

Social and Support Group Guidelines:

Purpose: Social and Support Groups provide a forum for Forgotten Australians to:

- Meet to discuss common interests;
- Participate in joint activities and events that enhance the health and wellbeing of Forgotten Australians and;
- Share good times together in their local area

Activities:

- Are to provide enjoyable and life enhancing experiences for Forgotten Australians such as life skills courses (e.g. creative writing, computer skills, arts and crafts), outings, entertainment, recreation and meals. The funding may also cover the hire of meeting facilities and to provide basic tea and coffee facilities
- Need to consider and ensure protection of everyone's safety (activities must not pose an unreasonable risk to the group members or to others and must be compatible with the group members' health status)
- Be accessible for all group members including those with physical and sensory disabilities

Budget:

- An annual budget for each group will be determined by Open Place at the start of each financial year based on a consideration of the number of active members and the funds available for Social and Support Groups.
- Budget considerations should include how to make best use of concessions and other reductions and offers
- Open Place will pay for events and activities from our central Richmond Office and will keep a running total of each group's expenditure for the financial year

Activity arrangements:

- A majority of the group members need to agree on selected activities and the person organising the activity is to record the names of those who have agreed to the activity
- Alcohol at any Social and Support Group event is not supported and will not be paid for by Open Place
- Family members may be included, with the approval from the group, in some activities but their involvement should not overly reduce the scope of the number and type of activities which are available to Forgotten Australians in the group
- Service providers for courses and events must all have an ABN for payment purposes
- It is recommended that services purchased by the group are not from family or friends of group members in order to avoid a potential conflict of interest in the use of funds

Group arrangements

- It is recommended that each group elect (on an annual basis) a Group Co-ordinator to ensure appropriate organisation of the group events, payment arrangements with suppliers of services and payment of the event costs by Open Place
- A copy of these guidelines is to be provided to each member of the Social and Support Group and can be obtained through Open Place.