

Council of Elders Member Profiles

Mr Ian Yates, AM (Chair)



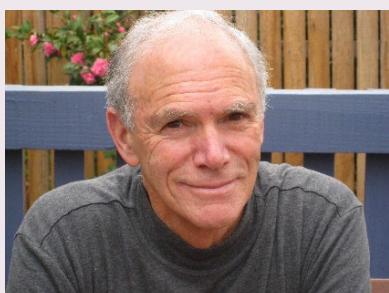
Mr Ian Yates has been a passionate advocate for older people for over 30 years as part of the Councils on the Ageing (COTA) where he has served in a range of national leadership positions since 1991, including as CE of COTA Australia since 2009.

Ian has had a key role in the development of the government's More Choices for a Longer Life package in the 2018 Budget. He has played leading roles in the National Aged Care Alliance, is member of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council, and was a member of the Aged Care Sector Committee and the Aged Care Financing Authority from their inception until they ceased on 30 June 2021. He serves on government and industry advisory bodies outside of aged care, is a Director of Livable Housing Australia, and a Board member of the Aged Rights Advocacy Service (ARAS) in SA.

In recognition of his "outstanding service to the welfare of the aged in South Australia and to a range of community, health and education organisations", Ian was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2005.

As inaugural Chair of the Council of Elders, Ian is also a member of the new National Aged Care Advisory Council.

Dr Michael Barbato, OAM



Mr Barbato entered the palliative care field in 1989 following 17 years as a General Physician in rural NSW. He retired from clinical practice in 2014 and is now engaged in research into the experience of unconsciousness in dying patients.

Michael is the author of 3 books: *Caring for the Living and the Dying*; *Reflections of a Setting Sun*; and *Midwifing Death*.

Michael and his wife run a correspondence course for members of the community and healthcare workers on the art of midwifing death. In the 2008 Australia Day Honours, Mr Barbato was awarded a medal in the Order of Australia for his service to medicine in palliative care.

Professor Tom Calma, AO



Professor Tom Calma AO is of Kungarakana and Iwaidja heritage from the Darwin region. He is currently the Chancellor of the University of Canberra, a Professor at the University of Sydney and the National Coordinator for Tackling Indigenous Smoking, and has previously served as Race Discrimination Commissioner (2004-2009) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner (2004-2010).

Tom was also a senior diplomat (1995-2002) and senior advisor to the Minister of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

In 2012, Tom was awarded an Order Of Australia in recognition of his advocacy, work in human rights and social justice and distinguished service to the Indigenous community.

Ms Gwenda Darling



Ms Darling has had a varied career working for almost 50 years in many Government Departments and Non-Government organisations. These included Child Protection and children's and adult mental health, (in both NSW and Northern Territory) Corrective Services and Juvenile Justice along with Centrelink and Housing NSW.

Gwenda is a Palawa woman and has proactively served her Aboriginal Communities, in which she has lived and worked, as CEO of Anaiwan Aboriginal Land Council, Chairperson of Gandangarra Local Aboriginal Land Council, Director of Hunter Aboriginal Children's services and various other NGO positions. This experience led her to discover her passion for justice for elders within the aged care system, advocating for many, not only with My Aged Care but also with home care providers.

After being diagnosed with younger onset Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD) at 59 and being determined to not allow the diagnosis define her, Gwenda has gone on to participate in dementia research and has been actively involved in rural dementia inclusive communities for those living with dementia and their carers. As a mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Gwenda is humbled and honoured by the trust placed in her to represent senior Australians on the Council of Elders, to build a better future for ageing in Australia.

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Ms Val Fell



Ms Fell is 93 years old and says she used to describe herself as a “retired mathematics teacher/statistician who had worked in many fields including economics, media and advertising”.

In recent years however, Val has made a significant contribution as a Dementia Advocate. Her work since 2012 has meant that people in Wollongong living with dementia and/or their carers have improved access to the information and resources they need.

In 2020, she was awarded the City of Wollongong Senior Citizen of the Year for her volunteering with Parent and Citizen Associations, Eisteddfod, the Council on The Ageing, and Dementia Australia.

Val is the 8th child in a family with 11 children and is now the eldest of 3 surviving family members. Over the years, she has watched her mother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, 2 brothers-in-law, 1 sister-in-law and husband enter residential aged care facilities.

Ms Gillian Groom, AO

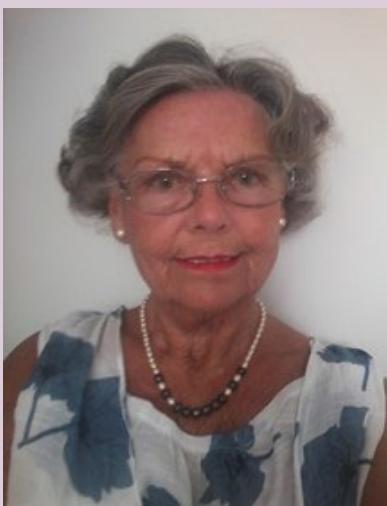


Ms Groom has been an occupational therapist for fifty years but has more recently established a career in elder and succession law. She received her law degree from the University of Tasmania, three weeks before turning 70.

