are important. LGBTQIA+ seniors are more and more likely to be open about who they are and what they value when they feel accepted in the community. We heard that social connection and friendship, particularly with other LGBTQIA+ people, greatly contributes to their overall happiness and wellbeing.

Under the Strategy, broader representation of LGBTQIA+ seniors will be prioritised, so that all seniors feel safe to be open about who they are in their communities and when engaging with services.

> **I want support services that are non-judgemental and acknowledge my LGBTI culture/community**
>
> LGBTQIA+ senior

Seniors with disability

Seniors represent 40 per cent of people with disability.[18] They are a diverse cohort with varying needs.

Accessible and inclusive spaces are particularly important for seniors with disability. Infrastructure, transport, and places play a big role in making sure that seniors with disability can actively participate in their community in ways that they choose, fostering social connection and decreasing the risk of social isolation.[19]

Reliable healthcare provides choice and control in later years. Thirty per cent of seniors with disability have profound or severe core activity limitations.[20] Seniors told us reliable healthcare provides choice and control for how they manage their health, and to be and stay well.

16 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) Same-sex couples: Census.

17 National Seniors Australia (2021) Listening to LGBT Seniors.

18 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Disability, Ageing and Carers: Western Australia.

19 Queensland Government (2018) Avoiding social isolation

20 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Disability, Ageing and Carers: Western Australia.

This Strategy has been developed in line with A Western Australia for Everyone: State Disability Strategy 2020-2030 which is focused on promoting an inclusive WA and supporting those living with disability to live well and actively participate in their communities. Under the Strategy:

- Physical spaces and infrastructure will be welcoming and accessible, using universal design principles.
- There will be proactive interagency and service collaboration between State- and Australian Government-funded services to best support seniors with disability.

> **My proximity to amenities, including medical, make me feel like I belong**
>
> Senior with a disability

Seniors no longer living independently

Around one-quarter of WA seniors are living with added support, including transition care and seniors in short term restorative care.[21]

Seniors' living circumstances can change over time. Some seniors find themselves more vulnerable as they age and require more support to live and age well. For those who find that living independently is no longer appropriate or safe, they may choose to increase home care support or move into residential housing.

> **Keep me in my home as long as possible and I will be happy**
>
> WA senior

Seniors want to stay at home as long as possible. We heard from seniors that the ability to age in their own home, on their own terms, is highly important. Statistics show that in Australia, over 80 per cent of seniors own their own home and wish to continue living independently in their homes. For seniors that need extra support, locally available, affordable and appropriate aged care is essential.

This strategy will work with WA seniors to have more choice in where they live as they age with the support that they need.[22] Under the Strategy, the State Government will continue to advocate for, and provide, appropriate home care support so that seniors can stay at home for as long as they safely can.

21 Australian institute of Health and Welfare (2022) Gen Aged Care Data: Aged care data snapshot

22 Department of Communities (2020) WA Housing Strategy

Seniors in regional and remote areas

Fourteen per cent of seniors live in regional and remote areas and enjoy a deep connection with their country and community, and this number is expected to continue to grow.[23]

Staying in place is a priority. Seniors in regional and remote areas are deeply connected to their local communities and want to be able to stay in place. Seniors we spoke to highlighted the benefits of living in a regional area, pointing to a great sense of belonging and close-knit communities.

> **This strategy will work very differently in my community compared to the way it would work in Geraldton**
>
> Mullewa senior

Maintaining wellbeing where they are. Services and supports, particularly specialised healthcare, can be hard to come by outside of Perth. Many seniors told us that they have to travel far to access healthcare, and value when they can access what they need close to home.

Under the Strategy, actions and initiatives will be driven by people and place, not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Carers and seniors with caring responsibilities

In WA, 17.2 per cent of seniors are carers, most of whom are caring for a partner.[24]

Carers are critical to supporting a well-connected and age-friendly community. Although some care is provided by formal providers, it is often provided informally and unpaid by friends and family. According to the 2021 Census, around 2.48 million people in Australia (9.7 per cent of the population) reported providing unpaid care and/or assistance to family members or others because of disability, long-term health conditions and other matters related to ageing.[25] Carers provide vital support to seniors to assist them to remain in their own homes, participate fully and receive the care and supports that they need. Seniors emphasised the importance of those that support them – they want carers to receive recognition for the role they play in helping them to connect and engage with the things they value and enjoy.

Many seniors play caring roles and require recognition and support. In WA, many seniors have caring responsibilities, but are less likely than other groups to self-identify as being a carer. Seniors told us that recognition and supports that reflect the diversity of caring duties are important. Some seniors are carers for their adult children and/or older partners. Others can be grandcarers who are raising their grandchildren.

23 WA Country Health Service (2022) Health Strategy for Older People 2022-27.

24 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Disability, Ageing and Carers: Western Australia.

25 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Unpaid work and care: Census.

> **The gift of caring means keeping your loved ones in their own homes for longer, or advocating for them in care**
>
> Carer

Other seniors may no longer be able to perform the caring role and need support transitioning out of a long-term caring role.

This Strategy will work alongside the WA Carers Strategy to improve outcomes for carers and seniors who are carers, to ensure that those that care for others are recognised and supported.[26]

Senior veterans

In Australia, seniors make up 53 per cent of all Australian Defence Force (ADF) veterans, with over 4,000 senior ADF veterans in WA.[27] [28] An ADF veteran is defined as someone who has previously served in the ADF and has worked to defend Australia and its national interests.[29] Veterans of other allied military forces are also residents of WA.

