



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

VISION

CO.AS.IT. engages, empowers and safeguards the Italian Australian community to enhance their quality of life.

MISSION

CO.AS.IT. is a provider of quality services and programs in the aged care, education, culture and heritage sectors. CO.AS.IT. promotes a comprehensive qualitative approach, involving all sectors: education, culture, social services, communication and information. We believe that language maintenance has a vital role in ensuring cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. We are committed to promoting quality education for all, strengthening cooperation and building better communities by preserving our cultural heritage and our history.

CO.AS.IT. gratefully acknowledges
the support of the following:

- Government of the Commonwealth of Australia
- Department of Health and Aged Care
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Government of the Republic of Italy
- Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- Consulate General of Italy for Victoria and Tasmania
- State Government of Victoria
- Department of Health
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Mu.MA - Istituzione Musei del Mare e delle Migrazioni (Genova)
- Il Globo Newspaper
- La Famiglia Siciliana (*The Sicilian Family*)





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PATRONS
patroni

COMMITTEE
componenti del
comitato

MANAGEMENT
componenti del
personale
manageriale

PEOPLE
AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

Emeritus President

Sir James Gobbo AC CVO (in memory of)

CO.AS.IT. Board

President

Prof. Mauro Sandrin

Vice Presidents

Ms Bruna Pasqua

Mr Vincent Volpe

Secretary

Dr Paul Francis Arduca

Treasurer

Dr Dominic Barbaro

Members

Ms Grace Alessandrini

Mr Sauro Antonelli

Dr. Tony Bartone

Mr Vito Cassisi

Mrs Maria Irminger

Mr Dario Nelli

Mr Don Pasquariello

Ms Carmen Randazzo

Ms Silvana Sgrò

Ms Luisa Valmorbida

Patrons

Comm. David Barro (in memory of)

The Hon. Bernard D. Bongiorno, AO

Dr Vic Buccheri

Mr Giancarlo Caprioli

Mr Angelo Favalaro

Mr Gianni Gangitano (in memory of)

Dr Anthony Mariani, AM

Mr Paolo Mirabella, OAM (in memory of)

Mr Sebastiano Pitruzzello, OAM (in memory of)

Mr Giuseppe Sala (in memory of)

Dr George Santoro, AO

Mrs Susan Santoro

Mr Giovanni Scomparin, OAM (in memory of)

Mr Tony Schiavello, AM

Mr Angelo Taranto

Mr Carlo Travaglini, OAM

Mrs Elsie Valmorbida

Mr Mariano Valmorbida

Mr Saverio Valmorbida (in memory of)

Dante Mecca (in memory of)

Prof. Piero Genovesi (in memory of)

Chief Executive Officer

On. Marco Fedi

Deputy CEO

Evan Pasqua

General Manager

Lusiana LiVolti

Finance Manager

Alfred Qiu



STAFF

componenti del personale



ADMINISTRATION

Assistant to Finance Manager
Accounts Payable Officer
Accounts Assistants

Jonathan Feng
Suong Tran
Yu Cao
Qian Wei
Patricia Yang

Training & Development Officer
Recruitment Officer
Administration Assistance
& Front of House

Sylvia Salerno
Pam Jadeja

IT Officer

Rosemary Bonacquisto
Mirella Lamberti
Manish Poudel



AGED CARE SERVICES

Director

Emma Contessa

Manager – Aged Care Packages

Stefan Pasqua

Care Managers

Massimiliano Aiello
Antonietta Aloï
Concetta Carramusa
Lara Ferraro
Lovleen Gill
Filomena Pacca
Vincenzo Pappalardo
Sara Pontoglio
Sherydan Reynolds
Marinella Terranova
Jane Trobbiani
Patricia Torresi
Elisabetta Varo
Angela Vindigni
Marilena Aloï
Silvia Mena Burgos
Rakhee Dev

