

# feros

SUMMER 2020



**COVER STORY**  
**BE SOMEONE  
FOR SOMEONE**

**CONNECTING  
YOUNG  
AND OLD**

**EMELITA KEEPS  
FINDING  
JOY**



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**Cover Photo Credit:**

Jacob Klaus

**From left:** Tarnya Sim, Shelly Craft and Jo Winwood



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# CEO'S WORD

## WELCOME TO THE SUMMER 2020 EDITION OF FEROS MAGAZINE

In this edition I'm very proud to share with you the launch of Feros Care's charitable initiative, **Be Someone For Someone**. The initiative aims to tackle what is arguably the country's most challenging epidemic – loneliness. While we've been introducing programs to support our clients who are lonely, the problem is so widespread in Australia that we are expanding our efforts to reach people beyond those in our care. This cause is close to my heart and it is gratifying to see the dream of creating **Be Someone For Someone** realised. Read more on page 8.

People are the centre of our organisation, and we love to celebrate their successes, their journeys and their lives. That's why you'll find plenty of stories about people in this, and all our magazines. Take Nathan – page 6, and Emelita – page 24. Both NDIS participants,

they have experienced challenges and found their way through. Wommin Bay resident Vic shares his simple tip for living life to the fullest on page 7, while staff member Rachel gives us the low-down on Grow Bold Requests on page 27.

There's plenty more inside the cover! The focus for Feros magazine is information and enjoyment. We'd love to hear your feedback and any suggestions for the magazine. Email [marketing@feroscare.com.au](mailto:marketing@feroscare.com.au) and it will be gratefully received.

As always, there's been lots happening at Feros Care since the last edition. Projects like Bold Ballerinas, Grand Gamers and Ask Gran Not Google have nurtured intergenerational connections – page 12. While our Gran Slammers have taken the world of slam poetry by storm – page 21. We've also updated our Feros Care Values. Renewed to

suit the change and growth in our organisation since we began almost 30 years ago, our values underpin everything we do at Feros Care. Read more on page 26.

We're also moving closer to the launch of Season 2 of Fearless Films. This season of Fearless will focus on the lives of people with disability living fearlessly. We have a shortlist of people who will tell their story, and our partner, Screenworks is recruiting talented filmmakers to bring them to life on film. We can't wait to share them with you in the coming months.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of your Feros Magazine.

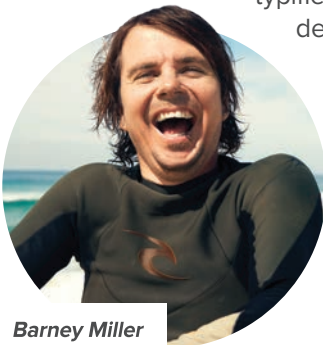
**Jennene Buckley**  
CEO



# CHRISTIAN DESIGNS WORLD CHAMP'S NEW SURFBOARD

With more than 50 creative entries, there was stiff competition to win the honour of designing World Adaptive Surfing Champion and Feros Care Ambassador, Barney Miller's next board.

After deliberation by the judging panel, **Christian Chapman's** bold, futuristic design was chosen. The design typifies Barney's transformation and determination to walk.



Barney Miller

Congratulations Christian, and thanks to all of our entrants!

A special shout-out to Barney. We know 2019 was a very challenging year healthwise, and we're awed by your determination to continue to live your best bold life!



## RU OK? – A QUESTION FOR EVERY DAY

R U OK? Day is about empowering everyone to connect with the people around them and start a conversation with anyone who may be struggling. While this important message has a special focus on the day, at Feros Care we try to put this into practice every day by starting

conversations with our friends, family, colleagues and clients whenever we notice a change in them, no matter how small.

On the day itself, there were lots of activities across the organisation, including 'chat corners' in our ACT office, a wonderful awareness video

created by the virtual LAC team, and of course a sea of yellow clothing that served as a visual reminder.

If you are looking for resources and support for yourself, or to help others, a great place to start is with the resources available on the R U OK website – [ruok.org.au](http://ruok.org.au).





Carlee Williams

## VIRTUAL SERVICE MAKES LIFE EASIER FOR NDIS PARTICIPANTS

Meeting with a Local Area Coordinator (LAC) can be difficult to fit into busy lives. That's why the Feros Care LAC service offers different options to participants and their families and carers. Face-to-face meetings at our office, our participant's home or even a café work perfectly for some, especially when creating first plans.

For others, including parents who work full-time, attending a face-to-face meeting just isn't convenient. That's where our Virtual LAC Team come in. Based in Tweed Heads, our team of Virtual LACs provide over-the-phone plan options for participants across all our service areas. And now they're able to offer virtual services outside of normal business hours.

Feros Care Virtual LAC Carlee Williams enjoys providing virtual services to participants. "I speak with so many people from all five of our service areas that

I've developed a broad local knowledge of each of them. My colleagues are the same."

"We're able to answer queries quickly and efficiently for participants," continues Carlee. "They get the information they need straight away. It also means our LACs out in the community can be efficient in servicing their face-to-face participants as they're not constantly checking messages and returning calls."

Carlee, who has previously worked in community roles where she's on the road, enjoys the organisation and efficiency of being office based. She is able to focus on the important and rewarding part of her role – supporting participants to create their plans – without the interruptions inherent in travelling.

As the only partner in the community with a Virtual LAC team, we're proud to be able to offer this

## MERV AND RAE GO PLATINUM



For Feros Care Wommin Bay residents Merv and Rae Edwards, September the 3rd is an extra special day. It's the day, 70 years ago, that they wed.

Never shy about a party, the team at Wommin Bay celebrated their platinum wedding anniversary with them. As well as delicious cake and treats at their special afternoon tea, there were speeches from family and friends, a Mr and Mrs Quiz and a good old 'knees up'.

A huge congratulations from all the team at Feros Care Merv and Rae!

additional option to suit more of our participants.

As an NDIS Partner in the Community, Feros Care provides Local Area Coordination services in Townsville, Mackay, the ACT, Barossa and Northern Adelaide. For more information visit [feroscare.com.au/ndis](https://feroscare.com.au/ndis).



## THE INSIDE STORY

# NATHAN'S TOP 3 TIPS FOR MAXIMISING YOUR NDIS PLAN

**FOR MANY, THE NDIS IS NEW AND POSSIBLY DAUNTING. NATHAN MAHER HAS BEEN THERE! HE SHARES HIS STORY AND HIS TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR FUNDING.**

**T**he last five years have not been easy for Nathan Maher. In fact, they've been the opposite. But you wouldn't know it speaking to him.

In April 2014, Nathan was a healthy 35 year-old who was rarely sick. A month later he became critically ill with a life-threatening form of meningitis and was placed in an induced coma. He was not expected to see out the month. Although he did, by July of 2015 Nathan was a double amputee.

Nathan shares his story as background, however it is not his focus. Instead, he is full of gratitude for the people who have helped him to harness his own determination and regain his control and independence.

People like Cindy Seaman, his Feros Care Local Area Coordinator, who understood Nathan's needs and built a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Plan that maximised every dollar so he could have those needs met.



*Nathan and his sister who convinced him to do his first ever event. 30km equaled six grueling laps around the lake on the wettest and windiest day in over ten years! Nathan raised well over \$5,000 for charity!*

"Cindy's knowledge of the NDIS is truly remarkable, and not just about the supports offered by the NDIS, but what supports I, as a double amputee with numerous underlying medical conditions, will benefit from in the future," says Nathan.

Through the planning process, Cindy linked Nathan to other professionals he could choose from, who could provide the supports he needed.

Nathan refers to his work with physiotherapist Matt Croger as 'life-changing' due to his invaluable pain management focus.

"I came to Matt weak and extremely overweight from lack of mobility due to debilitating pain. Put simply, Matt has rebuilt me from the ground up. Matt is constantly making me redefine my beliefs in what I am capable of achieving and has supported me in every sense of the word".

Nathan has lost 65kg and is able to manage his pain. His work with Matt has not only helped restore his confidence and self-belief, it's pushed him beyond his limits.

These days Nathan is fit and physically active, and a regular half and full marathoner. Completing his first half-marathon in October 2016, he credits his NDIS plan and the funding of a personal trainer Bernie Dowling from Body2Burn with his ability to achieve this goal. Training time with Bernie was pivotal in his recovery. Nathan was not only able to lose 30kg in two and a half months, it became a form of therapy for him.

He has since participated in many marathons and runs – at times seizing the opportunity to raise money for organisations like the Starlight Foundation and Ks for Kids. His best time is 1 hour 21 minutes.

### NATHAN'S TOP TIPS FOR MAXIMISING YOUR NDIS PLAN

Although the NDIS began its roll out in the ACT in 2014, for many participants around Australia it is still new. As someone with first-hand experience of the scheme as a participant, Nathan is keen to pass on his wisdom.

