
CommonAge Newsletter, April 2024



A Message from our Vice Chair

Dear Reader,



Imagine a Commonwealth where every older person feels not just supported, but truly embraced, living a life of dignity and meaning. As we step into the second decade of CommonAge, this vision becomes the heartbeat of our mission. I, as the vice chair, am not just a proponent of this vision but a living testament to the transformative power of CommonAge in inspiring leadership through collaborations and partnerships. In this new phase, my focus is clear: to weave a tapestry of collaboration among member countries, each contributing to the grander narrative of an All-age friendly Commonwealth.

Let us place a spotlight on the critical need for leadership development in this field. Strong leadership will be the driving force propelling the ageing agenda forward, ensuring that the diverse and evolving needs of our older population are met with unwavering dedication. Picture a future where the ageing agenda isn't just a notion but a lived reality, where the inherent rights of older persons are not just acknowledged but fiercely protected. This is the Commonwealth we aspire to create a tapestry of support, a symphony of meaning, where every older person can thrive.

Regards,

Femada Shamam

Vice Chair, CommonAge

CEO - Tafta, The Association For The Ageing

The BIG Reunion



“It was so good to be able to thank the Founding Members for their steadfast support for CommonAge from Day One,” says Andrew.

“I described CommonAge as a product of South Australia – conceived, born and nurtured to teenage years thanks to them. There are exciting teenage years ahead!”

Pictured left to right

- Mike Rungie: former CEO of ACH Group and Australian Aged Care and Ageing
- luminary Richard Hearn AM: former CEO Resthaven (Founding Member)
- Jane Pickering – CEO Eldercare SA (Founding Member)
- Antony Pivato: CommonAge Hon Treasurer and Director, and FD at Southern Cross Care (SA, NT & Vic) (Founding Member)
- Simon Lehman: Brand Partners (Founding Member) and pro bono graphics
- support Klaus Zimmermann AM: Founding CEO Director (Emeritus) of
- CommonAge Andrew Larpent: Founding Director and Chair (Emeritus)
- Kerry Lehman: partner at Brand Partners (and of
- Simon) Darren Birbeck: current CEO of Resthaven (Founding Member)
- David Martin: Chair Southern Cross Care (SA, NT & Vic) (Founding Member)
- Jo Boylan: CEO Clayton Church Homes and Chair of the CommonAge Healthy Ageing TaskForce.

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CommonAge welcomes Indian leader to its Board



It is with great pleasure we announce the appointment to our Board of Directors, **Dr Renu Abraham Varughese**, a prominent clinical gerontologist, accomplished scholar, and educator, is an Associate Professor at Mercy University, New York, USA.

Dr Varughese holds a PhD in gerontology, MPhil in gerontological guidance and Counseling, MS in clinical ageing, and is currently pursuing an MBA in Organisational Leadership.

“I am truly honored and privileged to be a part of this esteemed community. Being recognized alongside such accomplished individuals is truly humbling and inspiring. I am committed to upholding the values and standards of excellence that define CommonAge. I look forward to contributing to its mission and collaborating with fellow members to further advance our shared goals for a better quality of life for elders globally”.

Renu Abraham Varughese

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International Women’s Day, raising awareness and celebrating success



This International Women’s Day, our communications lead Annie Waddington-Feather takes a brieflook at some of the challenges older women face across the Commonwealth and puts the spotlight on their achievements.

International Women’s Day, held annually on 8 March; the day is about celebrating women’s achievements, raising awareness about discrimination and taking action to drive gender parity.

So where are we at when it comes to older women in the Commonwealth, particularly in developing countries?

Commonwealth countries are diverse: they are among the world’s biggest, smallest, richest and poorest countries; there are 21 Commonwealth countries in Africa, 8 in Asia, 13 in Caribbean and Americas, 3 in Europe, 11 in Pacific.

[Read More](#)

Commonwealth Day 2024



Commonwealth Day, held on the second Monday of March, is an annual celebration observed by people all over the Commonwealth in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Americas, the Pacific and Europe.

This year it fell on Monday 11 March 2024, and marks the beginning of a week-long series of events and activities that took place around the globe – including faith and civic gatherings, debates, school assemblies, flag-raising ceremonies and cultural events. We were represented by Rianna Patterson at the celebrations.

The theme for Commonwealth Day 2024, and the forthcoming **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting**, is ‘*One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Common Wealth*’.

The theme highlights how the 56 member countries must harness their strengths by building resilience, unlocking potential, leveraging the ‘Commonwealth Advantage’ and fostering a connected, digital Commonwealth.

The highlights for the day could be found [here](#):

[Read More](#)

Introducing our new partners, Person Centred Software



We are delighted to welcome our new partner, Person Centred Software.

Person Centred Software is a leading global technology company that builds products to help improve the quality of life for people living and working in social care.

Its solutions are loved by carers because they are built for carers – in a way that is simple to use and highly effective. As an organisation, Person Centred Software is dedicated to driving outstanding care.

Commenting on the partnership, Tammy Sherwood, Chief Customer Officer at Person Centred Software, says: “*We are proud to support CommonAge in driving positive change in how we support older people. Their advocacy work makes a real difference in the lives of older individuals across the Commonwealth.*”

[Read More](#)

Train the Trainer Programme

Empowering Elder Care through International Collaboration with a Focus on Ageing in Africa

JUNE 2024

Dr. Renu Varughese
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR - MERCY UNIVERSITY NY

FULBRIGHT
10 Years 2014-2024
CommonAge

tafta
THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE AGED

FULBRIGHT SPECIALIST
TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAMME ON
ELDER CARE

Common Age in partnership with Tafta and Fulbright Commission will be hosting the Fulbright Specialist Train the Trainer Programme on Elder Care

The Fulbright Specialist Programme allows for U.S. academics and professionals to provide short term training and expertise to international host organisations.

