



# Community Care TASMANIA

## HCP Newsletter October 2020

Hi everyone

This month we are sending you a survey to find out how we can better tailor services and activities to help you stay connected with the things you love and/or need. In particular, in rethinking how we can best support and care for clients in the new COVID-19 world we now live in, CCT is especially interested in finding ways to connect clients to the burgeoning Smart technology now available to help you access social programs and medical support you require. Your feedback will be extremely valuable for us to know what interests you would like to pursue, and what assistance you would need to do this. CCT has recently advertised for a Project Coordinator whose role will be to turn your wish list into a reality.

We know many people find the concept of smart technology overwhelming and just too hard to think about. However, many of you are already using smart devices, and you may be surprised to find it is not such a huge step to integrate additional programs or systems that may revolutionise your life; you might wonder why you didn't put some of these things in place sooner. Moreover, many of you have funds available in your packages that will pay for smart technology that helps you live better, safer and smarter to be installed. If you live in Launceston and would like to find out more about what smart technology is available, and how it could help you stay living independently and safely at home, CCT is presenting along with the Independent Living Centre at an Expo called 'Future Proofing your home with Smart Technology' during Seniors Week: Details are on the back page of this newsletter.

Finally, our thanks to two of our clients Palmerina (Pam) Letterio and Maria Rossilli, for sharing their stories with us this month. Pam has been receiving services from Community Care TASMANIA following hip replacement 13 years ago. Maria has been a client for 9 years, and her mother Giuliana, was a client in the early 1990's when we were known as the Community Options Service NESB when it first began in Wellington Street in Launceston; Giuliana was part of the post-World War II migrant generation for whom CCT was originally established to provide services to when we started. Both Pam and Maria were interviewed as part of a history project providing a snapshot of people who have been part of CCT's history to mark CCT's 30th anniversary.