Gillian has lived and worked in Tasmania for most of her life. She is quite familiar with all parts of the state which helps her to understand the unique needs of people living in regional and rural areas. She has extensive experience in community engagement through her involvement with a wide range of groups – Including those that represent people who are culturally diverse and people living with disability. Gillian has also served on many boards and committees at state and national levels.

As a parent of 6 adult children and 17 young grandchildren, she is particularly passionate about the future of aging in Australia that we can start building now.

Ms Danijela Hlis



Ms Hlis was born in Slovenia in 1949.

Danijela first studied agriculture in Svecina before studying linguistics and working as an interpreter/translator in London, Geneva, Rome, Paris and Sydney. She then went on to complete additional studies to become a human resource manager in Sydney and Melbourne until 1991 when she and her then partner established a tourism complex, Bicheno Hideaway, on Tasmania’s East coast.

In 1996 Danijela’s parents migrated from Slovenia and she became their full-time carer. Danijela’s father had a disability and her mother lived with dementia for many years and Danijela studied the illness extensively to enable her mother to live well. Having become quite invested in the aged care sector and the services it offers. Danijela then studied diversional therapies to work in aged care. She is currently an active member of the OPAN/NOPRG group, FECCA, Dementia Australia Advocate, and a volunteer bicultural social support worker. She presents at conferences and delivers workshops on better quality care for people living with dementia, and how to improve carer support, especially for clients from diverse cultures. A published writer, her latest book is about dementia (Forget-me-nots).

Mr Bill Jolley



Mr Jolley’s extensive contributions to the global blind and low vision community are well recognised with him receiving a life membership to the World Blind Union (WBU) at the 2021 World Blindness Summit.

Bill, who is currently Deputy Chair of Vision Australia, has played a significant part in the history of the WBU since its inception in 1984. Bill has spent 13 years as an executive member of the WBU and previously held numerous leadership roles across WBU General Assemblies. Bill has been a vital part of WBU operations across the Asia Pacific region, with particular focus on providing leadership and governance training to member organisations.

Bill was also a founding member of Blind Citizens Australia and served for eight years as treasurer of the International Council on English Braille. He has been on the Vision Australia Board since 2014 and was elected Deputy Chair in 2017. Prior to that he led the integration of Seeing Eye Dogs Australia into Vision Australia in 2008 and served on Vision Australia’s then Client Representative Council.

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Dr Gill Lewin



Dr Lewin is a health services researcher with extensive and diversified experience in health and aged care research and evaluations and the translation of evidence into policy and practice.

Following a ten-year career as a clinical psychologist, Gill completed a Master of Public Health and then worked in health services research for twenty-five years. Initially conducting consultations as a Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia, she was then employed by Silver Chain – a large national community-based health and aged care provider – to develop research across the organisation. After starting as a team of one, the team was 19 people strong when she left and she had been awarded more than \$4.5 million dollars in grants, published more than eighty articles in peer reviewed journals and together with the team produced more than 850 research reports. For the last eight years that Gill was with Silver Chain she also held a research professorship at Curtin University where she is still an adjunct professor.

In 2016, Gill decided to action a long-held wish to work in international development and worked for 12 months in Cambodia for HelpAge and then for 16 months in South Africa for a not-for-profit public interest law centre. On returning to Perth, Gill worked as a research and evaluation specialist for an aged care assessment provider before retiring in September 2020.

Throughout her career as a health and aged care researcher, Gill has been involved with the Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) often at both the State and National level. She is currently a Board Director, a member of the AAG's Reconciliation Action Group and of the AAG Research Trust Steering Committee.

Professor John McCallum



Professor McCallum has 50 years of work experience in research, policy and community activism in ageing, and is recognised as a distinguished Australian as well as international leader in ageing policy and research.

John is an Oxford trained specialist in applied research with a DPhil thesis on retirement in British Leyland car workers and civil servants. His 30-year longitudinal study of Dubbo residents born before 1930s has yielded over 50 peer reviewed publications. These have led world initiatives in cardiovascular disease and provided Australian models for aged care services.

After leading the Australia-Japan collaboration in aged care in 1999-2001, he produced a model for funding aged care services titled Ensuring Quality of Later Life (EQOLL) which was prominent as an option in the recent Aged Care Royal Commission.

In addition to academic research achievements, John played a significant management role as Dean at the Western Sydney University (WSU) merging three large nursing schools, then introducing multiple health disciplines and leading the establishment of the WSU Medical School. He moved to Melbourne after this and became Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Director of TAFE at Victoria University, the largest public sector TAFE in Victoria at the time.