- 1. Know what your goals are, and speak with as many people as you can in the community about your goals.**
- 2. Once you are clear on your goals, be persistent and relentless about achieving them – this is the rest of your life, so it's important.**
- 3. Don't be afraid to be picky with your service providers. Your Local Area Coordinator can provide you with details of those that might suit your needs, however it's up to you to choose. So ask questions, read reviews, ask around and make sure you're happy with them!**



**For more on Feros Care and its role with the NDIS visit [feroscare.com.au/ndis](http://feroscare.com.au/ndis)**



# VIC'S WONDERFUL LIFE

## VIC HANNAM'S TOP TIP FOR LIVING LIFE TO THE FULLEST? BE NICE TO PEOPLE.

**T**he 90-year-old Feros Village Wommin Bay resident, who grew up amongst the seedy streets of Kings Cross's red light district and went on to sail the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, reckons it is that simple.

"My parents owned a bed and breakfast and they got very close with people. If you weren't nice to people, you never got the trade," he says.

"My mother would cater for anyone; doesn't matter who they are, whether they are heavies or what, we knew them all in the Cross."

And knew them all they did. The family bed and breakfast sat opposite the famous Sargents Pies in Palmer Street, Kings Cross, and across from Tilly Devine's infamous establishment.

Tilly, who made her name as a brothel madam and organised crime entrepreneur, was linked to everything from sly-grog to razor gangs, and was one of several 'characters' that epitomised the suburb in the 1920s to 1950s.

"I come up the hard way, but I say I was brought up the right way. I had very strict parents who taught me right from wrong. I never went to a brothel in my life and I had them all around me," says Vic.

Another well-known neighbour was Dame Mary Gilmore, an Australian writer and journalist whose face graces Australia's \$10 note, and who Vic helped with 'all her odd jobs'.

"I haven't been an extra well educated guy, but I've learnt what I

was supposed to know and do and it has worked out well for me through life," says Vic.

After earning his trade as a fitter and machinist, Vic took his father's advice and decided to 'do a bit of travelling' as a ships steward before he settled down. It was at this time he met his wife, Barbara.

"I was to take a passenger out one night and she couldn't make it, so she sent a girlfriend along and that's when I met her," Vic smiles.

"She was interested in everything I did, and I was interested in everything she did. We worked as a team, we were good."

The couple moved to Sydney's northern beaches, close to his mother's new bed and breakfast in Manly, and reared three children – Mark, Greg and Kim.

His love of the ocean continued and he joined the crew on the Mistral, one of just 28 boats involved in the 1947 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race – just the third annual running of the 'blue water classic'.

While football, ice skating and rifle shooting were also among his many sporting pursuits, dancing is the one that brings the biggest smile to his face.

Within weeks of their first child, Mark, being born, Vic and Barbara were back on the dance floor, enjoying the quickstep in famous dance halls, including the Trocadero.

"We took my little bloke the first or second week after he was born and



the guy on the door looked after him, while we went in and had a dance," he laughs.

Sadly, after 60 years of marriage, Barbara passed away two years ago at the age of 84. She lived at Feros Village Wommin Bay with Vic.

Today, Vic is surrounded by friends of a different kind at the Village.

"They are lovely here," he says.

"I treat people as they treat me and the girls are wonderful. I can't fault them and I give this place a good rap every chance I get.

**“ I'M VERY LUCKY,  
I'VE HAD A GOOD  
TIME – A GOOD LIFE.**

"I've never done anything silly... gone out on the grog or things like that. I'm not a drinker, I'm not a smoker and I'm not a gambler.

"If you've got good partners, hang on to them, that's what I always say to people."



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“WE’RE ON A MISSION

# BE SOMEONE

Tackling loneliness together

## FEROS CARE HAS LAUNCHED A MAJOR CHARITABLE INITIATIVE BY TO TACKLE WHAT

**B**e Someone For Someone has been created in response to alarming statistics that reveal one in four Australians are lonely every day.

Loneliness is known to have a bigger impact on health than smoking, physical inactivity and obesity, accelerating premature death by 26 per cent – worse than smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Feros Care CEO Jennene Buckley says her team work with people across Australia – many of whom were lonely or at risk of being lonely, isolated and in need of human connection.

“In our work we see loneliness everywhere,” she says.

“ **IN OUR WORK WE SEE LONELINESS EVERYWHERE**

“To remedy this, we’ve been introducing initiatives like ‘In Great Company’ – a program that connects volunteers with people who are lonely; and technologies, like Feros Care’s Virtual Social Centre – a digital platform that helps connect people who are isolated.

“But unfortunately the problem is so widespread that we need to expand our efforts so we can reach people outside of those in our care.

“To help us tackle loneliness on a bigger scale, Feros Care founded Be Someone For Someone – a dedicated charity devoted to raising awareness and funds to help us fight this growing national problem.”

Head of Be Someone For Someone, Jo Winwood says everybody deserves to have quality social connections.

“Humans are social beings and they need to feel like they belong – it’s as simple as that,” she says.

“Feeling valued and giving value to others through meaningful connections is as vital to our health,

TO TACKLE  
LONLINESS  
TOGETHER”

# FOR SOMEONE

Founded by



## IT IS ARGUABLY THE COUNTRY’S MOST CHALLENGING EPIDEMIC – LONELINESS.

happiness and longevity as the air we breathe.

“The good news is, together we can address loneliness so people can live healthy, connected lives.”

Jo says Be Someone For Someone will focus on awareness, education and solutions.

“We want to raise awareness of loneliness and its impacts with government, organisations and communities so we can tackle it together,” she says.

“We also want to understand its underlying triggers so we can implement and scale a range

of impactful programs tailored specifically to address loneliness in its various forms.

“And finally we want to raise funds to pay for this important work.

“To help us achieve this, we are looking for philanthropists, businesses and the general public to support us in whatever way they can, be it as co-funders, advocates, volunteers or donors.”

Ms Buckley says Feros Care was the right organisation to steer this project.

“For more than 30 years, Feros Care has been actively advocating for, and working towards, helping people live happy and fulfilled lives,” she said.

“We already support more than 60,000 people and their carers and families every year, and we are now using that expertise to draw attention to the impact of loneliness and help create a more connected world.”



**To find out more, if you need support, or you want to be a supporter, visit the website [besomeoneforsomeone.org](https://www.besomeoneforsomeone.org)**



# THE LAUNCH

**BE SOMEONE FOR SOMEONE WAS LAUNCHED AT A VIP EVENT AT STONE & WOOD IN BYRON BAY WHERE 200 LOCALS, PHILANTHROPISTS, ARTISTS, MEDIA AND CELEBRITIES GOT BEHIND THE CAUSE TO HELP FIGHT LONELINESS.**

Hosted by Shelley Craft, the event also unveiled a giant jigsaw comprising 360 puzzle pieces decorated by people from across the country, 10 of which were sold during a live auction, with a piece by Aboriginal artist Narelle Watton fetching the highest price of \$1,050.

The Connection Project, inspired by the work of popular US artist and creator Tim Kelly, is a visual arts initiative that culminated in a giant, 360-piece jigsaw puzzle made up of artworks designed by people across Australia including schools, community groups, artists and celebrities.

All artists were asked to decorate their own puzzle piece after reflecting on what 'belonging' meant to them, drawing their inspiration from the words, "I feel most loved when...".

Designed to start a national conversation around loneliness and to raise money for Be Someone For Someone – the response from the country was overwhelming, with a host of big-name celebrities lending their artistic skills to help the cause including Bernard Fanning, Sonia Kruger, Joh Griggs and Pete Evans.

"This project has resonated with people from all walks of life, which is testament to how prevalent and relatable loneliness is among everyday Australians," said Head of Be Someone For Someone, Jo Winwood.

"The result is a visually striking and emotionally moving piece of art that goes right to the heart of what it feels like to belong.

"In addition to the beautiful artwork, the personal stories written by the artists are a heartwarming insight into how people feel about belonging and that social connections are as important to our vitality as the air we breathe."



**BE SOMEONE FOR SOMEONE**  
Tackling loneliness together

Founded by  
**feros care**  
GROW BOLD







# CONNECTING THE YOUNG AND OLD

**FOSTERING INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS IS A KEY FOCUS AT FEROS CARE, WE UNDERSTAND THE PROFOUND IMPORTANCE OF OLDER AND YOUNGER PEOPLE ACTIVELY ENGAGING IN EACH OTHERS' LIVES.**

**T**he vast amount of research suggests that engagement between generations may make people happier and healthier, while increasing their life expectancy.

These findings have been echoed through community projects created by Feros Care to encourage and facilitate connections between young and old.

Some of these projects include Gran Slam – an initiative that gave seniors a voice and a chance to join the youth-dominated slam poetry culture; and our nation-wide initiative 'Ask Gran Not Google' that encourages children to put down their devices and seek answers and advice from seniors.

'Ask Gran Not Google' proved so successful that it has now been funded by state and federal governments and rolled out at more than 435 schools across Australia – many of which have adopted the program on an ongoing basis.

Feros Care CEO Jennene Buckley says the benefits of connecting children and older adults are infinite for both generations.

"In a world where many extended families are separated by distance or overwhelmed by the pace of modern life, Feros Care initiatives like 'Gran Slam' and 'Ask Gran Not Google' are wonderful ways for youngsters and seniors to come together and learn new things about each other," she says.

**“ RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE CRITICAL INGREDIENT IN WELLBEING, PARTICULARLY AS WE AGE**

"Relationships are the critical ingredient in wellbeing, particularly as we age, so at Feros Care we focus on finding ways to ensure seniors are given a voice in the community and have opportunities to connect with people of all ages."

