

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 9 November 2020

SINGING PROGRAM EXTENDED TO REDUCE SOCIAL ISOLATION FOR OLDER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Funding for the Singing Strong program has been extended until the end of the year, enabling residents at Aged Care Facilities to participate in and connect to the community through song.

When the pandemic struck, the program was adapted to be Covid-safe with local musician, Jess Cook, moving the delivery of the program from face-to-face at Harbourside Lodge to live-streaming from her lounge room.

This also provides an opportunity to extend the program to a broader audience with residents from other aged care facilities joining in to hear Jess sing.

Songs are selected for their sing-along value, offering a trip down memory lane for many of the residents, who join in by either singing, playing an instrument or merely tapping their toes.

United Way Glenelg Executive Officer, Nicole Carr, said it was great to see technology being used to provide people in aged care with a sense of connection to others.

“With limited social activities on offer for those living in aged care, the risk of social isolation and disengagement is a real concern.”

“The pandemic emphasises the importance of using technology to provide connectedness and enrichment in aged care settings.”

One family who has greatly appreciated Jess’s singing is Jenny King, her mum, Marge Wilson, was a resident at Harbourside Lodge and recently passed away.

“You were the highlight of my Mum’s week. You gave her time-out from her dementia problems and she adored you. Every time I hear you sing it brings tears, but they are happy tears as you made such a difference to Mum. Her last few months weren’t good, but singing with you made her so happy.”

The Singing Strong program is an innovative speech therapy program introduced to Harbourside Lodge residents in 2019, aimed at residents who are living with Parkinson's Disease, post-stroke affectations, mild dementia, or for those who have issues with voice, speech or breathing.

This project is supported by the United Way Glenelg COVID-19 IMPACT Fund. If you would like to donate please head to https://www.givenow.com.au/uwg_covid19_impact_fund

Singing Strong, held virtually every Tuesday from 2.00pm via the Singing Strong Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Singing-Strong-109245644060265>

Photo: Jess Cook in her loungeroom delivering the Singing Strong program virtually.

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