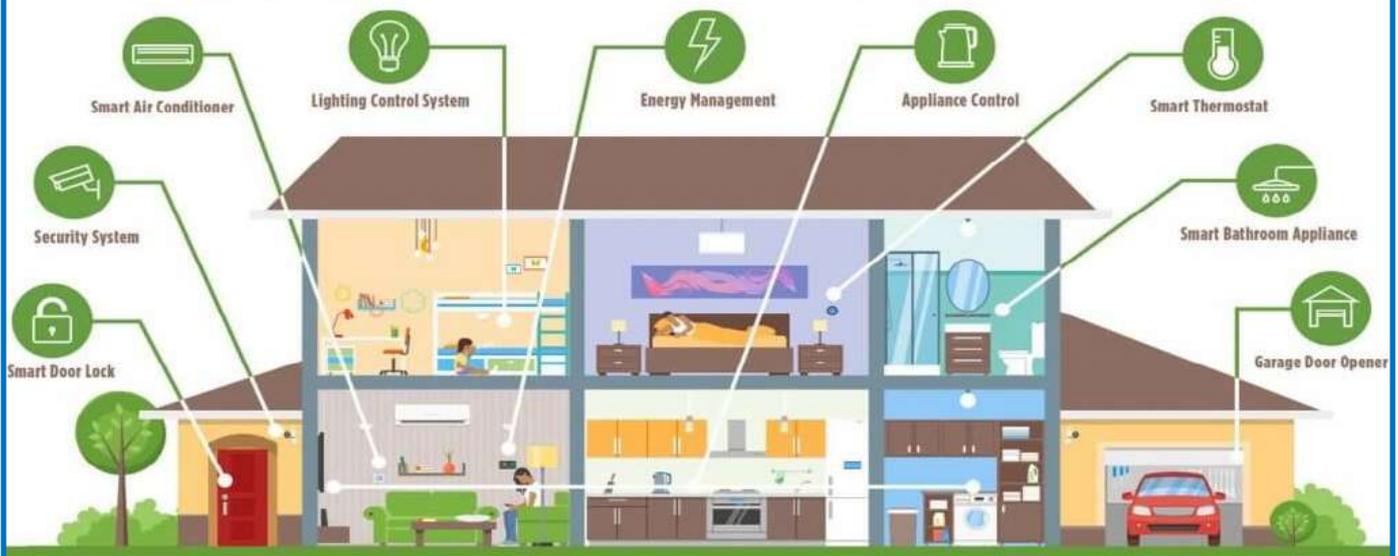
Best wishes,

Wendy Mitchell CEO

## Let's Get Smart

# HOME, SMART HOME

Cool gadgets, practicality drive trend in residential lifestyle technology



## Palmerina (Pam) Letterio

Palmerina was born in a small town near Abruzzo Italy 84 years ago. She was the sixth child of nine brothers and sisters, and she recalls her childhood was 'very hard as the family lived on a farm and all the children had to work.'



Palmerina went to school until grade three. When she was seven or eight, she helped to look after the other children and did things in the kitchen with her mother, like make pasta. Her older brother came to Tasmania in 1952 to work for the Hydro. She was 21 when she and her sister came to Tasmania in 1957 to find work and a new life.

She met her husband in Tasmania. He was from Italy originally but lived in Western Australia for a time before moving to Tasmania. He worked as a plasterer. Palmerina worked at Coats Paton's initially when they were married. After being retrenched from Coats Paton's, Palmerina worked in several places around Launceston, including St. Vincent's Hospital, until her first daughter was born. After her second daughter arrived, she worked at Benders Meats for seven years.

Palmerina said 'I liked Launceston, but learning the language was difficult. I missed my family a lot and would check the mailbox every day to see if my mother or another relative had written. We kept in touch a lot.' It took 15 years before Palmerina and her husband went back to see her mother and relatives in Italy. They took their two daughters with them. Her eldest daughter couldn't understand why they would leave such a place. 'They didn't understand how hard it was and how poor we were.' Sadly, Palmerina's mother was unwell and died six months after the family visited: she was 'very happy that we had spent our three-month holiday sitting with my mother, chatting and enjoying each other's company. We were lucky we got that time.' She never saw her father again.

13 years ago, Palmerina had a hip replacement and someone at the hospital told her of Community Care TASMANIA's services. She has been a client ever since. Her first coordinator was called 'Pinky'. 'I think Pinky went to Georgetown because she lived closer to there, so then I got Karen. Pinky was lovely and did an assessment to see what I needed after my operation. Karen is very good too. She makes sure I get all the equipment I need after I've been to the hospital and also from my 'package.' I am very glad of the help from the government.'

Palmerina says the service from Community Care TASMANIA is 'very good' and 'I am very happy they come to help me. I get one and a half hours a week cleaning and two hours a fortnight for the garden. It is plenty. My cleaner always has time for a chat and a coffee, but my gardener doesn't have a cuppa, just a chat.'

Palmerina says she doesn't feel lonely very often, but if she gets 'bored' she will go and find one of her neighbours to chat to and 'I go to social things each week. I used to go driving a lot but now because of my health, I cannot so much. My neighbours are so lovely. There is an African family two doors away who are fantastic. It is good to be able to call on them if I need help. My daughters are always there for me as well. I am very lucky.'

## Maria Rossilli



Seated L-R: Bernardo & Giuliana Iezzi, celebrating their wedding anniversary @ The Italian Club with their daughter Maria, and sons Nicola, and standing L-R, Ercole, Camillo, Dionino and Antonio

Maria's family were from Abruzzo Italy. Her mother was called Giuliana and her father, Bernardo Iezzi. They had six children, Maria was the only girl.

Maria said Italy experienced high unemployment and poverty after World War II, to the extent it was hard to feed the family even when working all week for a small wage. 'Mum said when they came to Tasmania, it was the first time they could feed the children properly and she was very grateful for this, very happy to be able to do this.'

The family migrated to Tasmania at different times. Firstly, Maria's two eldest brothers arrived. Maria's father came in 1954 and her mother arrived two years later in 1956. Maria came with her mother and two brothers when she was around 16, and the last brother followed soon after.

