

## Digital Inclusion of Multicultural Seniors during COVID-19

### In this issue:

- ECCV and U3A Building the Capacities of CALD Seniors' and Associations
- Pronia Phone Groups Keep Over 65's Greeks connected
- Australian – Filipino Community Services: Be Connected Program
- Vision Initiative - Don't lose sight of your vision



### Building the Capacities of CALD Seniors' Clubs and Associations

ECCV has partnered with University of the Third Age (U3A) and developed a pilot project to empower CALD seniors to strengthen their access to digital skills. Funded by the Victorian Government and supported by City of Kingston, City of Casey and City of Greater Dandenong and the Southern Migrant & Refugee Centre the project aims to build digital capacities of CALD seniors to support social inclusion, cultural connectedness and safety and wellbeing.

The ECCV-U3A project will:

- Support CALD seniors to develop and/or enhance their digital literacy
- Support CALD seniors' clubs to develop their grant application skills
- Support CALD seniors to enhance their capability to maintain social inclusion, cultural connectedness and up to date information including financial support options to assist with positive ageing.

If you are a leader or a member of a CALD seniors' club located in the City of Kingston, City of Casey or City of Greater Dandenong and would like to be part of the programs, please contact ECCV's Seniors' Project Officer:

**Tala Abdulhadi**  
Project Officer, Seniors  
tabdulhadi@eccv.org.au



*In 2021, ECCV will be extending this project to the City of Wyndham and CALD seniors' clubs located in the area.*

# PRONIA Phone Groups Keep Greeks over 65 connected

PRONIA, commenced the new initiative of tweekly Telephone group chats in August during the second COVID-19 lock-down. The aim was to bring people over the age of 65 years, who felt lonely or isolated together, in a group as an opportunity to connect with the ultimate goal to make new friends. The groups have participants from metropolitan and regional Victoria between the aged of 65 years to 91 years young! The telephone group chats engage the most vulnerable cohorts of the Greek community – people who do not speak English, may be isolated, do not have computer skills and /or have no supports. The chat groups form at the beginning of each month and have weekly chats for one month facilitated by PRONIA's Community Engagement and Capacity Building Officer, Antonios Maglis. To date there have been eight Telephone Chat groups each having between 5-6 participants per group.

Κάθομαι εδώ μόνος μου και περιμένω το τηλεφώνημα σας κάθε εβδομάδα. Είμαι 94 και μόνος μου.  
κ. Γιώργος από το Heidelberg

Εάν δεν μου τηλεφωνήσετε κάθε εβδομάδα, δεν θα μιλούσα σε κανέναν. Κανείς δεν με παίρνει, το τηλέφωνο μου δεν χτυπάει.  
κ. Μαρία από το Melton

Το να γεράς δεν είναι εύκολο. Όλοι σε ξεχνούν. Η δουλειά που κάνετε είναι καταπληκτική.  
κ. Αντζέλα από το Dandenong

**Αισθάνεστε μοναξιά, απομόνωση ή σας λείπει η επικοινωνία με άλλα άτομα;**

**PRONIA**  
For a stronger community

Για συμμετοχή ή περισσότερες πληροφορίες καλέστε την ΠΡΟΝΟΙΑ στο (03) 9388 9998  
[www.pronia.com.au](http://www.pronia.com.au)

Where participants may require assistance to enhance their wellbeing or assist their everyday needs, PRONIA's case work service is able to assist by identifying suitable services and offer support as long as needed. One of the program's participants, Mrs M called PRONIA to provide feedback "I speak to my new friend from the chat group every day. Thank you for helping me to find this wonderful support. I have gained so much more confidence since I joined the first group and connected with PRONIA's counsellor and case work programs". Mrs M was happy she has found inner strength to deal with complex personal issues and the confidence to engage with the outside world so much so, her doctor has recommended a decrease in her medication. It is the happy ending stories like Mrs M's that make the staff at PRONIA feel that their collaborative efforts and work make a difference and have an impact on people's lives.

If you know of Greek speaking people aged over 65 years, who may benefit from these groups, or you require additional information, please contact PRONIA (03)9388 9998 or email: [casework@pronias.com.au](mailto:casework@pronias.com.au)

By **Adonis Antonios Maglis**, Community Engagement and Capacity Building Officer

# Australian - Filipino Community Services: Be Connected Program

The Australian- Filipino Community Services (AFCS) is committed to support seniors gain digital literacy and upskill leaders to be mentors in this digital age. A group of seniors living in the Frankston and Casey area have completed 150 courses through the Be Connected program facilitated by the Filipino Seniors Group led by Fe Gillies, senior mentor. The AFCS is a lead digital capacity builder in Victoria and a strong partner with the Be Connected Network through the Good Things Foundation since 2018. AFCS supports community organisations who also support older Australians to thrive in a digital world.



The six seniors below signed up to our network and accessed a range of resources to enhance their digital literacy.

Some of the courses they completed are:

Using the internet, online forms, email, search engines, introduction to internet safety, develop your online skills by learning how to shop online, watch catch-up TV online, and connect with others using Twitter, Pinterest and Facebook. Online shopping overview, socialising online, using Facebook overview, using a digital camera and watching and listening online. For a complete list of courses go to [www.beconnected.safety.gov.au](http://www.beconnected.safety.gov.au)

By **Norminda Forteza**, Chaplain

Australian-Filipino Community Services Inc



# Vision Initiative - Don't lose sight of your vision

While 2020 has been a challenging year dominated by a global health emergency, it's still important for Victorians to remember to look after their everyday health – especially their vision.

The Vision Initiative is reminding all Victorians to not lose sight of their vision and get regular eye tests, because 90% of vision loss is avoidable or treatable if it is identified early. Don't wait for symptoms, book an eye test today.

Springvale Optometrist, Dr Loan Quach, of Loan Quach Optometry, advises that “if you notice a change in your vision, don't ignore it. Optometry practices are open and taking COVID safe precautions. You do not need a referral, if you are due for an eye check or have noticed a change to your vision, call your optometrist today to make an appointment.”

Eye tests can be arranged directly through an optometrist without the need for a referral to an ophthalmologist, or by speaking with your GP, and are often covered by Medicare.

Key tips for looking after eye health:

- Make sure you have regular eye checks, especially if you are over 40
- Protect your eyes from the sun by wearing a hat and sunglasses when outside
- Wear safety goggles eye protection when playing sports like squash, or performing activities like hammering, welding, mowing the lawn or gardening
- Do not smoke
- Maintain a healthy diet with regular exercise
- Manage your health including diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol

By **Melissa Morris**, Vision Initiative  
Multicultural Engagement Officer

Vision 2020 Australia



*About the Vision Initiative*

*Managed by Vision 2020 Australia, the Vision Initiative is a Victorian Government funded integrated eye health promotion program which aims to prevent avoidable blindness and address the impact of vision loss in the Victorian community.*

*Visit website for more information on [www.visioninitiative.org.au](http://www.visioninitiative.org.au)*