> **We are seniors first, veterans second**
>
> Senior veteran

Senior veterans may have different needs. Military service increases the likelihood of exposure to trauma. These experiences mean that some seniors who have done military service may encounter challenges in everyday living. Other senior veterans we spoke to told us that their needs aren't all that different to seniors' needs generally, and therefore by supporting and empowering seniors generally, we will also support veterans to live and age well.

In line with the WA Veterans and Families Strategy, the Strategy will reflect the contributions of seniors who have served Australia. In addition, it will acknowledge the needs of veterans from allied military forces.

26 Department of Communities – WA Carers Strategy

27 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Service with the Australian Defence Force: Census

28 Department of Veterans' Affairs (2022) Statistics about the veteran population

29 Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (2021) Western Australian Veterans and Families Strategy

Contributors to an Age-friendly WA

All levels of government in Australia are responsible for specific policies and programs which touch the lives of senior Australians. While there are some areas of shared or overlapping responsibility, the broad distribution of responsibilities between the Australian Government, the State Government, and local governments is set out below.

The Australian Government is responsible for some important areas that affect ageing well

This includes aged care services, in-home supports, primary health care, disability services, income support, taxation and superannuation, workplace relations, and protection from age discrimination.

Aged care services are provided to older Australians in their homes, in the community, and in residential aged care facilities. Regulation of aged care services is primarily the responsibility of the Australian Government, framed by the current *Aged Care Act 1997* and accompanying Aged Care Principles. As a result of the findings of the 2018-2021 Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, this Act will be replaced in 2023 by rights-based and consumer-focused aged care legislation.

Federal income support for older Australians spans the Age Pension, the Home Equity Access Scheme, concession, and health cards. This support is supplemented by Work Bonus arrangements for pensioners who choose to stay in the workforce.

A range of independent statutory bodies oversee the quality, safety, and sustainability of aged care services including the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, the Aged Care Pricing Commissioner, and the National Aged Care Advocacy program. An information service – My Aged Care – provides seniors, their families, and carers with information to access and navigate aged care services in their local area.

The Age Discrimination Commissioner in the Australian Human Rights Commission is responsible for initiatives to address age discrimination, including oversight of the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* to prevent unfair treatment based on age in different areas of public life.

The Australian Government subsidises the delivery of primary care and specialist health care to the Australian population. In addition, the Australian Government administers the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which provides funding for consumer directed care to support people with disability to live independently. Australians over 65 years who were receiving support under the NDIS before their 65th birthday will continue doing so unless they transfer to the aged care system.

The State Government is responsible for enhancing opportunities and strengthening inclusion for seniors

This includes providing access to mainstream government services and facilities like public spaces, public transport, hospital care, social housing, and justice, as addressed through a range of State and Australian Government strategies and initiatives. It also provides services relating to recreation and sports and the cultural and arts sector.

The State Government also provides financial support for seniors through the WA Seniors Card discount and concession program, as well as the Cost of Living Rebate, the Country Age Pension Fuel Card Scheme, and the Safety and Security Rebate.

While the Australian Government is the principal funder of residential aged care and home support, state and local governments operate some residential aged care services, though most services are delivered by non-government providers. State governments are also funded by the Australian Government to manage the Aged Care Assessment process.

The Australian and the various state governments jointly administer and fund Transition Care and Multi-Purpose Services as composite health and aged care support services.

The State Government's role also includes working with the Australian Government to address areas of shared responsibility and new matters like responses to the risks and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and economic trends.

Local government councils and community organisations deliver initiatives to meet the particular needs of local communities

Many councils in WA have developed or are developing local ageing well strategies, which are often modelled on the WHO domains for age-friendly communities. The responsibility of local councils includes the maintenance and improvement of local infrastructure such as libraries, community centres, parks, footpaths, and suburban streets. Local councils provide access to recreation spaces and facilities, including community sporting and recreational facilities such as seniors' centres.

Strategy Overview

The Strategy sets a clear path forward for the WA Government and our communities to support and empower seniors over the next 10 years. This Strategy includes:

- a vision which provides a shared goal or aspiration for WA seniors – this is the ultimate aspiration guiding the Strategy and its delivery
- pillars for change which identify the most important features that seniors told us are critical for them to live and age well
- key focus areas which recognise specific areas of opportunity to support WA seniors to live their best lives
- outcomes which tell us the changes we hope to achieve for seniors in WA under each key focus area.

An overview of the State Seniors Strategy 'on a page' is illustrated in Figure 2 overleaf.

