

## Healthy ageing across the lifespan

Optimising health and wellbeing across the life course



**‘There has never been a more critical time to strengthen our health systems and workforce, develop better solutions for care, and empower our communities to lead their own healthy ageing.’**

Professor Velandai Srikanth  
Director, NCHA



### The challenge

Supporting people to age well requires a lifespan approach, focusing on the importance of the early years; key life stages; prevention, and intergenerational opportunities for healthy ageing.

Understanding and addressing complex challenges also requires **identifying innovative solutions to tackling mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and social connectedness, and improving health and social care systems.**

**There is an urgent need to address the impact on healthy ageing of environmental and social health determinants, including age-related conditions such as dementia, frailty and access to stable housing.**



Australia's population is ageing

### Our impact

Our overarching approach and principles are helping us transform healthy ageing for all Australians.

Empowering and supporting people to optimise their own health

Improving care environments and systems to support healthier ageing



Emphasising priority populations



Addressing complexity of health



Addressing complexity of systems



Embedding lived experience

#### References

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Population aged over 85 to double in the next 25 years (2018). Available at <https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/population-aged-over-85-double-next-25-years>

## How the NCHA is impacting change

### Some of our leading healthy ageing researchers and projects



L-R: Prof Suzi Nielsen, Dr Aislinn Lalor, Dr Ayse Zengin, Prof Terry Haines, A/Prof Liz Sturgiss

#### **Beyond 50: Supporting vulnerable populations to maintain healthy lifestyles**

Australia's 'baby boomer' generation exhibits riskier drinking patterns than younger cohorts. In Victoria, alcohol-related hospitalisations for those over 65 have tripled in the past decade. A study of 1,000 people aged 50-60 years in Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula area is examining how social isolation, loneliness, health challenges, and retirement concerns may be driving these risky behaviours.

**A key impact:** Leading to development of positive ageing strategies and practices, such as lifestyle interventions and social prescribing, to facilitate healthier mid-life transitions.

#### **Who cares for the carer? A novel service to support health and wellbeing of older carers of older people**

Launched in 2024, the 'Carer Health and Wellbeing Service' is an interdisciplinary service to help carers identify goals, problem-solve, and address their own health needs by improving support for older carers and their communities. Led by Monash University's RAIL Centre and Peninsula Health, the service prioritises the health and wellbeing of carers aged 50+ who provide informal care to individuals aged over 65.

**A key impact:** An Australian-first service providing carers with personalised support helping them to prioritise their own health and wellbeing, and enabling them to continue caring for loved ones.

#### **The Deep End Living Lab: Inclusive and integrated health and social care for homeless populations**

A safe, secure, and affordable home is essential for achieving full health potential. Homeless individuals face lower life expectancy and higher rates of chronic disease. This study explores the perspectives of consumers, clinicians, and healthcare staff to identify gaps in services for those experiencing homelessness or housing instability. It aims to develop a scalable homelessness screening intervention in healthcare settings and create a priority framework for Victoria across health, ageing, and homelessness.

**A key impact:** Informing the 'Position statement on homelessness' by The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).

#### **Increasing bone health awareness to prevent fracture and falls in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities**

Chronic bone conditions like osteoporosis develop earlier in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, increasing fracture risk and premature death, especially alongside conditions like diabetes and heart disease. This co-developed study aims to upskill Aboriginal healthcare practitioners within Community Controlled Organisations to connect people with their GPs.

**A key impact:** Co-designed health education and materials designed for health care providers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with potential to scale nationally.



### Looking ahead

**Working together through partnerships, collaborations, and investment, we can have a greater impact in transforming health and care for all Australians.** Our world-class researchers are creating impactful change by developing innovative solutions to the most pressing issues in healthy ageing.

**Connect with us today and help change people's lives!**