

# Generations Together



## A Guide to the Western Australian Active Ageing Strategy

In 2004 the State Government launched Generations Together: the Western Australian Active Ageing Strategy.

Generations Together focuses on the possibilities and challenges presented by Western Australia's ageing population and responds to the needs of today's seniors.

The Strategy is a whole-of-government framework which is leading a shift in community attitudes and planning around ageing. The strategy encourages partnerships with local governments and the community. It seeks to maximise the social, economic and environmental outcomes of demographic change for all generations.

## What is Active Ageing?

Active ageing is a way of thinking and working to "optimise opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age," (World Health Organisation, 2002).

## Why an Active Ageing Strategy in WA?

By the year 2031, one quarter of the Western Australian population will be aged 60 years or over.

This demographic shift has important implications for policy and service planning in all areas of Government. It will influence economic and social trends in our community. The State Government is changing what it does today to be better prepared for tomorrow.

## What are the key aspects of the strategy?

The Strategy introduces a 'lifecourse approach' to programs and policies for older people in Western Australia. This approach acknowledges the important influences of earlier life experiences, gender and culture on how individuals age while addressing the specific demands of ageing in later years.

The strategy heralds a change in the way the State Government works and requires agencies to work together across government and the community, to achieve identified outcomes.

## What does the strategy do?

### The Strategy:

- ensures that State Government programs and policies are better directed to meet the demands of demographic change;
- provides a framework for an integrated policy and program response to ageing across the lifespan; and
- invites Local Governments, community and non-government organisations and individuals alike to take up active ageing and join together to improve the experience of ageing and being older in WA.





## How is this happening?

Since 2004 the Government has been implementing initiatives to address active ageing under 5 priority areas:

### 1. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

A holistic view of health is taken, emphasising resources for the retention of good health and prevention of illness. This includes the support of family and carers and promotion of the personal, social and environmental facilitators of wellbeing in a manner that is culturally appropriate and informed.

### 2. EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

Policies and programs are promoted to encourage employers to attract and benefit from older workers' skills and experiences. Employers are encouraged to retain older employees through innovative workplace practices, phased retirement and life-long learning. Mature employees are also encouraged to maintain and develop their skills and to profit from and contribute to the workplace as they age.

### 3. COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION

Older people are viewed as a vital resource for the community. The community are encouraged to employ and benefit from the experiences and skills of ageing and older people. Older people are encouraged to continue to be active and informed participants in our society and to sustain their diverse cultural heritage.

### 4. PROTECTION AND SECURITY

The community and private sector are encouraged to form partnerships to increase social and economic security and protection of older people.

### 5. PLANNING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Promoting and extending existing initiatives to make our community more accessible for ageing and to improve planning, services and design to meet the needs of our diverse ageing population. This process is informed by ongoing, accurate economic and social modelling.

## Outcomes for WA

A report on the initiatives implemented to address these priority areas is available at [http://www.community.wa.gov.au/Communities/Seniors/Publications/Generations\\_Together\\_A\\_Progress\\_Report.htm](http://www.community.wa.gov.au/Communities/Seniors/Publications/Generations_Together_A_Progress_Report.htm)

In 2006 the State Government released Western Australia's Seniors - Active Ageing Benchmark Indicators, these indicators will be used over time to measure Western Australia's progress towards achieving active ageing among our seniors and realising the vision of Generations Together.

The Benchmark Indicators are available at [http://www.community.wa.gov.au/Communities/Seniors/Publications/Active\\_Ageing\\_Benchmark\\_Indicators.htm](http://www.community.wa.gov.au/Communities/Seniors/Publications/Active_Ageing_Benchmark_Indicators.htm)

## Where to from here?

During 2007 the State Government will revisit Generations Together and invite all state government agencies to identify opportunities for new initiatives and to ensure that the strategy continues to respond to the possibilities and challenges presented by Western Australia's ageing population and meet the needs of today's seniors.

If you require more information please contact Mr Stephen Boylen, Director Policy and Planning Office for Seniors Interest and Volunteering PH: 6217 8525, or, Ms Trish O'Reilly Manager Active Ageing Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering PH: 6217 8524.



**Address:** Level 7 Dumas House, 2 Havelock Street, WEST PERTH WA 6005

**Telephone:** (08) 6217 8500 **Fax:** (08) 9481 3886

**Email:** [osi@dcd.wa.gov.au](mailto:osi@dcd.wa.gov.au) **Website:** [www.community.wa.gov.au/communities/seniors](http://www.community.wa.gov.au/communities/seniors)