Figure 2 State Seniors Strategy on a page

Vision	**Western Australian seniors are valued, safe, and empowered to lead happy and fulfilling lives in age-friendly communities**			
Pillars of change	**Thriving physically, mentally, and spiritually**	**Safe and friendly communities**	**Staying connected and engaged**	**Having views that are heard**
Outcomes	Seniors have access to suitable housing options Seniors have the support they need to stay in place Seniors have the support and information they need to maintain their wellbeing Seniors have access to health care information and services that support their individual choice and needs Carers and grandcarers are recognised and supported	Members of the community welcome and respect seniors Community infrastructure is accessible and inclusive for all seniors Seniors can access and navigate the transport system with ease Seniors are safe in their homes and as they navigate their communities	Seniors have access to the right information in the right ways so they can make informed choices Seniors have opportunities for meaningful and inclusive employment Seniors are supported to engage in their community in ways they choose	Seniors and their advocates feel heard Seniors have the confidence and opportunity to make their views heard regardless of identity or background
Key Focus Areas	Housing Staying in place Care and support Wellbeing Support for carers	Inclusive communities Infrastructure and spaces Transport Safety	Information Employment Volunteering and social participation	Representation and advocacy Diverse views
What this means for seniors	Affordable and appropriate housing Increased support for those who wish to stay in place Available and accessible care, informed by individual choice Proactive support to maintain wellbeing Supporting those who care for seniors.	Addressing ageist attitudes and valuing seniors' contributions Age-friendly public spaces, infrastructure, and facilities Accessible, appropriate, and affordable transport options Supporting seniors to be safe at home and in the community	Accessible and culturally appropriate information which enables informed choices Available and appropriate opportunities for employment Enhanced opportunities for volunteering and socially participating in the community	Meaningful opportunities for seniors to make their views heard Elevate and advocate for the diverse views of seniors
Domains of the WHO Age-friendly Communities Framework	Community and healthcare Housing	Respect and social inclusion Transportation Outdoor spaces	Communication and information Civic participation and employment Social participation	Civic participation and employment Respect and social inclusion
Action Plan				
Internal Monitoring and Evaluation Plan				

Our Vision

This Strategy represents the State Government's commitment to all seniors in WA. It is informed by – and focuses on – the views and experiences of WA seniors and provides a shared aspiration for how the State Government and our communities more broadly will support seniors in WA to live their best lives.

The Strategy is anchored in a vision for all seniors in WA:

> Western Australian seniors feel valued, safe, and empowered to lead happy and fulfilling lives in age-friendly communities

This vision will benefit everyone in our state. It paves the way for more inclusive and engaging communities, where everyone can participate and contribute in a meaningful way regardless of age or ability. It recognises and celebrates the diversity of seniors, and their valuable contributions to the community.

Achieving this vision will require a whole-of-community approach, considering what seniors need to thrive, and how we create, design, and deliver initiatives that meet their needs.

Thriving physically, mentally, and spiritually

Seniors told us that physical, mental and spiritual health and wellbeing is central to their happiness. That means having access to the right supports to ensure overall health and wellbeing, including the link between physical activity and overall wellbeing, as well as appropriate, affordable, and locally available housing and healthcare. It also means making sure that seniors are supported to be and stay well, and that carers, including seniors who are themselves carers, are appropriately supported and recognised.

> In this Strategy, we use the terms 'spiritual'/'spiritually' to reflect aspects of health and wellbeing outside mental and physical health. This might be connection to a faith and faith community, a life philosophy, a connection to traditional country and beliefs, or similar connections which help a person to remain grounded or connected to their community and self, and to stay well.

Table 1 Thriving physically, mentally, and spiritually

Key focus area	What this means for seniors	Outcomes
Housing	Affordable and appropriate housing	Seniors have access to suitable housing options
Staying in place	Increased support for those who wish to stay in place	Seniors have the support they need to stay in place
Care and support	Available and accessible care, informed by individual choice	Seniors have the support and information they need to maintain their wellbeing
Wellbeing	Proactive support to maintain wellbeing	Seniors have access to health care information and services that support their individual choice and needs
Support for carers	Supporting those who care for seniors	Carers and grandcarers are recognised and supported

Housing

Safe, secure, affordable, and reliable housing is a basic human right. Having a choice of location and type of housing ensures that seniors can grow older in a residence that is suited to their individual needs and circumstances. Housing security and being able to keep up with the cost of living, is imperative for seniors to live and age well.

Some older people find they have to relocate to receive the support they need or find themselves at risk of homelessness because appropriate housing is not available in their local community. Seniors told us that access to affordable and diverse housing options – including appropriate crisis care – which meet the needs of the individual is a priority for them, particularly for seniors living in regional and remote parts of the state.

Through this Strategy, we will continue to focus on supporting seniors' access to appropriate and affordable housing, regardless of where they live, so they can grow older close to their families and support networks.

> **The recurrent themes for regional local governments were to advocate for accessible, affordable and diverse housing to meet the needs of older people**
>
> Local Government Professionals, WA

Staying in place

Seniors often want to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. Over 80 per cent of seniors in Australia own their own home and want the agency and opportunity to age with choice at home.[30] Staying in place allows seniors to stay independent for longer and remain surrounded by the things – and people – they love.[31]

> **There needs [to be] more support to allow older residents to remain in their own home for longer, rather than having to move away from friends and into a retirement facility**
>
> WA senior

Seniors in WA told us that access to services which allow them to manage their health and personal care at home is not always available where they live or in ways that work best for them. Improved support and services will help seniors who want to live at home for longer, for example, by receiving more support to adjust their homes to enable them to age safely and comfortably in their current space. Where living at home is no longer possible or safe, support to stay in place – in their local community – helps maintain their sense of place and connection to their community.

Through this Strategy, we will focus on how our local and State governments can advocate for – and directly provide – greater support for seniors who wish to stay in place, including better information about, and access to, home care packages, and greater choice in determining their own future.

30 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020) Housing Occupancy and Costs

31 Aged Care Guide (2016). 5 benefits of home care.

Care and support

Seniors may require a range of different health, mental health, and other care supports that help them to thrive as they age. Seniors told us that they want the care they receive to be culturally safe, informed, and non-judgemental, so it reflects their choices and preferences as an individual. Seniors also told us that good health does not only mean being physically well – their mental and spiritual wellbeing is equally important. Seniors want services and supports to think about the different dimensions of what makes them thrive. For some seniors, this included the importance of having family, kin and their broader community involved in their care.

