

Kangara Waters hosts Carer's Program

IRT will next week begin hosting a *Coping with Caring* program at Kangara Waters, aiming to educate and support people who care for an older person living in the community.

The eight-week program aims to better prepare individuals in a range of areas associated with caring, including managing stress, accessing support and legal and financial planning.

Past participant David Whyte said the program gave him a comprehensive guide to the support and agencies available in the community.

The Hughes man has cared for his mother for the past 20 years, but also mentored a Vietnam veteran and provided support to other people in the community.

“There are such a range of services out there that I might otherwise not know about if not for the course, and I’ve been a carer for a long time. The program was really helpful,” My Whyte said.

“It also covers a range of topics such as stress management, and the need to take time out for yourself so you don’t become overloaded – we can’t be much good as carers if we’re not healthy ourselves.

“On occasions I have sometimes just felt worn out, particularly when following up with particular authorities to advocate on behalf of people to gain support or action – it’s tiring.

“I usually just cut myself off for a short time and take the dog for a walk.”

IRT Community Services Senior Coordinator Carina Robinson said many people in the community did not even identify that the regular support and dedication they provide for a loved one or friend makes them a carer.

“This program acknowledges the contributions carers make to our community, while providing an opportunity to connect with others and explore the rewards and challenges of supporting an older person to stay at home,” Ms Robinson said.

“By gaining practical skills and information a person is more likely to be able to sustain their caring role. *Coping with Caring* provides an opportunity to identify what additional support is available and gather resources to plan for the future.

“By looking ahead and being prepared, many carers are able to avoid entering a crisis.”

Ms Robinson said the program was free to participants because funding was provided by the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services.

The next program begins on Tuesday 18th May, running for 8 weeks, from 4pm – 7pm. For more information or to register please call 6233 8233.

Ends

Note to Editors: We request you refer to IRT as “IRT” not “Illawarra Retirement Trust” – thank you.

For further information please contact:

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About IRT:

IRT is Australia’s largest not-for-profit, community based aged care and retirement living provider*. It has been providing care, services and accommodation to older Australians for 40 years. IRT manages villages more than 30 locations across the Illawarra, South Coast of NSW, Sydney and Canberra. It serves the needs of more than 5000 residents and clients.

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