

NEWS

AUSTRALIAN NEWS**National Conference on Incontinence (NCOI) 2022**

Our flagship event, the 30th National Conference on Incontinence (NCOI) 2022, will be held on 11-14 May 2022 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre located in the vibrant South Wharf precinct of the city of Melbourne. This is Australia's leading multidisciplinary meeting for healthcare professionals working in bladder, bowel and pelvic health.

We are also thrilled to announce that the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre is one of the first major venues to join our BINS4Blokes campaign, installing permanent bins for disposal of incontinence products in eight of the male toilets in the Centre.

The NCOI program will run from Wednesday 11 to Saturday 14 May 2022, commencing with a full first day of workshops, followed by 2.5 days of plenary and abstract presentations. The program includes a welcome reception, conference dinner and exhibit hall, providing numerous occasions to connect and access information and support.

At NCOI we will also be announcing the recipient of the 2022 Carer of the Year award. The replacement value of unpaid care is estimated at over A\$1 billion per week, with recent data revealing there are over 2.8 million at-home carers¹ looking after the most vulnerable in our society, including approximately 167,710 primary carers who provide daily continence care². The Continence Foundation is here to support carers navigating these challenges by providing resources, referrals and confidential support.

Caring for people with incontinence presents several challenges, including physical, mental, emotional, financial and social consequences. This annual award honours the unpaid continence carers who make such a difference to the quality of life for their loved ones. By nominating someone you know for the Continence Carer of the Year award, you are showing you value the extraordinary contribution they make.

The full NCOI program and further information regarding speakers, workshops, awards and sponsorship opportunities is now available at <https://www.continence.org.au/NCOI>

The Great Dunny Hunt

In March/April 2022 we will be starting the Great Dunny Hunt which takes place virtually at the National Public Toilet Map (www.toiletmapp.gov.au) or on the app. This year we will be inviting people to update the facilities available in their local public toilets. The National Public Toilet Map lists over 19,000 toilets around Australia, giving people the confidence to go out and about knowing where the closest toilets are. This year will see a focus on updating the map.

Importantly, this campaign serves to highlight discussions on incontinence in order to raise awareness of the prevalence and stigma, as well as where to seek help. We would like to acknowledge all our supporters for their enthusiastic contribution. I trust the 2022 campaign will be just as successful as last year.

World Continence Week: 21-27 June 2022

The Foundation will shortly reveal the theme for World Continence Week 2022. This is one of the year's most significant events for the Foundation and we look forward to raising awareness and support for those who live with or care for someone with incontinence. Previous campaigns such as BINS4Blokes have been a huge success and seen notable change, with numerous Australian communities, councils and shopping centres permanently installing incontinence product disposal bins in male public toilets.

Continence SMART Care (CSC)

The Foundation is also developing Continence SMART Care (CSC), a best practice model of continence care based on research provided by the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) to ensure older people living in residential aged care facilities have access to evidence-based, person-centred, clinically-informed continence care that is responsive to their individual needs, safe, protective of their dignity and that optimises their functional abilities. We are currently finalising the education models for the residential aged care workforce and service providers and will keep you up to date when we are closer to launch.

National Continence Helpline update

Over the last 6 months the National Continence Helpline (NCHL) has been the focus of a promotional campaign that has involved a variety of posters in toilets in shopping centres. This campaign has seen the NCHL reach a diverse range of the public, including younger males. Young tradesman in their twenties have called with issues such as urgency and frequency, noticing their voiding patterns are different to their friends and colleagues, and disruptive to their work. They were previously unaware there was support and, once they called the NCHL, they were reassured to know assessment, treatment and management options were available.

Unification: planning the future for our Foundation

Back in October 2020, the Foundation held its Annual General Meeting, where members voted to accept the resolution to unify with the states to create one national entity. An initial Board made up of current directors along with state representatives started to progress the work of the Foundation's new strategic plan.

In November 2021, the initial Board asked members to vote on a special resolution to allow the it to continue

the work of unification, including strengthening the skills and capabilities of the future Board. The special resolution was passed, and the initial Board remains in place until the Annual General Meeting in 2022.

Pre-budget submission

We are pleased to have presented a pre-budget submission to the Australian Government requesting urgent action to develop a National Action Plan on Incontinence. There has been no strategy from the government since 2014, and the Foundation's request of A\$20 million to develop and implement a new plan will see better access to continence care and support, build workforce capacity, improve economic participation, and accelerate research. The pre-budget submission will be available shortly at www.continence.org.au

REFERENCES

1. Deloitte Access Economics. The value of informal care in 2020. Carers Australia; 2020.
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Disability, ageing and carers, Australia: summary of findings, 2015 [cited 2022 Feb 3]. Available from: <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4430.0main+features202015>

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