Seniors also want access to care and support locally. Seniors in regional and remote areas spoke to us about the importance of having locally available specialists and allied health professionals. This means travelling far from home to receive necessary care and support should be the exception, not the rule.

> **Local access to services including health make it a pleasant place to live**
>
> WA senior

Through this Strategy, there will be a focus on making sure that seniors are supported and cared for in ways that they choose, and in their local communities wherever possible

Wellbeing

Seniors want to receive support to maintain, not just rebuild, health and wellbeing, so that they can stay well for longer.

Access to fresh food, preventative care, and regular social and physical activity allows seniors to stay healthier for longer and minimises the need for reactive and responsive care and support.[32] Seniors told us that they value prevention and promotional supports for them to maintain their wellbeing, like affordable exercise activities and low-cost opportunities to socialise within their local area.

Through this Strategy, there will be a focus on holistic health and wellbeing that brings together physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing to proactively support seniors to be and stay well. This may be realised through relevant public education programs and developing a state-wide model of service for mental health to promote best practice care and support.

> **Preventative measures and social connectedness are integral to mental health and wellbeing**
>
> Local government representative

32 Life Line Screening. How Healthy Eating Prevents Disease.

Support for carers

Social support networks, including carers, are a key contributor to seniors' ability to live their lives as they choose. A significant number of WA seniors receive unpaid personal care, support, and assistance with daily life, greatly alleviating the pressure on our health and community services and providing invaluable support for seniors to age comfortably within their own homes.[33]

Support for carers, including accessible and flexible respite care, was highlighted as a key priority for WA seniors. Around two in five Australian seniors report needing assistance as they age, with much of this care and support provided by family members, friends, or neighbours.[34] Nearly one-fifth of seniors are themselves carers and must be appropriately supported and recognised.

Through this Strategy, there will be an acknowledgement of the role carers, including seniors who are themselves carers, and ensuring that they are appropriately supported and recognised.

> **"I'll feel more valued by being recognised and respected as a carer, widespread awareness of a carer's rights and provision of information of supports available to carers"**
>
> WA senior

33 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Disability, Ageing and Carers: Western Australia.

34 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022) Aged care services. PC Report on Government Services.

Safe and age-friendly communities

Seniors have told us that when they feel safe and secure in the community, they are able to navigate it freely and actively engage. Safe and age-friendly communities, where seniors are treated with respect and included in community activities, are crucial for seniors. To facilitate this, infrastructure and transport systems must be accessible and affordable regardless of age or ability.

Table 2 Safe and age-friendly communities

Key focus area	What this means for seniors	Outcomes
Inclusive communities	Addressing ageist attitudes and valuing seniors' contributions	Members of the community welcome and respect seniors
Infrastructure and spaces	Age-friendly public spaces, infrastructure, and facilities	Community infrastructure is accessible and inclusive for all seniors
Transport	Accessible, appropriate, and affordable transport options	Seniors can access and navigate the transport system with ease
Safety	Supporting seniors to be safe at home and in the community	Seniors are safe in their homes and as they navigate their communities

Inclusive communities

At the core of any community is its people, their values, and their attitudes towards each other. When a community is inclusive and respectful towards all seniors, it creates space for them to feel safe and thrive.

Community perceptions of seniors have a significant impact on seniors' opportunity – and desire – to engage with their communities, and with the political process. Ageism, rooted in negative and incorrect stereotypes of older people, creates barriers for how seniors participate in and engage with their communities.[35] WA seniors told us of frequent encounters with attitudes that were discriminatory and lacked respect, and across Australia 63 per cent of seniors reported experiencing ageism within the past five years.[36] It is essential that we address negative perceptions of seniors, and that we instead welcome and celebrate seniors' contributions, allowing them to positively engage with and contribute to their communities in ways that they choose.

> **Educating seniors and younger people about each other would create greater understanding within the community**
>
> Kalgoorlie senior

35 Council of the Ageing (2023). Ageism and Discrimination.

36 Australian Human Rights Commission (2021) What's age got to do with it?

For example, learning and understanding the role of Aboriginal Elders and practicing cultural awareness is a community-wide undertaking and represents one aspect of how we must come together as a community to combat ageism and promote respectful, inclusive communities.

Through this Strategy, we will focus on addressing ageism, and promoting age-friendly, inclusive communities in which seniors can thrive and feel welcome, included and valued. This will be realised through a combination of awareness-raising and public media campaigns to address ageist attitudes and collaboration with local and State Government, as well as industry, to promote inclusive and age-friendly activities and practices.

Infrastructure and spaces

Public spaces bring people together and foster a sense of togetherness in the community. Appropriate and safe environments, including walkways, seating, and public toilets, are essential for seniors to enjoy their communities.[37] Community spaces should be accessible to everyone, providing facilities that cater to all needs regardless of age and ability.

Many seniors enjoy spending time in nature and outdoor spaces. This is important for their health, wellbeing, and happiness. Consultations on this Strategy highlighted that older people want public spaces, infrastructure, facilities and opening hours across WA that are accessible for seniors. They want to encourage councils and developers to ensure that places are planned and built with accessibility in mind, to ensure that everyone can enjoy them.