Ms Buckley says Feros Care also embraces technology as a way to connect people – a strategy that has been internationally recognised through the 2019 Global Ageing Network's (GAN) Excellence in Ageing Services Award.

"We are thrilled to have been acknowledged on the world stage for technologies that have the potential to revolutionise the global aged care industry," she says.

"These technologies include our Virtual Social Centre (VSC) – a platform that ensures those at risk of social isolation can join others via video-link and enjoy facilitated sessions such as Tai Chi, book club and poetry reading."

Ms Buckley says with loneliness becoming one of society's biggest problems, the opportunity to connect, be it face-to-face or digitally, is more important than ever.

"Fostering intergenerational connections not only improves the wellbeing of those involved, it also helps inspire social change and strengthen communities, which is key to tackling the issue of loneliness," she says.

"We're proud to be leading the way with programs that create opportunities for seniors to not only connect with young people but feel a greater sense of self-worth."



## GRAND GAMERS

Feros Village residents over the age of 80 have been fighting in a galaxy far, far away while psychology and behavioural science researcher, Alex McCord has been studying the impact of gaming on their mental processes.

The University of New England post-graduate student found that residents of the villages who regularly played Star Wars: Battlefront, significantly improved their ability to switch tasks and maintain visual attention

– benefits that were sustained one month later.

“Twice weekly gaming over three weeks also significantly improved working memory immediately after game play, but the gains regressed a month later,” said Ms McCord.

“This suggests that game play should be ongoing to preserve its positive effects and, with that, Feros Care has now introduced gaming to two of its residential villages on a regular basis.”



## BOLD BALLERINAS

Pirouetting pre-schoolers and chasteing seniors have proved you're never too young or old to become a ballerina.

Residents of Feros Village Byron Bay attended ballet lessons with the aim to improve their strength, balance and flexibility through dance.

After a few classes, the dozen seniors, with an average age of 90, were joined by four-year-olds from Byron Bay Preschool and,

according to Feros Care Positive Living Manager Bec Stephens, that is where the real magic happened.

“The ballet classes have been fantastic for the residents and you can see the positive effect it has on their mood and wellbeing,” she said.

“The residents really look forward to their ballet lessons and then when the pre-schoolers arrived, the energy lifted and there was a real joy on everyone's faces.”

## INTERGENERATIONAL CHOIR

Participants are singing the praises of a beautiful program that has seen 25 preschoolers join 30 aged care residents to form an intergenerational choir at Feros Village Byron Bay.

After six weeks of rehearsals, residents from Feros Care villages, alongside children from Byron Bay Preschool, showcased their talents during a performance in November.

Under the guidance of choir master, Melia Nauhton, who heads up the Byron Bay 'Shire Choir', the group performed a variety of

songs including Yellow Submarine, Edelweiss and some tribal 'call-out' songs.

Choir mistress Melia Nauhton said this was the first time she had worked on a project that connected 'four and 94-year-olds'.

“It's so beautiful to watch the children's faces as they sing to the old people and to witness the genuine connections,” she said.





# FRIENDSHIPS BREW BETWEEN BEER MAKERS AND SENIORS

**THE KARAOKE MACHINE BELTED OUT EVERYTHING FROM FRANK SINATRA TO BRITNEY SPEARS AS FEROS CARE VILLAGE RESIDENTS AND LOCAL BREWERY WORKERS JOINED TOGETHER FOR A DAY OF SINGING, DANCING AND FRIENDSHIP.**

**T**he Stone & Wood Brewery team volunteered their time and donated beer to brighten the day of residents at Feros Village Wommin Bay.

The young volunteers were paired up with seniors on a trip to the beach – walkers, wheelchairs and all – before enjoying lunch and ‘happy hour’ back at the village.

Feros Village Wommin Bay positive living assistant Lisa Burnie said the Stone & Wood team were so genuine in their interactions that they had already made plans to return.

“The Stone & Wood team brought a huge injection of energy and good vibes and our residents are still buzzing from it,” she said.

**“ IT WAS JUST BEAUTIFUL TO SEE A BIG WAVE OF YOUTH BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO THE PLACE.**

“Some of the team made such genuine connections that they have planned to come back and see the residents one-on-one.

“The next move is for us is to visit the Stone & Wood team at their brewery in Byron Bay and we’ve already had residents asking when that’s happening.

“It’s more than just a day, it’s going to be something that’s ongoing. For the residents, knowing that they’ve

made new friends gives them a sense of purpose and something to look forward to.

“We just can’t thank Stone & Wood enough for choosing to give up their time to visit us and encourage all companies to do the same with their local aged care village.”

Feros Village Wommin Bay resident Ruth Nugent said the volunteers brought ‘so much love’.

“They bring their love and their help and make us feel happy. We appreciate them so much,” she said.

Stone & Wood Communications and Community Engagement Manager, Jasmin Daly said her team got more out of it than they put in.

“We left the Feros Village on Thursday with full hearts. The team got so much out of spending time with the residents and I feel like they did too. We’re all inspired to continue doing it,” she said.

“We volunteer because this is a part of who we are. Supporting the community and giving back have been intrinsic to who Stone & Wood is from the beginning and enabling our team to get out there and do it is important to us.

“We’re conscious of not making these days tokenistic and that’s why we want to work with not for profits to build meaningful relationships and for our team to support them in the ways they need it.”



**For more useful, inspiring and**







# LET'S INNOVATE:

## THREE COOL THINGS HAPPENING IN DISABILITY

by Tristram Peters

### CUE THE CONFETTI AND CAKE. ZOLGENSMA HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE FDA!

**T**o the uninitiated, Zolgensma wouldn't mean much at all. The word Zolgensma looks like someone's throwing down tiles in a brazen attempt to top score at Scrabble. But for myself and others with Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 2 it's a Very Big Deal. It's a potential cure.

Zolgensma, a gene therapy, replaces the survival motor neuron (SMN1) gene, which is missing or mutated (looking at you X-Men mutants) in folks like me. This gene provides the building blocks for life, giving the muscles their oomph.

But we missed the fine print: the therapy is only suitable for people newly diagnosed. You see, the effects of SMA can't be reversed for someone my age. Not by Zolgensma at least. Its curative powers lie in early use, before symptoms take full effect.

Although a rollercoaster, I'll admit that I'm okay with the news. I'd love to be cured, but I've accepted my lot, and the thought that newborns will have this therapy is beautiful enough. Without a doubt, it'll save thousands and thousands of lives.

I'm also okay with the news because, well, the world is forever innovating. On the daily, people are inventing and brainstorming ways that make society more and more accessible. They're also normalising disability. Let's take a quick gander...

### 1. Disability, dating & sex

One of the big things changing within society is also the healthy discussion around people with disability, relationships, and sexuality. I mean, why it took so long, I'll never know. But more innovators are working in this area than ever before.

Organisations like Northcott offer sexuality and relationship education. This includes counselling, expos, and helping people march at Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. Northcott Innovation also works to find needs and gaps in the sex toy market for people with disability.

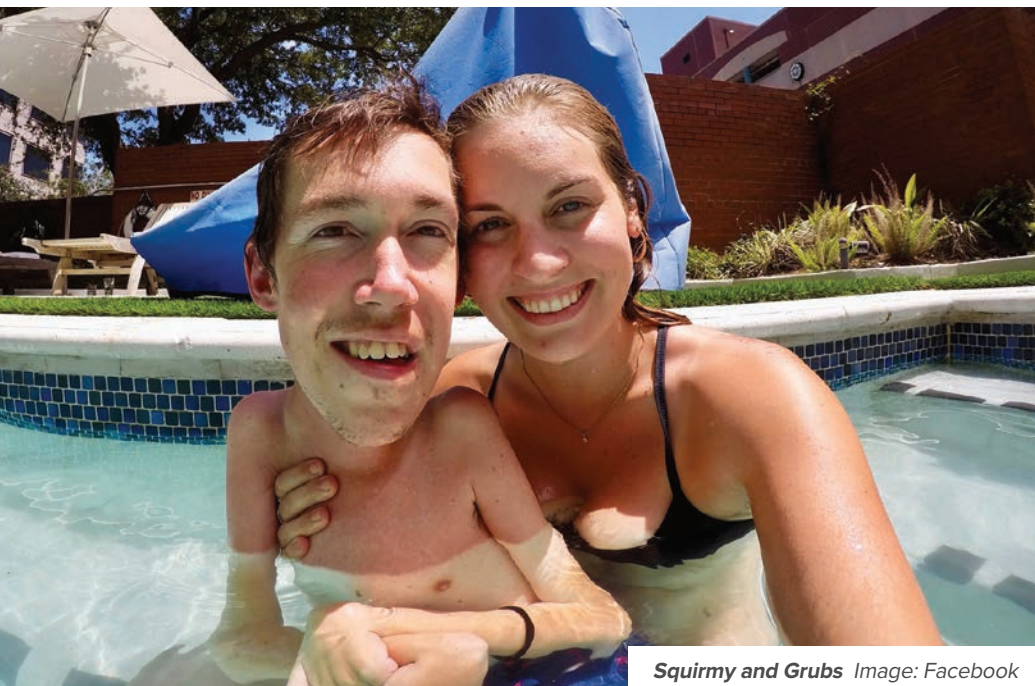
More than anything, the innovators in this space are the ones who continually normalise disability, showing that we have the same desires and wants as everyone else. For instance, Squirmy and Grubs are brilliant at capturing what dating someone with a disability entails.