PEOPLE
AS AT 30 JUNE 2023



AGED CARE SERVICES

Access & Support	Stella Tallorito	Visitation Program	
Customer Relations	Giovanni Ghilardi	Manager	Fil Adem
Team Leader In-home Support	Connie Colosimo	Regional Coordinators	Rina Afflitto
Service Provision In-home			Tania Barbaro
Support	Jacob Colosimo		Marianna Cibirin
	Marisa De Simone		Daniela Montesano
	Alfie Falletti		Maria Penco
	Linda Lastrina		Concetta Tartaglia
			Davide Vigiano
Aged Care Assistants	103	Volunteers	260
Manager – Quality Care	Deborah Caprioli	Social Support Groups	
Clinical Care Coordinator	Roberta Di Marzo	Manager	Maria Metelli
	Allan P Krechowitsch	Administration Assistant	Immacolata Navazio
Registered Nurses	Drasti Kakkad		Flora Levorato
	Pablo Martinez	Assessment Officer	Margaret Rizzo
	Claudia Vallese	Site Officers	Janina Girardi
	Teresia Bellia		Nina Scali-Parrello
	Chloe Kim		Bianca Loreface
Intake Officers	Andrew Martin	Centre Cook (Rosanna)	Gino Antognetti
Compliance Officer	Serena Sandrin		
Italian Senior Citizens Association		SSG Aged Care Assistants	11
Coordinator	Frank Di Blasi		

ITALIAN LANGUAGE, CULTURE & HERITAGE DEPARTMENT

Director	Ferdinando Colarossi	University of the Third Age (CUTE)	
Support Officer	Alexander Parise	Coordinator	Francesco Pascalis
Education & Language		Project Officer	Ivano Ercole
Coordinator	Michela Pellizon		
Language Assistants Program		Resource Centre	
Assistants	30	Coordinator	Rose Patti
		Library Assistant	Tania Barbati



EDUCATION PROGRAMS

After Hours Italian Program

Coordinator	Maria Brancolino
Team Leader	Sally Monitto
Adult Classes	
Coordinator	Alexander Parise