> **Seniors are moving to the regions, but there aren't services there. Services and facilities need to be where people are**
>
> WA senior

Through this Strategy, we will continue to promote and provide age-friendly infrastructure and spaces, by promoting accessibility as a key consideration for all current and future State Government infrastructure projects, including through existing grant programs.

37 World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide, p18

Transport

Transport is a key factor influencing positive and active ageing.[38] It includes the public transport system, as well as core community infrastructure like bike paths and pedestrian areas that supports active mobility. Access to good transport services, including specific parking spaces, accessible public transport, and private services which cater to their needs, enables seniors to stay connected with friends, family, and their communities.

Seniors told us that when they are unable to drive and need to rely on other forms of transportation to get around, it creates a major barrier for engagement in activities outside their home, particularly for seniors living in regional and remote areas. Frequent, accessible, and reliable transport helps to ensure that seniors stay connected to their communities, regardless of where they live.

> **We got our own community bus for seniors to get around and it has been fantastic. I'd like to help other communities to do the same thing**
>
> WA senior

This Strategy will focus on considering seniors' transportation needs throughout WA, and how access to appropriate and cost-effective transport can be made available for seniors. This may include reviewing transport-related policies and procedures, such as the Country Age Pension Fuel Card, to maximise accessibility and uptake.

Safety

Being and feeling safe is essential for seniors to live as they choose. This means feeling safe in the community and in their homes, which includes being safe from crime and safe from mistreatment and elder abuse, and making sure that homes are safe and accessible based on individual needs and ability.

Seniors told us that feeling unsafe made them less likely to engage with their communities, and with care and support services. Through this Strategy, we will focus on how State and local governments, seniors, and the community more broadly can work together to make sure seniors feel safe in their homes and in the community.

> **To enhance safety in our neighbourhoods/homes has to be a high priority [for] the sake of everyone in the community**
>
> WA senior

38 World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide, p20

Staying connected and engaged

Being able to stay engaged, make independent choices, and contribute to society allows us to manage life and meet our personal needs. For seniors, this means having ways to stay connected with friends and family, opportunities to contribute through paid and unpaid work, and access to and the ability to engage with relevant information.

Table 3 Staying connected and engaged

Key focus area	What this means for seniors	Outcomes
Information	Accessible and culturally appropriate information which enables informed choices	Seniors have access to the right information in the right ways so they can make informed choices
Employment	Available and appropriate opportunities for employment	Seniors have opportunities for meaningful and inclusive employment
Volunteering and social participation	Enhanced opportunities for volunteering and socially participating in the community	Seniors are supported to engage in their community in ways they choose

Information

Having access to information is essential to navigating the community and making informed choices. For seniors, staying connected with the community and getting timely and practical information relevant to them is essential for positive ageing.[39]

As technology continues to advance and digital connectivity becomes more important, so does the need for better digital inclusion. Older Australians remain the least digitally included age groups[40], and limited ability to use (or access) the internet is a growing cause of social exclusion among seniors.[41] We must recognise the barriers that technological advances and cost may present for seniors and consider how best to address them.

> **It should be digital first, not digital only**
>
> WA senior

While many older people are able to access internet and online services, many still prefer to speak face to face. Seniors highlighted facilities such as libraries and Community Resource Centres as useful providers of information and support. Seniors reminded us that it should be digital first, not digital only, and that information must be presented and provided in ways that seniors can and want to engage with.

39 World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide, p60

40 Social Innovation Research Institute, Swinburne University (2020). Improving the digital inclusion of older Australians

41 World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide, p63

Through this Strategy, we will consider how government and industry can provide accessible and culturally appropriate information so that seniors have the information they need to make informed decisions and stay connected to family, friends, and their community. This includes considering language barriers experienced by seniors who use languages other than English.

Employment

Meaningful and inclusive employment opportunities are an important aspect of positive ageing, providing both a sense of purpose and economic independence. Age-friendly communities recognise the wide range of capacities and resources that older people bring and provide inclusive working environments, for example by accommodating age-related needs and preferences in the workplace.[42]

In light of the rising cost of living, seniors told us that having financial security means they feel empowered to make informed and appropriate decisions about how they live their lives. The rising cost of living means that older adults are continuing in the labour force for longer than ever before;[43] however, many seniors were concerned about the impact of paid employment on their pension entitlements. We also know that some older Australians who still want to work find themselves forced out of the workforce early due to age-related discrimination.[44]

> **I would like to be able to work more without it affecting my pension. Working helps keep me connected to people**
>
> WA senior

Through this Strategy, we will focus on ensuring that there is a continued emphasis on creating and sustaining opportunities for seniors to continue to contribute to their communities through paid employment. This may be achieved through addressing conscious and unconscious biases of individuals and industry, and by collaborating with industry to promote and provide inclusive, age-friendly workplaces and practices.

42 World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide, p5

43 Older adults in Western Australia (Department of Communities)

44 Poverty and Homelessness – The Reality For Too Many Older Women (Streetsmart, July 13, 2021)

Volunteeering and social participation

Social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and wellbeing throughout life.[45] Seniors are some of our most active volunteers (with 25 per cent of people over 70 years volunteering in 2019),[46] contributing to everything from their sporting club to their local library. People who participate in community activities, including volunteering, have better and more positive social outcomes, regardless of age.[47]

Seniors told us they value social activities that cater for older people of all backgrounds, including for those who do not speak English. These activities help seniors to engage with their peers and the wider community in a positive way. As social isolation continues to be a significant issue for seniors across Australia,[48] it is important that we consider how WA can better support and promote social connection among seniors.