Annoyingly, society does kick back. Squirmy and Grubs (real names: Shane and Hannah) are often the victims of internet trolls, who believe that there must be an ulterior motive for Hannah's love of Shane. There's not; changing society's perception just takes time sometimes.

And hell, they're engaged now. Take that, internet trolls.

### 2. Make-a-thon innovations

I don't know what I'd do without my powerchair, but these days, powerchairs are merely the beginning of the mind-wrinkling assistive technologies that are being



*Squirmy and Grubs* Image: Facebook





*Thisables Snap Cup – Ikea*



*Thisables Finger Brush – Ikea*

introduced to the market. The people behind these technologies are the real MVPs of the world.

Take a look at TOM. Not a bloke, but an acronym for ‘Tikkun Olam Makers’. It’s a global movement that ‘creates and disseminates affordable solutions’ to common problems faced by people with disabilities and others. They partly do this by running ‘make-a-thon’ style events.

Basically, people with disabilities submit everyday problems that they would like solved. They’re linked with a team of ‘makers’ (engineers, designers, developers, and occupational therapists) who then solve that problem.

Some of the solutions they’ve created included an adjustable guide-dog harness, crutches that can be turned into a chair, portable ramps, and a device (made of pulleys and ropes) that allows someone with a disability to independently dress themselves. Genius!

With these make-a-thons becoming more and more common, we’re also seeing major corporations enter the game, in order to make their services more accessible to people with disability. Microsoft is one such big-name player.

Spurred on by a community of gamers who had been modifying existing controllers for years, Microsoft last September released an adaptive controller for its Xbox One.

Now, people with disability can play freely with their peers.

### 3. Housing and supported living

With assistive technology affording people greater independence, many things are becoming more easily achievable. For me, innovation means that I can begin looking at moving out of home and living independently, even at the grand ol’ age of 28.

For your disability housing needs, check out sites like The Housing Hub. It’s got vacancies in New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria, including existing Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) properties, private rental, properties for sale, and more.

We also need to give a shout-out all the amazing organisations (again, read: innovators) working in this space, from Youngcare to the hand-in-hand Summer Foundation and Summer Housing. For the latter, apartment features include access to a ‘concierge’ support service!

Much of this fits within SDA, which is funded by the National Disability

Insurance Agency (NDIA). Basically, it refers to accommodation for people who require specialist housing. If you require specialist accommodation, it’s worth investigating.

With such a focus on independent living, it’s also great to see companies like IKEA get in on the act. IKEA Israel’s ThisAbles project offers simple furniture hacks that people can download and 3D-print; these hacks include easier-to-grab handles and bigger light switches. Nice one, society.

### WHAT ELSE CAN WE INNOVATE?

Making the world a more accessible place just takes a small bit of innovation. By engaging the makers and linking them with people with disabilities (aka TOM), we can find solutions to problems we previously thought unsolvable.

I might not have a cure, nor might I ever, but society is steadily evolving. We’ve just got to continue finding the innovators, makers and people who normalise disability.

#### ABOUT TRISTRAM

Tristram is the Content Manager at Clickability, an Australian disability service directory and Information, Linkages and Capacity Building grant recipient that allows NDIS participants to rate and review their disability supports.



For more useful, inspiring and entertaining articles visit [feroscare.com.au/feros-stories](https://feroscare.com.au/feros-stories)



# DIANE COMES HOME TO ART



COMING BACK TO SOMETHING YOU LOVE, CAN FEEL LIKE COMING HOME. FOR DIANE FLETCHER, THAT SOMETHING SHE LOVES, HER HOME, IS ART. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ART.

She started painting in high school as an elective. Like her mother she can put her hand to most things creative. "I'm just artistic," says Diane.

Over the years she's created beautiful cakes in the kitchen, and penned witty poems. She even began to crochet during a period she spent in a convent. Diane cheekily recalls "I got into trouble with the nuns for drawing and painting too much."

## “ I GOT INTO TROUBLE WITH THE NUNS FOR DRAWING AND PAINTING TOO MUCH.

To appease the nuns, she learned to crochet. Although she enjoyed it – even teaching her niece the craft – it was never her real passion.



A quadriplegic as a result of an operation, Diane has also had some serious health issues to contend with, including a heart attack and cancer. Over the years she stopped drawing and painting as she got back on her feet and steadied her health.

A long-time Feros Care client, she has visits from her support workers most days. It was one such visit that eventually lead Diane back to art. Her former support worker, Corinne, was vacuuming when an art book fell out of the linen press. Impressed with the contents, she asked Diane about it.

Having discovered Diane's substantial talent, Corinne encouraged her to start drawing and painting again, supporting her to obtain art supplies, and even commissioning some work from her.

Now that Diane is back doing what she loves most she is less concerned

about her health conditions and reports that she doesn't panic about things anymore.

Since word has got out about her prodigious talent, she is now an in-demand artist, with more than 30 people requesting she create something for them!

At Feros Care, our team are warm, caring individuals, who see it as a privilege to work with seniors. We offer team members the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and many choose to do a Certificate course, including Certificate IV in Lesiure and Lifestyle, which focuses on diversionary tactics to enhance the mental and physical wellbeing of seniors.





# INNOVATORS NOT IMITATORS

From online communities that connect the socially isolated, to virtual health monitoring, and voice command technology.

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 **feros care**  
GROW BOLD





# BYRON WRITERS FESTIVAL 2019

**AUSTRALIA'S MOST RESPECTED JOURNALISTS AND SOCIAL ADVOCATES CAME TOGETHER BENEATH THE FEROS CARE MARQUEE AT THE BYRON WRITER'S FESTIVAL TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ISSUES FACING OUR MODERN SOCIETY.**

**H**ow important are free speech and a free media to protecting our democracy – and have we got the balance right? Where to from here for the #MeToo movement? What are some of the greatest challenges facing our regional Australians? And how can humanity's relationship with Mother Nature be a healthier one?

These topics and more were placed under the microscope by some of Australia's leading commentators, including six-time Walkley Award-winning journalist and recent Logies Hall of Famer **Kerry O'Brien**, Australian correspondent and free press advocate **Peter Greste**, 7.30 anchor **Leigh Sales**, World Vision Chief Advocate **Tim Costello** and multiple award-winning journalist and #MeTooAustralia advocate **Tracey Spicer**.

The Feros Care marquee also played host to conversations with some of

the country's most talented fiction and non-fiction writers – with a total of 19 author sessions held across the popular three-day festival.

Among the most eminent writers and thinkers taking the stage at the Feros Care marquee were Australian household names, **Di Morrissey** and **John Marsden** – joined by, among others, literary legends in the making **Chloe Hooper**, **Rick Morton** and **Matthew Condon**.

Feros Care CEO Jennene Buckley said the organisation was honoured to support the Byron Writers Festival for the seventh consecutive year.

"Feros Care was founded in Byron Bay more than 25 years ago, so we understand the importance of grassroots local events – that's why we've been a major sponsor of the Byron Writers Festival for so long, and we only see our partnership with the event going from strength to strength," she said.

"The Byron Writers Festival has always been a great fit for Feros Care to throw its support behind.

"We firmly believe in the power of storytelling and at Feros Care we love sharing the stories of people smashing stereotypes around ageing and disability by living extraordinarily bold lives."

Byron Writers Festival Director Edwina Johnson said the ongoing support of sponsors including Feros Care helped to ensure the event could return bigger and better ever year.

"Not only does Feros Care provide ongoing sponsorship support for our festival every year, but we are always encouraged to see how its residents and staff – and their friends and families – are among the festival-goers in attendance who every year embrace and become part of the fabric of this much-loved grassroots cultural event," she said.



# GRAN SLAM



**ONCE AGAIN, FEROS CARE HELD AN EXCLUSIVE BESPOKE EVENT AT THE BYRON WRITER'S FESTIVAL, FOR FEROS CARE FRIENDS, FAMILY AND VIPS.**

**A**ward-winning writer, speaker and appearance activist, Carly Finlay joined us on stage to talk about her book, *Say Hello* – which is both a moving memoir and a proud manifesto on disability and appearance diversity issues.



Carly Finlay

Caro Llewellyn took to the stage to talk about her memoir, *Diving into Glass* – a searing, often funny portrait of the realities of disability and an intimate account of two lives filled with vigour and audacity.

To end, our Gran Slammers treated guests to an exclusive performance of their original slam poetry. What a treat!

## WHAT IS GRAN SLAM?

More than 20 seniors had the chance to be a part of the slam poetry revolution under the guidance of an expert poet and literary performer, David Stavanger. The project consisted of a series of poetry workshops that taught aspiring wordsmiths to give voice to their ideas and experiences.



Caro Llewellyn

Gran Slam is a collaboration between Feros Care and performance producer Everybody NOW, an organisation that shares our commitment to smashing stereotypes and supporting communities to live bolder lives.