Who will benefit from the FSP?
Practitioners including Social workers, administrators, activity co-ordinators, Nurses, Occupational therapists etc. working with older persons living with dementia and/or psychiatric illnesses.
NB: Participants will be required to train at least 6 other persons on completion of the programme.

The programme will focus on:

- The neurology system, behavioral disorders, dementia, person centred planning and care.
- The impact of ageing related neurological changes on the cognitive and physiological functioning of older adults and;
- How best to manage challenging behaviour presented by older adults with age related cognitive deficits

About the Trainer
Professor Renu Varughese from New York, USA, comes highly recommended with extensive experience and expertise in the fields of gerontology, dementia, educational facilitation and curriculum design.

Cost
THE TRAINING PROGRAMME IS FREE!
For those travelling from outside Durban, the cost of accommodation and/or travel will be to their account.

If you are interested in participating in the programme, email:
carmel@tafta.org.za
for the application form

10 - 21 JUNE 2024
TAFTA, DURBAN,
SOUTH AFRICA

We are excited to announce the upcoming "Train the Trainer" initiative, a collaborative effort between Tafta and CommonAge, leveraging the prestigious Fulbright Specialist program. This initiative aims to enhance elder care outcomes through international collaboration, emphasizing knowledge sharing and capacity building, with a special focus on ageing in Africa.

The program focuses on critical areas such as understanding neurological changes in ageing, comprehensive assessment tools for older persons, and building capacity through the Train the Trainer approach. Participants, including nurses, social workers, and therapists, will gain valuable insights and skills to improve care practices for older adults in African contexts.

The Fulbright Specialist program, known for its global impact, aligns perfectly with our vision of fostering collaboration and expertise exchange. Participants can choose between in-person or virtual attendance options, ensuring accessibility and flexibility.

Scheduled between 3rd June and 24th June, this initiative promises to be a transformative experience for all involved. Stay tuned for more!!

Conversations in Common across the Commonwealth

The first of our CommonAge live and recorded Conversations in Common across the Commonwealth will commence from May 2024.

The hour long series are presented by **Linda Justin** (member of the CommonAge Board) interviewing **Jo Boylan** (CE Clayton Church Homes) about ways to advance healthy ageing across the Commonwealth for our elderly population.

The series target health care workers/health professionals providing formal and informal services provided in Commonwealth countries.

The presenters have a strong positive diversity mindset and are keen to hear everyone's experiences, knowing we have so much in common across our countries and also valuing our differences.

The presenters will use power point, interviews style questions and answers and will be asking for participation in a number of questions by participants.

Our first series about 'shifting our thinking' to eradicate Ageism in health care services is scheduled for May 2024.

The second is about understanding healthy ageing and the benefits and the building a workforce with a growth mindset culture and the third series, is about implementing strategies to advance healthy ageing.

Stay tuned for more!!

Introducing our exclusive Membership Badge

We have developed this exclusive badge for members to support their credibility and commitment to working towards an all age-inclusive Commonwealth, as well as being part of a Commonwealth affiliated organisation committed to working to ensure older people are fully recognised in society, and are supported and enabled to live well.



Ambassador Updates



Senator Dr. Eze Darlington Ajoku conducted a hangout recently in Nigeria.

A hangout, is an intergenerational and gender-based initiative aimed at including and re-integrating indigenous, marginalized and vulnerable older persons, especially older women, into the society through social gatherings that will rejuvenate and empower them mentally and psychologically to continue to fully participate in the society.

The project can be viewed here: [COSROPIN-VOICE-Older-Persons-Hangout-Project-2023](#)



Dr Pascale Dinan, our bursary recipient gave an interview on healthy ageing on national Mauritius TV following a conference she did to the public on healthy ageing in October 2023.

They have activities coming up at FIAPA from 18-20 April with the visit of an expert from Marseilles, France.

The interview can be found here: [Nou Rasinn 03 Mar 2024 - YouTube](#)



Sandra Latibeaudiere is a lecturer in the Social Work Unit, University of the West Indies, Mona.

She recently submitted an article in the ***The Gleaner***, an English-language, morning daily newspaper.

The article can be viewed here : [The Gleaner article.](#)



Lynda Smith conducted an online workshop on exploring work options later in life.

The workshop can be viewed here: [Exploring your work journey 50+](#)

Accreditation



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Join us!

We are a charity and our voluntary Board of Directors is committed to making changes to older people's lives across the Commonwealth.

Help us deliver the ideal of an "All Age Friendly" Commonwealth that values the dignity of older people, respects their wisdom and experience, and that leaves no one behind in the journey towards a sustainable, peaceful future.

[Donate, partner, become a member!](#)

You can donate to us via

- Credit card: Visa, MasterCard and American
- ExpressApple Pay
- Google Pay
- PayPal

Get in Touch! We'd love to share your stories and help us to grow the conversations about our mission and vision, and to celebrate the great achievements of organisations and older people themselves.

Thank you for your continued support.

Team CommonAge

Visit our website www.commage.org for more information about our work and for regular updates.

Email Reneta Dsouza, Executive Assistant at secretariat@commage.org or Connect with us on social media.



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