

WINTER 2025

Read all about it!

What's News?



A Message from MCCC

Welcome to the Winter 2025 edition of What's News.

As the weather cools down, we're bringing you fresh updates and helpful reminders to support you through the winter months.

Inside this edition, you'll find more detailed information about Support at Home, the Government's new approach to in-home care funding. These changes are important, and we've broken them down in a simple way to help you understand what they mean for you. If you have questions, please reach out, we're here to help.

This edition also includes tips to help your care run smoothly. For example, giving us plenty of notice for transport bookings, and keeping your space tidy for our team. These small steps go a long way in making sure your care is safe and efficient.

We also celebrated National Volunteer Week at the end of May, and we were grateful to have the opportunity to give thanks to them. We couldn't support our community like we do without the incredible support of our volunteers.

Plus, find advice on staying well in the colder months, and see our latest social outings. These events are a fun way to stay active and meet friends, even when it's chilly outside.

Thank you for trusting us to help you **live your best life, with care at home.**

Sarah Twaddell

Regional Manager - Hunter
Maitland Community Care Services



Live your best life with care at home

IN THIS ISSUE

CLINICAL CORNER

SUPPORT AT HOME

MCCC TIPS

SOCIAL CALENDAR

CROSSWORD

Want to keep up to date with our news & services via email?



mccs.org.au/email

Winter Wellness Tips

1

Stay Warm, Stay Safe

As temperatures drop, keeping warm is vital for good health, especially for older adults and people with disability, who may be more vulnerable to cold-related illnesses.

Top Tips:

- Dress in layers and keep your feet and head covered.
- Use heaters safely and check for drafts in your home.
- Keep your home warm—ideally between 18°C and 21°C in living areas.

Cold weather can increase the risk of respiratory infections, worsening of chronic conditions, and even hypothermia.

For more information visit:
health.nsw.gov.au/winter



2

Get Your Winter Vaccinations

Protect yourself from serious illnesses this winter by staying current with your vaccinations.

Recommended vaccines for winter:

- Flu vaccine: Free for people aged 65+, those with chronic health conditions, and people with disability.
- COVID-19 booster: If it's been 6 months or more since your last dose or infection, consider a booster.

Vaccination is one of the most effective ways to prevent severe illness and hospitalisation.

For more information visit:
agedcareengagement.health.gov.au/blog/winter-vaccines-reminder



3

Stay Active Indoors

Chilly weather may keep us indoors, but staying active is important for strength, balance, and mental wellbeing.

Ideas for staying active:

- Chair exercises, stretching, or gentle yoga.
- Walking laps inside the house or using a step machine.
- Online fitness videos tailored for seniors and people with disability.

Regular movement helps maintain independence and lowers the risk of falls and depression.

For more information visit:
activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au



COVID-19 and the Flu

While current case numbers are low and new variants are not causing more severe illness, winter can still bring higher risks of respiratory infections.

Staying well this season means practising good hygiene, like regular hand washing, and speaking with your care team or GP about getting vaccinated.

At Maitland Community Care Services, our staff have been offered free flu vaccinations to keep you safe, and to minimise staff vacancies during winter.

It's important to report any cold or flu symptoms early, so care can be adjusted.

If you are experiencing illness, please call 4932 5755 so we can reschedule your services.

Support at Home - Delayed!

The Australian Government recently announced that the new **Support at Home program and the Aged Care Act** will now **begin on 1 November 2025**, instead of 1 July 2025.

Scan to read the **open letter to older people** issued by the **Minister for Aged Care and Seniors**.



What does this mean for you?

- **No changes to your current services.** You will continue receiving the same care and support from your familiar support workers and local team.
- **We're still preparing.** This delay gives us more time to get ready, train our staff, and make sure everything is in place to support you under the new system.
- **We're here to help.** If you have any questions, please call Carolyn Crockford, our Home Care Package Team Leader, on 4932 5755.

What about Assistive Technology and Home Modifications?

Under the Support at Home program, the **Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Scheme** will give participants access to assistive technology and/or home modifications without needing to save up funds from their individual budgets.



What's Coming on 1 November?

Three service areas:

- **Clinical Supports** - nursing care, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy.
- **Independence** - help with showering, getting dressed, taking medications, transport or respite care.
- **Everyday living** - cleaning, gardening, shopping or meal preparation.

Quarterly budgets: You will receive a quarterly budget that aligns with your funding classification. You can roll over up to \$1,000 of each quarter's funds.

Care management: 10% of your budget is set aside to help plan and organise your care.

Eight funding levels: to better tailor plans to individual needs, ranging from \$11,000 to \$77,000.

Two special pathways for additional assistance:

- **Restorative Care Pathway** - to maintain and improve your independence through allied health services following a significant life event, like a fall or hospital stay.
- **End-of-Life Pathway** - help to support those who have 3 months or less to live to stay at home for as long as possible.

One provider: each participant will have a single Support at Home service provider

This information is correct as of 10 June 2025 and is subject to change. Contact our office on 4932 5755 for more information.

What We Can Help With

Our support workers are here to help you keep your home safe and tidy. But please remember – they are not professional cleaners.