> **Feeling as though you still matter and have a purpose in the wider community – this is what fosters mental health**
>
> WA senior

Through this Strategy, we will focus on supporting social networks, clubs, associations, and groups that foster social connection to create inclusive, safe and accessible places for seniors to continue to volunteer. This includes grants to support quality partnerships, mentoring and access to knowledge and education.

45 World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide, p38

46 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2019), Volunteers

47 Head to Health (2019) Connecting with community

48 Beer A, Faulkner D, Law J, Lewin G, Tinker A, Buys Let al. (2016). Regional variation in social isolation amongst older Australians. *Regional Studies, Regional Science* 3: 170-84.

Having views that are heard

Seniors told us that they feel valued when they feel heard and their contributions are respected. Having their views heard is essential for seniors to influence issues that matter to and impact upon them and ensures that all policies, initiatives, and activities designed to support and empower them are informed by their views and experiences. This means seniors have the opportunity – both locally and nationally – to have their views heard and have agency and opportunity to advocate for themselves, or effective representation should they have someone speaking on their behalf.

Table 4 Having views that are heard

Key focus area	What this means for seniors	Outcomes
Representation and advocacy	Meaningful opportunities for seniors to make their views heard	Seniors and their advocates feel heard
Diverse views	Elevate and advocate for the diverse views of seniors	Seniors have the confidence and opportunity to make their views heard regardless of identity or background

Representation and advocacy

Having views that are heard means that organisations and services that represent and support seniors are informed by seniors' views and experiences. Seniors want to have frequent and meaningful opportunities to speak up and to influence the world around them.

> **Seniors have a lot of wisdom, find a platform for seniors to tell their life stories**
>
> WA senior

Seniors have told us that they can feel disempowered and unable to make their views heard, with some highlighting that they have been overlooked or ignored when they have sought opportunities to speak out. For some, the lack of digital inclusion or of accessibility makes this even more difficult. Seniors must have frequent and meaningful opportunities to speak up, including through peak bodies that can represent them and their needs when they might not be able to.

Through this Strategy, seniors' views have been heard and will be acted on. The power of lived experience of older people is essential in developing good policy and initiatives for seniors. The engagement approach as part of the development of this Strategy provides a template for how seniors can and should be engaged during the drafting of policy, initiatives, activities, and events that impact them. Their views and valuable contributions improve the way government does business with and for the benefit of seniors.[49]

49 Bringing the voices of senior Australians to the centre of aged care reform (Department of Health and Aged Care, 27th January 2022)

Diverse views

Seniors are a diverse group of people, with rich and diverse life experiences, backgrounds and needs, and their individual diversity increases with age.[50] Capturing and acting on the views of all seniors is a crucial aspect of this Strategy – including those who belong to groups who are often under-represented.

We aspire to elevate the views of Aboriginal seniors, seniors from CaLD backgrounds, those who identify as LGBTQIA+, seniors with disability, veterans, and senior carers, who all reported facing even greater difficulties in navigating life. They must have the opportunity and feel safe to speak about their experiences, and to influence services, policies, and initiatives so that they work for all that need them.

> **We need to provide opportunities for all older people to share their stories**
>
> WA senior

Targeted and tailored opportunities to engage with diverse and harder-to-reach groups have been critical to this Strategy's development. We will continue to focus on ensuring that government and industry initiatives are informed and inspired by the diversity of seniors and their perspectives, from decision making through to delivery.

50 World Health Organization (2007). Global age-friendly cities: a guide, p6

Achieving Our Vision

This Strategy is a whole-of-government approach to achieving better outcomes for seniors, and by extension, everyone in WA. The pillars and key focus areas set out above will guide us as we strive to achieve better outcomes for seniors in WA.

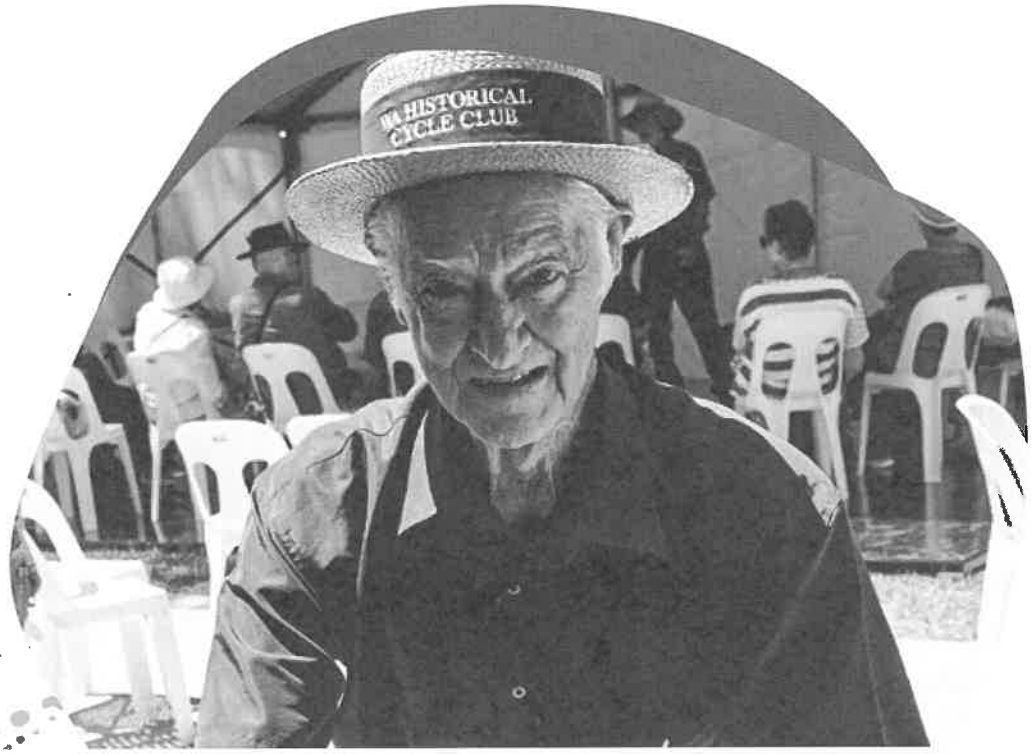
Communities will oversee the whole-of-government efforts to deliver this Strategy