Il Girotondo Program

Coordinator	Mariella De Paolis
Sessional Teachers	18



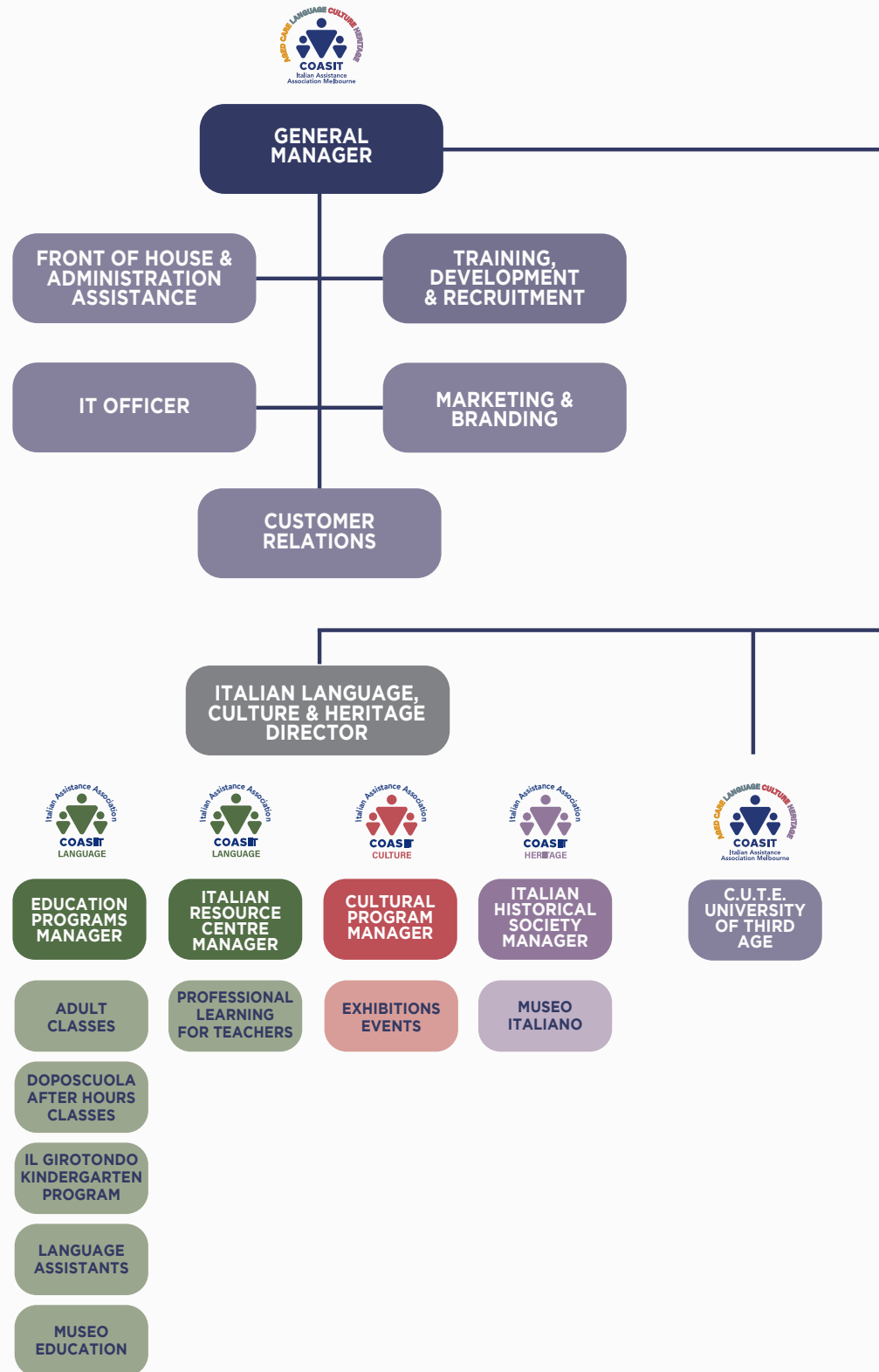
CULTURAL PROGRAM

Manager	Dr. Paolo Baracchi
Community	
Engagement Officer	Carmelina Calabro



ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEO ITALIANO

Manager	Elizabeth Triarico
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**BOARD OF
MANAGEMENT**

CEO

**DEPUTY
CEO**



**FINANCE
MANAGER**

**FINANCE
ASSISTANT**

**ACCOUNTS
PAYABLE**

**PURCHASE
ORDERS
REQUESTS**

**AGED CARE
SERVICES
DIRECTOR**



**HOME
SUPPORT
MANAGER**

**HOME CARE
PACKAGES**

**FLEXIBLE
RESPITE**

NURSING

**PERSONAL
CARE**

**DOMESTIC
ASSISTANCE**



**QUALITY
CARE
MANAGER**

**ACCESS &
SUPPORT**

**CLINICAL
COORDINATOR**

INTAKE

**SOCIAL
WORK**

NURSING

PROCUREMENT



**SERVICE
PROVISION
MANAGER**

**PO
REQUESTS**

ROSTERING

**AGED CARE
ASSISTANTS**

**DOMESTIC
ASSISTANTS**



**SOCIAL
SUPPORT
GROUPS
MANAGER**

**SITE
COORDINATORS**

ADMIN

**ASSESSMENT
OFFICER**

**CENTRE BASED
RESPITE**

COOK



**VOLUNTEER
VISITATION
MANAGER**

**REGIONAL
VOLUNTEERS
COORDINATOR**

VOLUNTEERS



**SENIOR
CITIZEN
CLUBS**



CO.AS.IT. President
MAURO SANDRIN

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

// CO.AS.IT. (Italian Assistance Association) Melbourne continues to be a dynamic and influential organisation supporting the Italian-Australian community. This annual report for the year ending 30 June 2023 provides a comprehensive overview of CO.AS.IT.'s achievements, initiatives, and financial performance.

1. Introduction

In the 2022-2023 financial year, CO.AS.IT. Melbourne continued its unwavering commitment to serving the needs of the Italian-Australian community. Founded in 1968, CO.AS.IT. has established itself as a prominent and trusted organisation,

striving to improve Italian-Australians' lives across generations.

2. Financial Performance

CO.AS.IT. maintains financial transparency and accountability as a cornerstone of its operations. During this fiscal year, the organisation

demonstrated its fiscal responsibility. Revenue was expertly managed, allowing for the successful execution of various programs and initiatives. The organisation continued to meet its financial goals while efficiently allocating resources to maintain its valuable services.