John is currently the CEO of National Seniors Australia and a foundation member of the Australian Industry Workforce Council.

Mrs Sue McCann



Mrs McCann brings many years of experience as a Registered Nurse and spent her working life caring for the elderly in aged care services.

Sue has completed a post graduate degree in Gerontology at the Australian Catholic University, and a Masters in Aged Care Management at Charles Sturt University.

Sue's extensive aged care experience encompasses the entire spectrum of Aged Care, including her role as Director of Care at Catholic Care of the Aged in Port Macquarie for 20 years. Sue has Board experience, including being elected to the Board of Aged and Community Services representing a regional area for several years; ensuring an understanding of care standards when accreditation first commenced in 1997; taking over the management of an aged care facility with sanctions and ensuring all outcomes were met in a short time frame; investigating, researching and implementing a person-centred model of care in the late 90's.

She was responsible for the first dementia specific facility between Newcastle and the Queensland border.

Before retiring in January 2021, Sue was the General Manager at Lutheran Services and managed several aged care facilities and services across South East and Central Queensland including managing the commencement of the pandemic.

Council of Elders Member Profiles

Dr Kay Patterson, AO



Dr Patterson has been the Age Discrimination Commissioner since July 2016. She has demonstrated a strong interest in issues affecting older people throughout her professional life.

Kay left school at 15 to manage a small business, before returning to school and achieving a Bachelor of Arts with honours at the University of Sydney as well as a PhD in Psychology and Dip Ed at Monash University. She then taught allied health science students for 11 years before studying gerontology at the University of Michigan and Pennsylvania State University.

Following her election to the Senate in 1987 she served on several Senate Committees and held various shadow portfolios. In 1988 she was appointed a Parliamentary Secretary and in 2001 was appointed to Cabinet serving in the Health and Social Security Portfolios. She retired from Cabinet in 2006 and from the Senate in 2008.

Kay has served on several not-for-profit boards and she is currently the Director of the Brockhoff Foundation and honorary Fellow and Monash University. Kay was awarded as an Officer in the Order of Australia in 2016.

Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann, AM



Dr Ungunmerr Baumann, 2021 Senior Australian of the year, is a renowned Aboriginal artist and educator who is dedicated to creating bright and fulfilling futures for Aboriginal children and youth. She was the first fully qualified Aboriginal teacher in the Northern Territory and is the founder of the Miriam-Rose Foundation. Miriam-Rose speaks five local languages along with English and is responsible for establishing the highly successful Merrepen Arts centre in Nauiyu.

Born in the bush near Daly River, Miriam-Rose is a member of the Ngangiwumirr language group. When Miriam-Rose was around five years old, she was placed in the care of her Aunt Nellie and Uncle Attawoomba Joe, a legendary police tracker.

In 1975, Miriam-Rose became the Territory's first fully qualified Aboriginal teacher and for many years held the position of Art Consultant with the Professional Services Branch of the Northern Territory Department of Education. Miriam-Rose also saw the need for more Aboriginal teachers to work among non-Aboriginal school children.

Miriam-Rose continues to advocate that education is a matter for the whole community and must be adapted to suit contemporary Aboriginal needs.

In 1988, Miriam-Rose was awarded a Bachelor of Arts Degree by Deakin University and two years later, she began training as a school principal. By 1993 Miriam had gained a Bachelor of Education degree and was appointed to the position of Principal at the St. Francis Xavier School at Daly River. She later went on to gain her Masters of Education Degree, with a high distinction. The focus of work for her Master's degree was the integration of traditional and western education for Aboriginal children and adults.

Ms Margaret Walsh, OAM



Ms Walsh is an experienced nurse and Manager of organisations providing services to people who live with disability, and an aged care organisation. Margaret has been passionately advocating for over 20 years for the disability sector. Margaret brings experience in policy development and delivery of services according to service agreements.

Margaret's experience includes being the Community Representative for the WA Older Person Health Network Expert Advisory Group. She also brings Committee and Board experience, as well as experience working with various Health Consumer Council consultations and projects. She is a Board member of Association of Independent Retirees (AIR) and worked with the Royal Perth Hospital and Fiona Stanley Hospital Consumer Advisory committees.

Margaret is committed to the inclusion of lived experience and has demonstrated understanding of the significance of this in her career, particularly in the disability field while managing an Alternatives to Employment organisation which provided services to young adults who have severe disabilities and high support needs.

Margaret also worked in Home and Community Services at Geraldton Home Help and Perth Home Care providing a range of Home Care to frail aged seniors and younger people with disabilities, in their homes.

In 2011, Margaret was awarded a Medal in the Order of Australia for her services to people with a disability. She is now retired and together with husband Doug has two children and four grandchildren.