Communities will be responsible for driving implementation of this Strategy across government in order to achieve the objectives of the Strategy and will establish a cross-agency working group to come together to track progress of the Strategy and monitor the effectiveness of any actions undertaken.

Two five-year Action Plans will be developed to support delivery of the Strategy's objectives

The State Government will commit to a five-year Action Plan to guide delivery of this Strategy through its first five years. The Action Plan will include specific actions and initiatives that the State Government will take and deliver to support the realisation of our vision. They will align to the pillars, and target known gaps and challenges identified by seniors throughout the consultation, and as highlighted in our key focus areas.

A second five-year plan will be developed as we approach the halfway mark of this Strategy to guide the final five years.



We will track our progress and outcomes, and be accountable to seniors and the WA community

To make sure the Strategy is achieving what it sets out to do, Communities has developed an internal Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan alongside the Strategy that sets out how we will monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Strategy and Action Plan. This M&E plan will:

- ensure that we collect and review the right information to measure our progress
- enable us to make informed decisions about how we deliver the Strategy (including adjusting how and what we do if needed)
- keep us accountable to seniors and the broader WA community, to make sure that the Strategy is doing its job and delivering improved outcomes for seniors in WA.

The M&E plan will help us to track our progress, address any shortfalls, and make informed decisions about future actions and investments. It also connects to other important whole-of-government outcomes including targets under Closing the Gap and the WA Community Services Outcomes Measurement Framework.

Together we will support and empower seniors to live happy and fulfilling lives

The Strategy represents a clear commitment by the State Government to support older Western Australians of all backgrounds live their best life where they can participate and contribute as they choose. Through this Strategy and Action Plans, we will all play a role in supporting seniors to live and age well, and for WA to be a leader in age-friendly communities.

Together, the State Government and local governments, alongside the broader community, will empower seniors to live happy and fulfilling lives, so that we will all benefit from their significant contributions, experiences and ideas across WA.

Seniors in the broader strategic landscape

This Strategy is one part of a broader strategic landscape and has been developed to align with and support other key plans and initiatives. Some existing strategies which directly address the needs of older people have informed the development of this Strategy and will support its implementation. Others target cohorts of which seniors are a part. An overview of the strategies, agreements and plans which intersect with this Strategy is provided in Appendix A: Strategic landscape.

Over the life of this Strategy, we will continue to connect meaningfully with local governments, State Government agencies, and the Australian Government on their key strategies and initiatives that impact the lives of WA seniors as part of implementation. Through this Strategy, and in connection with others, we will collectively contribute to our vision of an age-friendly WA where seniors feel valued, safe and empowered to lead happy and fulfilling lives.

Appendix A Strategic Landscape

Table 5 below outlines existing strategies, agreements and plans which intersect with, and supports implementation of, the State Seniors Strategy.

Table 5 Strategic landscape

Title	Lead Agency	Purpose
Western Australian		
Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy	Department of Communities	The strategy was developed in response to extensive community feedback, and in recognition of the disproportionate impact of family violence on Aboriginal women, children, families, and communities.
Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations Strategy 2022 to 2032	Department of Communities	Department of Communities is committed to partnering and working with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) across WA to deliver conducive outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people, and their families across the spectrum of child protection services.
Outcomes Framework for Aboriginal Health 2020 2030: An outcomes focused approach to funding community-based healthcare services	Department of Health	An outcomes-focused approach to funding community-based healthcare services. The Outcomes Framework seeks to build on and complement the intent of the WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030.
Sustainable Health Review	Department of Health	This review consists of eight strategies and 30 recommendations to drive the health system to focus on prevention and early intervention as opposed to the current reactive-based model to ensure a more sustainable healthcare system.
Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy: Western Australia 2021-2029	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	This strategy outlines a high-level framework for future State Government policies, plans, initiatives, and programs that contribute to better outcomes for Aboriginal people, built around genuine partnerships and engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders, strong accountability, and culturally responsive ways of working.
WA Carers Strategy	Department of Communities	This strategy was developed in partnership with the Carers Advisory Council and Carers WA, the strategy guides the WA community on how to better recognise and support carers.
Digital Strategy for the Western Australian Government 2021-2025	Department of Premier and Cabinet Office of Digital Government	This strategy aims to change the way the community interacts with government by putting WA people, businesses, and communities at its centre and sets the vision for a government that provides convenient, accessible, and secure online services informed by quality data insights. It also recognises that as government delivers more services online and better leverages data to inform its operations, excellent cyber security capabilities are more important than ever.