Visit [feroscare.com.au/granslam](https://feroscare.com.au/granslam) to meet all our slam poets and watch their performance

# MEET THE SLAMMERS

## MY DAD by Aaron Blomeley

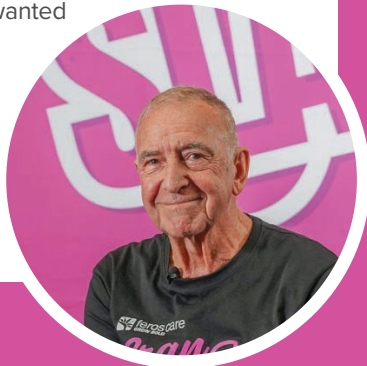
The rain hit the ground like the day my mother died  
My father, his stoic self, told me not to cry  
A job must be done, so he said. No tears allowed  
So we set about to bury my mum  
While outside the rain hit the ground like beating sticks  
And I looked across to see my dad  
His shoulders slumped, demeanour gone to bits.

This was not the Dad I knew  
Stern, strict and limited in view  
Unmoved by pleading words  
'Pragmatic' would be the word upon his sleeve  
Hard-headed he was, but never, ever, forgot the word 'connect'  
His disciplined soul was now in tears.  
I had to learn a new kind of respect.

The words 'I love you' could never pass his lips  
Put a gun to his head and demand he used these words  
'I love you, I love you'  
He would reply in no uncertain terms  
'That's too hard, so shoot me if you wish.'

Dear mum never heard these words.  
Nor did I.  
But love he certainly had  
For when the words failed to come,  
Actions he had; actions full of love.  
Unbreakable and well clad

So we buried me mum down deep.  
Down deep 'cos Dad wanted  
to go on top.  
Not right then of  
course, but later  
When he joined the  
love of his life.  
Jessie was her  
name: his wife.



## UNTITLED by Julie Crow

In 1964 at the age of twenty-one  
I feared my lust would bring me  
undone.  
And when my salacious sexuality  
Threatened to undermine my sense and sensibility  
I decided it was best not to tarry,  
And hastily agreed to marry.  
'Forsaking all others' I stoically pledged to uphold.  
But alas! most of the time I felt lonely, empty, and cold.  
It was no bed of roses for me.  
More like being in a leaky boat at sea.  
Because in and out  
those dreary 'death do us part' years  
Bits of me died floating seaward in a river of endless  
tears.  
But I knew I was more, so much more.  
Thankfully one magical day when I dived to the bottom of  
the ocean floor,  
I met Namaka the Goddess of the sea  
And low and behold! She was safe guarding the  
tearstained pieces of me  
Then beneath the mighty ocean, and the endless sky  
Namaka shared her Goddess wisdom from times gone by.

'Dear one never let your rebellious spirit be crushed by  
age, fear, religion, myth or propriety.  
And always always! hold dearly your lascivious lust, and  
salacious sexuality.  
Because it's your birthright, and the juice that feeds your  
soul,  
Sustains your spirit and keeps you whole.  
Remember you have the power to choose your own fate  
Therefore your destiny is yours to create.  
So go forth; spread your wings; fly gloriously free,  
Because freedom is the liberty to simply be'  
Then I thanked Namaka for not only sharing her timeless  
wisdom of Goddess lore,  
But also for the safe keeping of my lust and sexual core.  
Then buoyed with gratitude and hope in my heart I swam  
swiftly back to shore.



To meet more of our slammers visit [feroscare.com.au/granslam](https://feroscare.com.au/granslam)



# HEART AND SPARK

with Wendy Taylor

## REGENERATION

by Wendy Taylor

**L**ike a bower bird I collect stuff. I love garage sales, boot sales, junk shops – any place that can deliver up a prize. Breathing new life into something I already have, instead of shopping for something new is always a challenge I enjoy. Over the years my collection boxes have overflowed with ribbons, jewellery, scraps of silks and velvet, baubles of all descriptions. This helps my wardrobe forever evolve. Not all my undertakings bear fruit – but there are always treasures to be anticipated. We live in hope, just like we do when buying a lotto ticket!

A knitted woolen thigh-length jacket/cardigan has had many changes over the 20 years it's lived with me. Different buttons, adding – dare I say – fur and later a wired felted piece. It has also had silk embroidery strips from India, and one year I found two large beaded oblong brooches. Placed on the shoulders they looked like epaulets and with the addition of a dangled tassel, my husband called me “The General” when I wore it.

Its most recent incarnation sees a two-metre long scarf made of knitted net, overflowing with beads and sequins stitched around the front. I love my new ‘evening jacket’. At least for now.

Do I throw anything out? A loved pair of black satin sling back very high heels were put in their box for the



delight of someone else. Another pair of turquoise heels with a satiny sheen were also dispatched. At 80 years they are too hard, and probably dangerous for me to walk in – but I could still wear them if all I had to do was sit on a barstool. You're probably thinking I couldn't get up on a high stool – but you betcha I can!



### ABOUT WENDY

Wendy is a slam poet, film and instagram maven. Quirky and witty, she shares her bold and unique take on life, based on her 80 years on the planet. As Wendy says; “Nobody ever wants to be thought of as ordinary, everyone wants to have a little spark about them as we are all such individuals”.

We love her personal style and asked her to share a little of her process as she expresses herself through fashion.

**For more of Wendy's pearls of wisdom and sense of style, follow her on instagram @wendysthirdact**

But it's not just clothing we can regenerate. I do it with exercise too. Although I need a reviving nap afterward, I do circuit training at the gym twice a week. I didn't start at the gym until I was 72 – so it's never too late!

*Love Wendy*



# EMELITA KEEPS FINDING JOY

**UNAPOLOGETICALLY INDEPENDENT. THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO DESCRIBE EMELITA KACZEREP, 67. ADD CREATIVE, JOYFUL, OPTIMISTIC AND FUNNY AND YOU'VE CAPTURED HER PERFECTLY.**

**A** survivor of Hodgkin lymphoma, breast cancer and currently managing several chronic illnesses, Emelita is a participant in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) as she is also blind.

Her eyesight began to deteriorate in the early 2000s, and eventually she lost all her vision. In her indomitable manner, Emelita found ways to maintain the life she'd always lived. She featured in an exhibition of blind artists, entered (and won) a braille short story competition, nurtured her musical talent and enjoyed a full and active social life.

"I like to live life to the fullest," she exclaims.

Joining the NDIS in 2016, her funding allowed for supports to help her move through the world without sight. Her husband Peter was her primary support, and together they continued to live the life they'd always lived.

This changed after Peter's death in 2017. Emelita found herself without the day-to-day support she required. She couldn't, nor did she want to rely on her friends and family as it would change their relationship, and her independence.



Emelita describes how, in an effort to maintain that independence, she would crawl up five steps to get to her backyard washing line. As harrowing as this sounds, she is smiling and positive as she demonstrates how she now easily navigates those same steps with the safety handrails that have been installed thanks to her NDIS funding.

It was quickly identified that Emelita required additional supports after losing Peter. Home modifications, together with assistive technology like smart doorbells, a smart watch, talking microwave and talking scales let her continue to reside safely in the home she's lived in since 1982.

Perhaps most important is the addition of a support worker.

"Without the NDIS I would probably be miserable in my own home," says Emelita.

**“ WITHOUT THE NDIS I WOULD PROBABLY BE MISERABLE IN MY OWN HOME. ”**

Her Feros Care Local Area Coordinator, Pauline Gallacher agrees that this can often be a risk.





“Emelita could easily have become isolated and possibly placed in an aged care home.

“With the additional supports in her NDIS plan she can continue to live in her own home and participate in all the activities that bring her joy,” she continues.

Emelita has always found joy in life.

Born in the Philippines, she was working as a court stenographer and studying at university, when she accepted a job in Papua New Guinea with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia in the 1970s. It’s here she met Peter, a “handsome” Australian.

Settling in Canberra, they raised two daughters, while they both worked full time. Emelita went into the public service, serving as secretary to the Director of the Australian National Gallery.

After 15 years, she left to have more time to care for her youngest daughter, who had severe eczema. This gave her time to study as well, and she went to culinary school where, through cake decorating, she discovered her love of art.

“I didn’t know I was an artist!” she laughs.

Never one to do things by halves, Emelita decorated cakes competitively, traveling around the country displaying her artistic skills – and sharing the secret to her extra delicious fruit cake (replace rum with Grand Marnier).

She began working part time as a chef so she could continue to be there for her daughter. She’d still be doing that now, were she not blind.

“People don’t trust me to cook,” she grins.

She probably wouldn’t have time, anyway. As well as becoming proficient in braille and continuing to make music – she writes songs and sings in three choirs – Emelita’s next goal is to begin busking to raise money for charity.

# DREAM BIG, ACT LOCAL WITH YOUR LOCAL AREA COORDINATOR

**HOW CAN YOU HELP PEOPLE TO REACH THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL GOALS AND EASILY UNDERSTAND THE INS AND OUTS OF THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS)?**



**T**he answer is to think local. As an approved NDIS Local Area Coordinator (LAC), and partner in the community, Feros Care can get you sorted. We want you to think big, dream big and live big. Through one-on-one discussions we can help you navigate the NDIS from go to whoa. We know the scheme like the back of our hand, so we can provide professional, reliable advice to help you access assistance and funding.

