

## From the Desk of the CEO

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### Electoral Reforms in the Northern Territory

There are quite a few consultation papers released by the NT government recently and one of them is the [Electoral Reforms in the Northern Territory](#). You can visit this link to view an information paper on Electronic Voting and another one on the actual Electoral Reforms.

It is interesting to note that it is very difficult to get voters in the 18-24 age group to firstly enrol and then to actually vote. Would a voting phone app allow more people to vote? There is a lot to discuss – should we keep preferential voting as well?

**These papers are available from our COTA NT office** or can be downloaded from the government web site <http://www.haveyoursay.nt.gov.au/electoralreform>. There are also information sessions first one is at 10am 23/11/2017 and this one will focus on issues relevant to voters with disabilities, older voters, and culturally and linguistic diverse communities.

You can take the **Electoral Reform Survey** online if you wish to, [https://haveyoursay.nt.gov.au/electoralreform/survey\\_tools/electoralreformsurvey](https://haveyoursay.nt.gov.au/electoralreform/survey_tools/electoralreformsurvey)

### Skills for Working in the Aged Care Sector

COTA NT met with representatives from the NT Skills Advisory Council regarding the qualifications for working in the aged care sector. Do you realise that there are 95,000 vacant jobs in the aged care sector Australia-wide? With the Territory having the fastest growth of residents over 65 in Australia – 35%, we will definitely see a skill shortage in this area in the near future. DO you think that a Certificate 1V is adequate for working in this sector? COTA NT believes that a *Working with Vulnerable People* card should also be mandatory for employees in this area.

### Seniors Card comes to COTA NT

The Office of Territory Families has outsourced the Seniors Card to COTA NT, so from the 1st February 2018, if you need a new card – come and see us! We are looking at ways to enhance the Seniors Card and to attract more local businesses. We envisage having a separate website for the Seniors Card and we will be having focus groups in regional centres to take on board what you think the card should look like going into the future. COTA NT has this agreement for a five-year period.



## **NT Concessions and NT Seniors Recognition Scheme**

With the release of information regarding the re-vamped Northern Territory Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme (NTPCCS) to the NT Concessions and NT Seniors Recognition Scheme, the NT Government has increased the budget. However, this increase is not enough to cover all seniors, especially the self-funded retirees.

With 28,000 seniors listed - but quite a few of these have moved on – let's say 23,000 seniors who all would like to receive all the concessions, including the \$2,000 capped water and electricity, plus the \$500 each and every year, this amounts to nearly \$58 million, which is nearly \$25 million over budget.

So how does the NT government raise this extra budgetary requirement? Maybe this is why the discussion paper has been released regarding ways to raise revenue?

Take care and stay safe

Sue Shearer, CEO COTA NT