Title	Lead Agency	Purpose
A Western Australia for Everyone: State Disability Strategy 2020-2030	Department of Communities	A Western Australia for Everyone: State Disability Strategy 2020-2030 sets the foundation for building a more inclusive Western Australia, empowering people with disability to participate meaningfully in all parts of society and to have the resources to do so.
WA Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse) 2019-2029	Department of Communities	WA's first strategy to respond to elder abuse. This 10-year strategy is a blueprint for the priorities, actions, and outcomes required to effectively prevent and respond to the abuse of older people. The Elder Abuse Strategy highlights four priority areas: raising awareness and early identification; prevention and early intervention; integrated and coordinated response; and data and evidence.
Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality	Department of Communities	This strategy provides a framework for coordinated action by government, business, organisations, and individuals with practical steps to advance gender equality over a ten-year period.
Western Australian Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex: Health Strategy 2019-24: Diverse communities, diverse care	Department of Health	This strategy sets out clear priorities and outcomes for the WA health system, Health Service Providers and health services on policy development and service delivery to achieve optimal health and wellbeing outcomes for LGBTI populations.
Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries Office of Multicultural Interests	The Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework (WAMPF) is outcome-focused, providing a structure for agencies to direct their efforts in achieving the government's vision for multiculturalism in WA – through effective leadership, planning service provision and engagement with communities.
Western Australian Veterans and Families Strategy	The strategy was initially developed by the Department of Communities. Responsibility for the Veterans Issue portfolio (including the Strategy) transferred to the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI) in July 2020	This strategy provides a framework to guide the development of policies and initiatives that welcome veterans and their families and commemorates the service and sacrifice of Australian service personnel.
Path to Safety: Western Australia's Strategy to Reduce Family and Domestic Violence 2020-2030	Department of Communities	This strategy sets out a clear whole-of-government and community plan for reducing and responding to family and domestic violence over a decade.

Title	Lead Agency	Purpose
Mental Health 2020: Making it personal and everybody's business: Reforming Western Australia's mental health system	Mental Health Commission	The development of a modern and effective mental health system for WA underpinned by five key principles, three key directions for reform and nine priority areas for action.
WA Housing Strategy 2020-2030	Department of Communities	This strategy is a call to action for all sectors to work together to improve housing choices and access to suitable and affordable homes particularly for the most vulnerable. It sets clear targets to create a more agile housing system that can respond to current and future need.
All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030	Department of Communities	This strategy is a whole-of-community plan, setting the direction for all levels of government, business, and the community sector in responding to and preventing homelessness in WA.
WA Active Mobility Strategy	Department of Transport	Department of Transport is currently leading the development of a whole-of-state Active Mobility Strategy, on behalf of the WA Bike Riding Reference Group (BRRG). Whilst bike riding is a significant focus, the BRRG provides strategic direction relevant to all active modes across WA.
WA Volunteering Strategy: Enriching lives, strengthening communities	Department of Communities	This strategy provides a broad framework for action and suggests strategies that can be implemented through a whole-of-community approach, to encourage and support volunteering.
Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy: for WA Public Sector Employment 2020-2025	Public Sector Commission	The twin goals of the strategy are to increase the representation of people from different backgrounds at all levels (workforce diversification) and ensure all staff in the sector experience a sense of belonging and inclusion in the work environment (workforce inclusion).
State Training Plan 2022-23	State Training Board	A key strategic document that sets out the training needs of the state's industries and how those needs should be met by State Government investment in vocational education and training. Led by the industry-backed State Training Board, the plan outlines eight priorities to guide a well-funded, responsive, and innovative vocational education and training sector that supports the strategic development of the state's industries and the economy.
Our Community Blueprint for Digital Inclusion in WA	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	A whole-of-government approach to improving digital access and inclusion through making internet services more available and affordable, upskilling of people in the community, as well as working with businesses and government departments to provide more accessible digital platforms.

Title	Lead Agency	Purpose
Australian Government		
The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement)	Australian Government	The objective of the National Agreement is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians. All signatories to the agreement, including the WA Government, have committed to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards a future where policy making and programs that impact on their lives are carried out in genuine partnership.
Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety	Australian Government	The Royal Commission assessed the current status of the Australian Aged Care System, identifying the systemic problems and weaknesses of the current system. The Royal Commission report identifies priority requiring urgent improvement, and proposes solutions aimed at rebuilding and improving aged care for Australians.
International		
WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities		WHO Age-friendly Communities are connected through the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities, with the common aim to create communities that promote healthy ageing for seniors. Communities within the network have a commitment to work collaboratively on a global level to develop an age-friendly world. Currently, the Network covers 300 million people, spanning across 1,445 cities and communities in 51 countries.
United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021-2030	United Nations	The Decade of Healthy Ageing provides an opportunity for governments and international agencies to work towards better outcomes for all aspects of the lives of older people worldwide. Key action areas outlined include age-friendly environments, combatting ageism, integrated care, and long-term care.

Appendix B References

1 Through this report, the Department of Communities uses the term 'Aboriginal' respectfully to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as the preferred usage by Aboriginal people in WA.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Population: Census. Available from: https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/population-census/2021

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Population: Census. Available from: https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/population-census/2021

4 World Health Organization. The WHO Age-friendly Cities Framework. Available from: https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/age-friendly-cities-framework/

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