Acting as your NDIS Local Area Coordinator, Feros Care will get to know you, your goals and your challenges. We’re great listeners and we’re determined. So we’ll get the best outcome for you, your family and your carers. Together we can create a holistic, individually tailored plan that meets your current and future needs, while also giving you the opportunity to thrive.

Everyone deserves to live their best life and as locals, we’ve developed strong relationships with services that can support you in your community. From helping

with the activities of everyday living, to providing equipment to help you get around or assisting with participation in the workforce.

Feros Care can help manage all the not-so-exciting stuff. We’ll ensure you tick all the right boxes, dot all your i’s and include any supporting information or reports required. Because getting your NDIS support plan right the first time will help you receive the supports you need sooner. Plus, we’ll play an active role in your NDIS support coordination – following up your application, advocating on your behalf and introducing you to providers that can implement your plan once you get the go ahead.

At Feros Care we’re passionate about creating support frameworks that build an individual’s capacity and deliver new opportunities. Through empowering, supportive and flexible pathways, that resonate with each individual, we can help make a genuine difference to the lives of people living with a disability – and their families.



**For more information on Feros Care and the ndis visit [feroscare.com.au/ndis](https://feroscare.com.au/ndis)**



# FEROS VALUES

**WHEN WE FIRST CREATED OUR VALUES 15 YEARS AGO, WE WERE A SMALL BYRON BAY BASED COMPANY WITH 150 CLIENTS, 100 STAFF AND OUR ENTIRE CORPORATE TEAM OF 5 PEOPLE WORKING IN A SMALL SHED AT OUR FEROS VILLAGE BYRON BAY.**

Since then, Feros Care has grown, changed and broadened its services, as have the environments in which we operate. We are diverse in cultures, experiences and backgrounds, we are diverse in geography, and we are diverse in the services and people we care for. This means we needed to revisit who we are and what is important to us. And so we created a new set of company values that still acknowledge and celebrate our legacy.

Our values are not just words on a wall. They are unique to us and underpin our much bolder vision and aspirations for you – our clients, residents, participants, customers, consumers, and staff. Our commitment to involving both staff and clients in the creation of our values has ensured that our values accurately depict who we are now, and who we aspire to be. These values set us up for success, and ensure we remain relevant to our customers and staff.

The language used for our values is edgy, challenges the status quo, and is bold – it is exactly who Feros Care are and who we dream to be.

Each value is important in its purpose, powerful in its meaning, and aspirational in what we want to achieve at Feros Care. These values drive our behaviour, and as a result people can feel them when they work with us, visit us, or receive care or service from us.



For more about our values visit: [feroscare.com.au/about/our-values](https://feroscare.com.au/about/our-values)



# THE CAN DO POLICY WITH RACHEL TYLER



**AT FEROS CARE WE GROW BOLD, NOT OLD. TO HELP OUR CLIENTS LIVE THEIR DREAMS WE HAVE AN INITIATIVE CALLED A 'GROW BOLD REQUEST.' RESIDENTS AND CLIENTS CAN SUBMIT A REQUEST EITHER FOR AN EXPERIENCE, SOMETHING TO MAKE LIFE EASIER OR SOMETHING THAT HELPS THEM OVERCOME AN OBSTACLE. OUR VIRTUAL WELLBEING MANAGER/CLIENT ADVOCATE RACHEL TYLER SHARES HER SECRET TO GRANTING OUR CLIENTS' REQUESTS.**

"People ask for all sorts of things. If you're creative and resourceful, you can make it happen... or at least achieve the next best thing. Never give up trying."

Growing up in Tasmania, Rachel was inspired to pursue a career in aged care when she considered the quality of care she would like her grandfather to receive. "My grandfather was a dairy farmer, a hard worker and a loving grandfather. As he aged, it was important for him to stay at home and maintain his independence as long as he could. Unfortunately, he suffered with dementia. I thought, 'This is what I want to do. I want to help people stay independent at home as long as possible.'"

In her early twenties, Rachel became a carer with a focus on dementia-based care, and then progressed to become a diversional therapist. This involved facilitating leisure-based activities to enhance the psychological, spiritual, social, emotional and physical wellbeing of clients. "I was a Diversional Therapist for many years. I absolutely loved it – but moving to Queensland, I wanted to get back into a position in aged care where I could support a healthy work/family balance."

In May 2016, Rachel made the move to Feros Care as a Client Experience team member, before taking on the role of Virtual Wellbeing Manager. Rachel is part of a team who coordinates and organises health and support services for our clients within their own home.

"Every day is hard work and it can be exhausting. But when I come home, I think of all the clients I've helped. I know I had a small part to play in changing someone's life for the better. Just having a chat with someone can brighten their day. It is important to me that our aged clients know they are not forgotten; they are valued. They have a wealth of knowledge and many have survived wars and overcome obstacles our generation can't even begin to imagine."

**“ WHEN I GRANT A REQUEST, I FEEL ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL.**

Rachel says she feels happiest when making others smile. Indeed, the highlight of her role, she says, is granting 'Grow Bold Requests.' "When I grant a request, I feel absolutely wonderful. I always follow up to see how it went. I love seeing the photos and hearing about the experience," she shares.

Requests can be anything from a new fridge or a walking frame to enable a client to walk their daughter down the aisle. Or it could be really out of the box – like taking a nostalgic adventure.

"Recently, a client and his wife celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. We organised flowers and chocolates, balloons and a big card delivered to their surprise party. They were so grateful and happy and said it was, 'the best party ever!' Afterwards, they visited the office with photos and a thank you card. It meant so much to me that our simple gesture made their night so special."

"Another Grow Bold Request that comes to mind is when we organised for a married couple to attend the EKKA. Our client wanted to treat his wife to a fun day out – reliving their youth. The smiles on their faces when they were telling me all about their adventures was priceless. I panicked at first when I saw a photo of his wife standing inside the pen with a monstrous bull. Then I thought, 'Why stand on the outside looking in when you can be right there in the middle of the action?' That is what growing bold – not old, is all about!"

# 5 FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT SENIOR DATING IN 2019



**FOR MOST OF US, SENIOR DATING IS NO LONGER TABOO. LOVE IS NOT SOMETHING WE EVER STOP SEEKING, AND THIS OFTEN MEANS GOING ON FIRST DATES WELL INTO OUR 80S AND 90S. BUT WHEN IT COMES TO SENIOR DATING, THERE ARE STILL STEREOTYPES TO BREAK AND FUNDAMENTALS TO EXPLORE. SO WHAT DOES SENIOR DATING LOOK LIKE IN THE 21ST CENTURY?**

**W**hen it comes to love, we often think of young couples holding hands, lost in their own world. If we do think of older people and love, we see partners for life, two people having spent so much time together that they're practically intertwined.

What we don't really think of – and what is the reality nonetheless – are seniors actively participating in the dating scene. And while this scene does differ from our younger dating days in some respects, love is still love, even when you're 70+!

Joyce Basset is 86 and a Virtual Social Centre client. As we sit down to talk, she recounts memories of a high school friend, Jim, who – after becoming widowed many years later – contacted her again. While the two were never together in high school

and that didn't change 60 years on either, Joyce recounts the memories they shared during their school years and those they made together again. In the seven years from their reunion to Jim's unfortunate seizure in 2015, they spent quite a bit of time travelling and enjoying life together.

## **1. Commitment is a different story after your 70s**

When asked why she hasn't given him a chance at being more than just her friend after many, many years, she is very clear.

"Those days were very different to nowadays. Dating later in life is really common – I can name four friends who've got rings given to them recently – but for the most part there's no intention of getting married. I'm

happy to go out, but I don't want to be serious."

Just like younger dating, there are a number of reasons why senior dating has its drawbacks – and they're completely different to what younger couples would experience. Commitment is certainly one of them – depending on whether someone is entering the dating scene after their spouse has passed away or whether simply never having been married, commitment can seem daunting or even unnecessary.

Joyce has her eyes set on remaining independent, even after two marriages.

"Married or not married, I still live MY life. If I wanted to go and see something in, say Sydney, too bad if they didn't want to go, I went anyway."



## 2. Finances might be a reason for uncommitted senior relationships

Part of the lack of commitment evident in most older relationships is a financial aspect. As Joyce explains, many of her friends with new partners will probably never live together.

“They won’t grow old together because they still have their own homes. It can’t work if you want to retain your own independence – and your own pension.”

While elderly people going on first dates might not have to worry about whether their date could be a potential life partner or the mother/father of their children, they now have to keep other things in mind – like finances. The pension is calculated on the basis of whether someone is single or living together in a committed relationship. For those single seniors who rely on the pension, moving in with a new partner might not work out very well financially. According to Joyce, this is something commonly stopping people of her age from moving in with their new partners. As she puts it, this is definitely a major problem.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DATING AS A SENIOR?

### 3. Companionship leads to happy lives for seniors

The number one reason for getting back into the dating scene as a senior is the benefits of companionship. Life is best shared, and this becomes increasingly true after kids and grandkids have left the nest. Loneliness is often an unwelcome but very persistent companion for seniors – and one way to combat that is to dust off the old dancing shoes and go out and find someone who loves salsa just as much as you do.