It took 31 days on the boat to travel to Melbourne, then two hours to fly to Tasmania. Another two hours to travel by bus to Bronte Park and then they began their lives together as a family again. Maria remembers this time as 'difficult, but many happy times also.' She describes the women gathering for morning teas. 'There were many different cultures and languages and little or no English among them, but we all learnt English somehow. We managed.'

Maria stayed at Bronte Park for a couple of years until she met and married her husband and then moved to Launceston. Her father worked for the Hydro in Bronte Park, Poatina and Gowrie Park, then he and Giuliana finally settled in Launceston.

Maria says her parents would write regularly to their relatives in Italy. They managed to get back twice to visit but once the older generation were no longer living, there seemed little point. However, Maria says her children are very proud of their Italian heritage and 'save their money to go and visit regularly.'

Giuliana became involved with the Community Options Service NESB (CCT) when it first began in Wellington Street in Launceston in the early 1990's. The process involved an assessment that Maria thinks was done by Ina, the case manager, who visited Giuliana at home to work out her needs. The service helped Giuliana with general cleaning and gardening for approximately five years until she died in 1995. They continued to help Bernardo with his cleaning and some gardening until his death in 2003. Maria remembers one of her mother's helpers was a woman from the Philippines called Philomena. Maria says she didn't think any of her mother's helpers spoke Italian, but it didn't matter, 'they were all very good people and kind.'

Maria says she is now getting assistance from Community Care TASMANIA for the same things, general cleaning and some gardening. She says she is very happy with the service from CCT and her attitude is one of 'I accept whatever is given to me. I don't complain. There's no point to complain, this just makes people unhappy. I live my life like this.' When asked if Maria believes her upbringing helped fine-tune this attitude towards life Maria agreed wholeheartedly – 'yes, whatever is given I am grateful for, we lived in times when we had nothing. To have people come and help is wonderful.'



During Seniors Week this year Community Care TASMANIA is collaborating with the Independent Living Centre at an event called:

**'Future Proofing your Home with Smart Technology.'**

**Date: Thursday October 15th 10.00am—2.00pm**

**Venue: Windsor Precinct, 1 Windsor Drive, Riverside.**

You will be amazed at how smart technology can be used to support you in living independently and give you and your family peace of mind that you can do so safely through the automation of day-to-day tasks. Today's technology allows you to activate lights, that will help prevent stumbling in the dark and falling: Falls are the number one cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries among older adults. There are appliances and security and monitoring systems that you can activate easily with your voice, and which can even call for help on your behalf in case of an emergency, as one of our clients gratefully discovered recently after a fall.

So what is SMART Technology really? Well, you need to attend the event to find out, but the first thing you should know is that 'SMART' does not actually mean 'clever', although the acronym is clever in that what it makes us think, and that is what the technology is. However, SMART actually stands for: "self-monitoring, analysis, and reporting technology."

Smart technology has been around for some time, but COVID-19 has shown how important and helpful these technologies can be, and ideas that were still on the drawing board pre- COVID-19 are now being fast-tracked into a reality. There are smart health devices that can help identify symptoms, and/or monitor health conditions that will alert you to changes so you can address a problem quickly. There smart devices, like a 'flood detector sensor', that will detect a build-up of water on the floor and activates an alarm: a perfect solution for people who have a poor memory and have a tendency to leave taps running. Or you can install taps that have touch, motion, temperature light cues, and voice control; Hands-free operation and voice control can make household chores easier for someone with Parkinson's or arthritis. And the list goes on.

**If you would like to attend this event to see what smart technology is available, and find out what might help you, please book a place before 14 October 2020.**

**You can book online: [www.facebook.com/ILCTas](https://www.facebook.com/ILCTas) or email: [ilc@ilctas.asn.au](mailto:ilc@ilctas.asn.au), or phone 03 6335 9200.**