We provide support just for you, the client.

This doesn't include cleaning up after other people or pets in your home.

We can help with:



Your bedroom and changing linen.



Your living area.



Your primary bathroom.



Shared traffic areas.



Your kitchen.



Your washing, folding and ironing.



Shopping for you by list, with cash.



Your rubbish and recycling.

We're sorry, but our support workers cannot assist with:

- Cleaning windows, ceiling fans or ovens.
- Using ladders.
- Heavy lifting or moving furniture.
- Using leaf blowers.

These tasks fall outside the type of support we provide. If you're unsure, please ask!

If someone else in your household needs help, talk to us. We may be able to offer other options.

Public Holiday services - What to expect

On public holidays, we focus on essential care. This includes help with medication, personal care, and meals.

Domestic Assistance (DA) services are not provided on public holidays.

Starting from the King's Birthday public holiday on Monday, 9 June 2025, you will no longer receive a call to confirm this. The service will simply be paused for the day.

If you would like to reschedule a DA service that falls on a public holiday, please speak with your care team. A new service request will need to be made.

Thank you for your understanding.

A Note on Service Times

We work hard to provide services at a time that suits you best. Sometimes, we may need to adjust your booking to support clients with essential care needs.

When this happens, our goal is to minimise disruption and keep you informed.

Please remember

✓ Cleaning products labelled in original containers

✓ Restrain pets

✗ No smoking, drugs or alcohol

✗ We can't clean up after pets

✗ No toxic chemicals or bleach

Cancelling a service

To avoid a cancellation fee, please let us know before 5 pm on the day before your service.

For Monday bookings, it's best if we hear from you by 5 pm Friday. Our business hours are 7:30 am–5 pm, Monday to Friday.

Outside these times we're only available for urgent matters.



We require 48 hours' notice to arrange your transport. Early notice allows us to secure a suitable vehicle, set up any necessary supports (like wheelchair access) and give our drivers clear instructions. Thank you for helping us plan ahead.

Introducing Bec, your new Customer Service Team Leader



Has our customer service been exceptionally exceptional lately?

That could be due to our **new Customer Service Team Leader, Bec!**

Bec joins us from Adssi In-home Support on the Central Coast, and brings a wealth of experience leading teams in providing caring, personalised support to those receiving care at home.

A note about pets

Pets bring a lot of joy to our lives, but they also come with challenges and risks.



Please help us manage risks to you, your animals and our workers by:

✓ Securing pets before workers arrive by keeping them:

- in a fenced yard.
- in a separate room.
- on a lead in a yard.

✓ Presenting documentation to show Guide Dogs or Companion Pets are accredited.

✗ Not asking workers to transport your pet without pre-approval. We typically can't as:

- They may transport other clients later; pets can trigger allergies.
- Workers risk fines for incorrect pet restraints.
- Extra cleaning time and costs.
- Driver distraction.

What to do in an emergency



Call Triple Zero (000) if it's an emergency.

For example, you have difficulty breathing, chest pain, severe bleeding, sudden collapse or are seriously injured.

We do not provide an after-hours nursing service.

For general after-hours health advice, help is available 24/7 through healthdirect.

Call the government-funded health information and advice line **healthdirect** on **1800 022 222**.

National Volunteer Week

19-25 MAY 2025

Connecting Communities Week

As a not-for-profit, we are proud to be supported by many generous volunteers in many roles. These include administration, driving clients to appointments, friendly social visits, and helping out at community events. Their kindness and dedication make a big difference, and help us to provide the highest standard of care.

Our volunteers come from all walks of life. Some are retired and looking to stay active, others are students gaining experience, and many simply want to give back to their community. No matter their background, we've had feedback that volunteers bring something special and help create a warm, welcoming environment.



Despite the torrential rain, our dedicated volunteers gathered for a morning tea to celebrate National Volunteer Week. It was a chance to reconnect, share stories, and reflect on a big year. With their help, we delivered over 30,000 meals, completed more than 25,000 transport trips, held 228 group outings, and provided 280 hours of one-on-one support.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who helps make such a difference in our community.

Social Activities Guidelines

These guidelines help keep everyone safe during outings – especially our team members and volunteers, who may not be trained to give personal or medical care in group settings.

Please note:

- Dates and venues may change.
- If you need to cancel, let us know at least 24 hours in advance. If not, you may still be charged.

To take part safely, you must meet the following:

- **Mobility:** Must be able to walk safely. No falls in the past 6 months. Walking aids (like sticks or walkers) are okay if you can move around confidently.
- **Cognitive ability:** Must be aware of where you are, what's happening around you, and be able to follow instructions. No signs of wandering, confusion, or sudden changes in behaviour.
- **Toileting:** Must be able to use the bathroom without help.
- **Medication:** Must be able to take your own medication without help.





Maitland Community Care Services is dedicated to supporting stroke survivors on their journey to recovery. Our **ESTEEM Program** provides a nurturing environment that promotes physical, cognitive, and social enrichment for stroke survivors.