A new companion can mean positive changes for seniors. This was the



case for Joyce – as she says, Jim was never a man of adventure, hence why they didn’t end up marrying each other. But after his wife’s death, Joyce and Jim enjoyed many adventures together as friends; and these took them to places where Jim would’ve never gone on his own. With Joyce’s positive influence on his life, they travelled all around Australia, seeing and doing new things. After all, loneliness is best fought with laughter and shared experiences.

### 4. Intimacy is proved to benefit us physically, mentally, and emotionally

Older people don’t stop enjoying intimacy and sexual relationships. Intimacy, regardless of the degree to which we enjoy it, has proven benefits to our lives. According to research, “getting intimate on a regular basis boosts your immune system. Your risk for heart disease and prostate cancer decreases. If that isn’t reason enough, it’s been proven that frequently hugging people you love can lower your blood pressure almost as well as prescription medication. What’s more, healthy sexual relationships can prolong your life up to 8 years.”

Intimate relationships can help keep seniors fit physically, mentally, as

well as emotionally. And a happy, healthy granny is the best granny!

### 5. Sharing is caring – and sometimes, sharing is also surviving

There are just some things only people who have gone through similar life experiences can understand. This can include the passing of a spouse or other family matters from a senior’s point of view that can only be truly appreciated by someone else in similar shoes.

Widowed seniors often come together to help each other grieve and learn to live with and overcome that grief. While the support of other loved ones certainly helps, it can benefit seniors to discuss these issues with others coming from the same background. Sharing grief (or joy, or anxiety, or contentment, for that matter) can strengthen a bond and help anyone overcome big emotional obstacles in life.

Senior dating certainly has its unique challenges – but so does it have its own rewards! As a senior entering the dating scene, it’s good to know what you’re up against so you can protect yourself financially and emotionally.

# PLANNING AHEAD

**WHEN DIFFICULT CHANGES HAPPEN IN YOUR LIFE, OR THAT OF A LOVED ONE, IT CAN BE HARD TO WORK OUT WHO SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FUTURE AFFAIRS. BY PLANNING AHEAD FOR LEGAL, HEALTH AND FINANCIAL DECISIONS YOU CAN ENSURE WISHES ARE RESPECTED.**



## When you should plan ahead

Although we're living longer and remaining healthier, many of us will have a period of increased dependence and, potentially, a loss of decision-making ability. Don't wait until you are struggling to manage your financial affairs or healthcare decisions. Everyone over 18 who has capacity should consider planning ahead now because anyone can have an accident or event that will affect their capacity.

## Terminology throughout Australia

The legislation covering planning ahead is different in each State and Territory, with different terminology, different documents and different provisions about who can make financial or health care decisions for you if you have not appointed anyone to do that.

## Enduring Power of Attorney for financial matters

In all States and Territories, an Enduring Power of Attorney (EPOA) is a document which legally appoints one or more people to manage your financial affairs and property matters. You can say when the authority of that person starts and what they can or can't do. However, while you have capacity, the person you appoint can't just do whatever they want to; they

are your agent and should only do what you authorise them to do. If you lose the capacity to make these types of decisions and you haven't given someone EPOA for your financial affairs, a court or tribunal may appoint someone to do that – but it might not be the person you would have chosen.

## Enduring Power of Attorney for personal and health matters

In the ACT and QLD, you can also appoint one or more people to have EPOA for your personal and health care decisions. However, unlike EPOA for financial matters, the authority of the person you appoint for your personal and health matters does not come into effect unless or until you have lost capacity.

## Appointments for medical or health care in other states and territories

Again, the terminology and conditions are different across the country; e.g., in NSW, SA, Tas and WA you can appoint an Enduring Guardian (EG) to make medical and personal decisions for you if you can't make your own. In Victoria, you can appoint an EG for some personal decisions but you need to appoint a Medical Treatment Decision Maker to make your medical decisions.

## Enduring Guardian

An Enduring Guardian can allow you to guide decisions in the future about your care, health and lifestyle choices which you may not be able to make yourself, if you lose that ability. It's a good way to plan for the future and will only be in effect during periods of incapacity.

An Enduring Guardian should know your values, beliefs and wishes as they have the authority to make decisions about things like:

- where you will live
- your general health care matters and medical consent
- support services you receive, such as meals-on-wheels
- who you may have contact with or who can visit you
- day-to-day issues

## ADVANCE CARE DIRECTIVES

Make sure that the person (or people) you appoint to make decisions for you if you lose capacity know your wishes by completing an Advance Care Directive and giving a copy of that to your EG/EPOA for personal and health matters (or whatever that person is called in your State or Territory).

## WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

**Any organisation or company that provides you with financial, personal or health care support, including Feros Care, will need a copy of your EPOA and/or EG documents and your Advance Care Directive. By requesting these documents prior to working with your appointee, we can make sure your wishes will be respected. If you have written an Advance Directive or appointed an Attorney or Guardian, please let us know!**

## GOT QUESTIONS?

We recommend that you look at the Advance Care Planning Australia website [advancecareplanning.org.au](http://advancecareplanning.org.au) or contact the relevant Public Trustee or Guardianship Tribunal in your State or Territory, or speak to a solicitor.



# REVIEWS

## BOOK REVIEW

Fruzsina Gal – Digital Marketing Specialist

### IF AT BIRTH YOU DON'T SUCCEED

by Zach Anner

Part comedy, part inspirational biography, Zach Anner's *If at Birth You Don't Succeed* offers a raw but funny insight to the challenges and lessons of life with cerebral palsy, as well as a man's attempts at defining himself outside of his disability. The book follows the first 30 years of Zach's often bumpy (sometimes literally, thanks to his wheelchair) road to success – not only in his career, but more so his personal life.

His musings recount the many milestones he has reached, as well as all the failures and wrong turns along the way – some of which bear more significance than the triumphs. From becoming a viral internet sensation who's hosted two travel shows,

impressing Oprah, to driving the Mars Rover, and inspiring a John Mayer song (it wasn't *Your Body is a Wonderland*), Zach's life is truly a testament to resilience, the importance of friendship, and making the most of every mistake.

Zach's witty sense of humour and his ability to extract not only hilarious, but often touching, thought-provoking, and heart-felt details from the challenges he faces makes this one of the best memoirs I have read. His stories are both entertaining and stimulating, and they had me laughing at parts and getting teary-eyed at others. While the book captures life with cerebral palsy, it's

much more than that – it's about the coming of age of someone who is trying to find himself amidst friends, challenges, internet-fame, and love.

With laugh-out-loud funny one-liners and elaborate life lessons blending in seamlessly, *If at Birth You Don't Succeed* is a must-read for anyone looking for a hilarious, approachable, but very honest look at life with cerebral palsy.



## MOVIE REVIEW

Jacqi Holloway – Marketing Coordinator

### COOL HAND LUKE, 1967

I know, I'm more than 40 years late for the party – but it was definitely worth the wait.

This film appeals to my love of the underdog – to the quiet rebel in me that wants to stand up against things that I view as wrong, unjust or uncaring. Given it was released in 1967, it's not surprising that it so strongly positions the protagonist as an anti-establishment antihero. A rebel against 'the man'.

"Calling it a job don't make it right, boss."

It's not always clear what Luke is rebelling against – it seems the establishment is enough. So, while

the attitude reminds me of current release films, like *Joker*, the reasons for Luke's rebellion aren't as well defined.

As the film goes on, and Luke's continued escapes garner him harsher punishments I find myself almost willing Luke not to let himself be broken. Yet when he is, I'm not as disappointed as I could be.

Maybe it's because he never really breaks. His sidekick and friend, Dragline, recounts Luke's final stand.

"He was smiling... That's right. You know, that, that Luke smile of his. He had it on his face right to the very end. Hell, if they didn't know it 'fore,



they could tell right then that they weren't a-gonna beat him. That old Luke smile."

Well written, directed and full of great performances, *Cool Hand Luke* is a compelling way to spend a couple of hours. Hands up if you're planning on watching it – or, re-watching as the case may be!

## FEROS AWARDS

Feros Care was awarded ‘Regional, Rural and Remote Provider of the Year’ at the Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) national awards, for a range of groundbreaking technologies that empowered seniors to stay independent, safe and connected while remaining in their own home.

The ACSA also acknowledged Feros Care for its continued contribution towards breaking down stereotypes around ageing by encouraging seniors to lead bold and fulfilling lives, and for its innovative workplace culture.



Every year, the ACSA awards recognise providers and individuals working and volunteering in the aged care sector for their compassion, commitment and achievements – with Feros Care also taking out a state award earlier in this year in the same category.

## BOLDTOBER

In October we teamed up with Sunrise to search for Aussies living their best BOLD lives – giving them a chance to win a share of \$10,000 cash!

Four winners won \$2,500 each by sharing how they were living BOLD lives. The winners are:

**Jasmine West** who showed us how she turned her life around after suffering a stroke at the age of 25.

**Elizabeth Marchi** who shaved her hair for cancer, raising \$11,547 in the process.

**Patricia Hooper** who, at 73 is still flexible enough to do the splits!

And finally, **Stephen Howarth** who stays bold at 60 by conquering obstacle courses and water-skiing barefoot!

Congratulations to our winners – stay bold!



For more Feros Care social news follow us on Facebook or Instagram: @feroscare





Our Local Area Coordination team in South Australia participated in Feast Festival celebrations. Founded in 1997, Feast is Adelaide's only not-for-profit LGBTI Queer Arts and Cultural Festival celebrating Pride and Diversity.

The team were able to connect with the community and share information about how the NDIS can support them. And they had a blast at the same time!

## FEARLESS 2 SHOUT-OUT

Get ready! Fearless Season 2 is coming! With so many bold stories submitted by people living with disability, it was such a pleasure for us to review all of them! A shortlist of stories has been created and production will begin in early 2020. Stay tuned for the launch of Fearless Season 2 next year!



## UPDATED DICTIONARY

ANOTHER SMALL SELECTION OF NEW WORDS AND SENSES COMING INTO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

**OK Boomer** A term coined by Gen Zers as a retort to older people who don't appear to understand the issues facing them including climate change, housing costs and education.

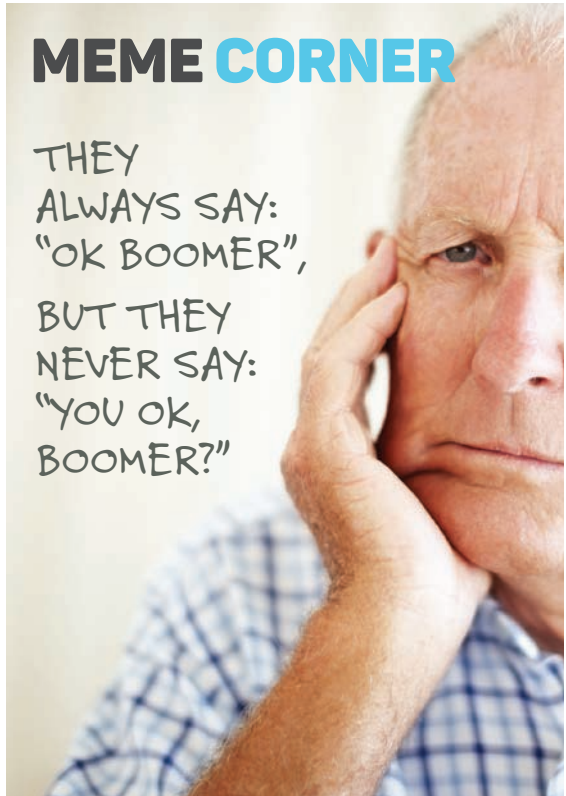
**Cannabusiness** A term coined to describe the growth of legitimate business activities around cannabis.

**Chillax** A combination of the words chill and relax. You get the picture!

**Netflix and chill** A euphemism. An invite to 'netflix and chill' should be interpreted as an invite to sexual activity.

## MEME CORNER

THEY ALWAYS SAY:  
"OK BOOMER",  
BUT THEY NEVER SAY:  
"YOU OK, BOOMER?"



# BRAIN GAMES



## CONNECTION WORD SEARCH

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

AFFECTION  
 COLLECTIVE  
 COMMUNITY  
 COMPANION  
 CONNECTION  
 FAMILY  
 FRIENDS  
 INTERTWINED

LOVE  
 PARTNERSHIP  
 RELATED  
 RELATIONSHIPS  
 SOLID  
 TOGETHER  
 UNDIVIDED  
 UNITED

# SUDOKU CHALLENGE

## BEGINNER

1			4
4	2		1
2			
3	4	1	2

## INTERMEDIATE

			4	2	1
	1	2			
		1			
6				1	
	3	6	1	4	5
	5	4	2	3	6

## ADVANCED

7			3		1	5		
		3			7	8	2	
	5	4	8					3
9					8	6		2
	4				5	3		7
8						1		
3		9		8	6			
4	1	8	2					6
5	6		9	1	4			

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

BEGINNER

INTERMEDIATE

ADVANCED

SOLUTIONS:



# YOUR LOVED ONES CAN'T ALWAYS BE AROUND TO HELP.

But the Smart Hub personal alarm can.

**SAVE  
\$99**

when you sign up today\*

## We understand that you want to remain independent.

Our discreet and reliable personal alarms give you the assurance that help is only ever a touch of a button away.

**You and your loved ones can live confidently for only \$8.95 a week.\***

We invest in the latest technology to ensure your needs are met promptly, efficiently, and with the least amount of hassle.

### Safety first

Our personal alarms give you assurance in all types of emergencies in and around your home.

**Call Feros Care today.**

**1300 763 583**

[feroscare.com.au/smart-hub](https://feroscare.com.au/smart-hub)

### Your own terms

We tailor our alarms and solutions to meet your personal needs for your home.

### Round-the-clock monitoring

Our 24/7 monitoring is the safety net you need to live life without interruptions.

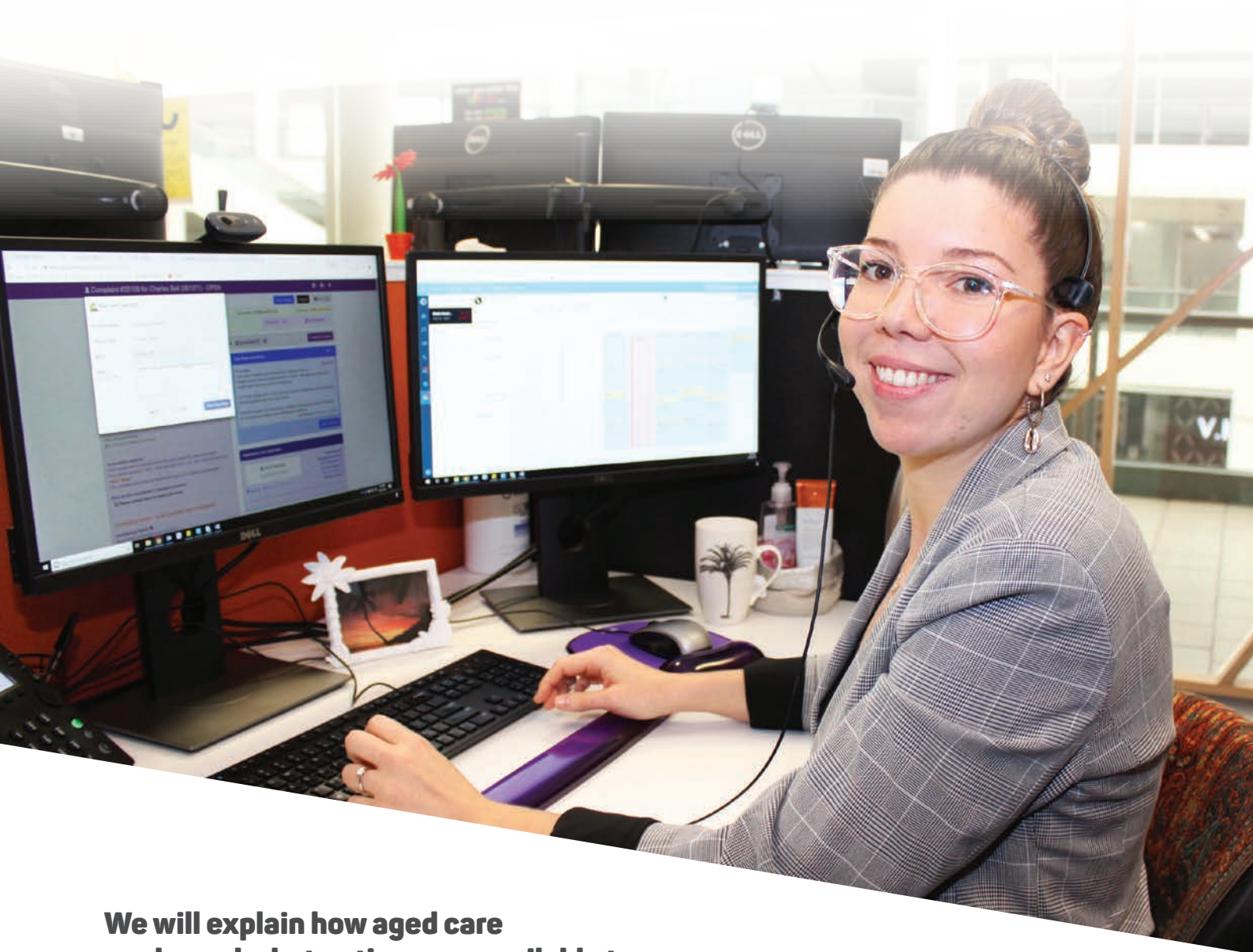
### No expensive set-up costs

We'll waive the \$99 establishment fee, so you pay nothing upfront. Just plug it in, turn it on and you're ready to go. Things don't always go according to plan and your family isn't always around to help. That's why you should have a plan B with a Smart Hub alarm.

\* Terms and conditions apply

 **feros care**  
GROW BOLD

# OUR AGED CARE HOTLINE IS HERE TO HELP MAKE AGED CARE SIMPLE



**We will explain how aged care works and what options are available to you.**

We'll help you to register with My Aged Care and will support you every step of the way. We speak your language.

What's more, our advice is completely free.

**CALL US NOW ON 1300 763 583**

**[feroscare.com.au](https://feroscare.com.au)**

Aged Care • Disability Support • Technology

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