STROKE RECOVERY PROGRAM



4932 5755



esteem@mccs.org.au



mccs.org.au/strokerecoverymaitland

Bookings are essential

Our 10-week program is held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm at Kurri Kurri Hospital Day Centre



Coming soon - New Look Meals on Wheels Menu

We're making it easier for you to choose tasty meals. Keep an eye out for our new look Meals on Wheels menu!



Ready to join in the fun?

For bookings or information, call us on (02) 4932 5755.

Your feedback matters to us

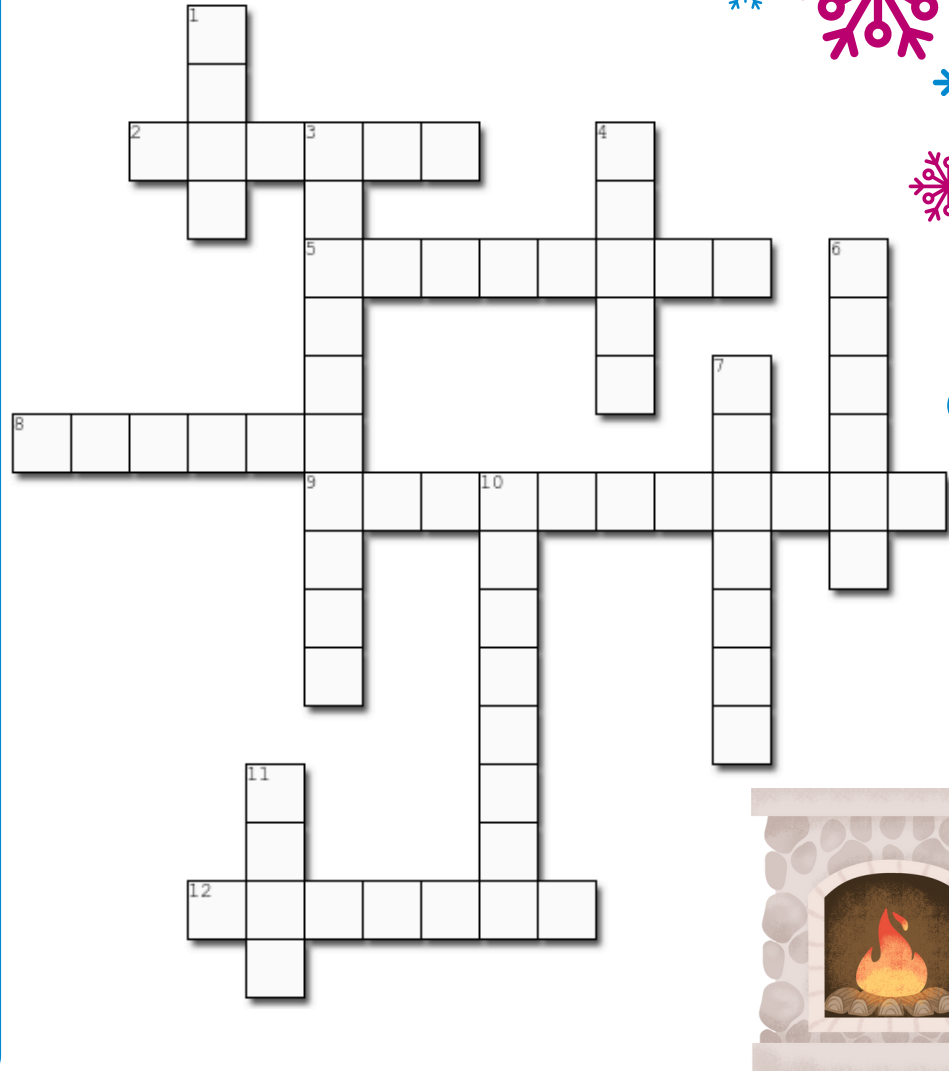
We want to hear from you! Your comments help us improve and provide better care and support.

Whether it's a compliment, suggestion, or concern, we're here to listen:

- **Call us:** (02) 4932 5755
- **Email us:** admin@mccs.org.au
- **Submit feedback online:** mccs.org.au
- **Contact the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission:** 1800 951 822 or agedcarequality.gov.au/contact-us

A collection of colorful snowflakes and circles in blue and pink, scattered around a white crossword puzzle grid. The snowflakes are of various sizes and designs, some with multiple points and others more compact. The circles are also of different sizes, some solid and some with a smaller circle inside. The grid is a standard crossword puzzle layout with black squares and white squares for letters. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100 are visible in the grid.

11. People who love Christmas celebrate it again this month.



• My Aged Care	1800 200 422	myagedcare.gov.au
• Carer Gateway	1800 422 737	carergateway.gov.au
• The Older Persons Advocacy Network	1800 700 600	opan.org.au
• Seniors Rights Service	1800 424 079	seniorsrightsservice.org.au
• NSW Ageing & Disability Abuse Helpline	1800 628 221	
• 1800 ELDERHelp (Elder Abuse)	1800 353 374	
• Beyond Blue	1300 224 636	beyondblue.org.au
• Lifeline	13 11 14	lifeline.org.au
• Mental Health Line	1800 011 511	health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth

We affirm the right to equity, respect and fairness for all people.