President

3. Services and Initiatives

CO.AS.IT's commitment to the Italian-Australian community is manifested through its diverse services and initiatives. The past year saw the expansion and enhancement of existing programs, including:

- Aged Care Services: CO.AS.IT. Continued to provide essential support to elderly Italian-Australians through various programs, ensuring their well-being and quality of life. Funding from the Australian Federal Government is critical to maintaining adequate support for families and an aging community.
- Home Care Packages, Social Support Groups, Visitation Program, Respite Services and the entire Commonwealth Home Support Program spectrum, and the Access and Support Program.
- Education, Language and Culture: CO.AS.IT. continued a successful program in education with significant funding from the Italian Government and the State Government of Victoria. Funding

is necessary to maintain the Language Assistants, Doposcuola, Il Girotondo, the Resource Centre and the Adult Language Courses.

- Heritage: documenting the history of the Italian people in Melbourne and Australia is part of our heritage work. The Italian Historical Society and Museo Italiano are a vital component of Carlton, Melbourne and Australia's Italian heritage.
- Cultural Activities: The organisation actively promoted Italian culture through art exhibitions and cultural events, fostering a strong sense of identity and community among Italian-Australians.
- Youth and Education: CO.AS.IT. expanded its educational initiatives, helping young Italian-Australians excel in their studies and engage with their heritage.

4. Community Engagement

CO.AS.IT. maintained a strong and deep connection to the Italian-Australian community through outreach, regular events, and communication channels. CO.AS.IT. remained responsive to the evolving

needs of its members, ensuring it continues to serve as a vital resource and support network.

5. Advocacy and Partnerships

CO.AS.IT. has always been a staunch advocate for the rights and needs of the Italian-Australian community. In the past year, the organisation actively engaged in advocacy efforts. It fostered partnerships with other community organisations, government agencies, and stakeholders to ensure the community's voice is heard and its interests are protected.

6. Future Outlook

The Annual Report also highlights CO.AS.IT's strategic goals and priorities for the upcoming year. The organisation remains committed to expanding its services, meeting the community's evolving needs, and being a voice for the Italian-Australian population in Melbourne. CO.AS.IT. aims to continue its financial stability while providing innovative and meaningful services.

Conclusion

CO.AS.IT. Melbourne's 2022-2023 financial year report reflects a year of growth, service, and community impact. The organisation continues to be a beacon of support, culture, and advocacy for Italian-Australians in Melbourne. CO.AS.IT.'s dedication to its mission and the community it serves is unwavering, and its commitment to enhancing Italian-Australians' lives remains as strong as ever. With a solid financial foundation, a broad range of programs, and a responsive approach to community needs, CO.AS.IT. is well-positioned for a bright and promising future.



CO.AS.IT. (Italian Assistance Association) Melbourne continua ad essere un'organizzazione dinamica ed influente a sostegno della comunità italo-australiana. La presente relazione annuale per l'anno terminato il 30 giugno 2023 fornisce una panoramica completa dei risultati, delle iniziative e delle prestazioni finanziarie del CO.AS.IT.

1. Introduzione

Nell'anno finanziario 2022-2023, il CO.AS.IT. Melbourne ha continuato il suo costante impegno al servizio dei bisogni della comunità italo-australiana. Fondato nel 1968, il CO.AS.IT. si è affermato come un'organizzazione importante e affidabile, impegnato a migliorare la vita degli italo-australiani.

2. Performance finanziaria

Il CO.AS.IT. mantiene un sistema trasparente di responsabilità finanziaria come pietra angolare delle sue operazioni. Durante questo anno fiscale, l'organizzazione ha dimostrato la propria responsabilità fiscale. Le entrate sono state gestite con perizia, consentendo la esecuzione di vari programmi e iniziative. L'organizzazione ha continuato a raggiungere i propri obiettivi finanziari, allocando in modo efficiente le risorse per mantenere i suoi preziosi servizi.

3. Servizi e Iniziative

L'impegno del CO.AS.IT. a favore della comunità italo-australiana si manifesta attraverso i suoi diversi servizi e iniziative. L'anno scorso ha visto l'espansione e il miglioramento dei programmi esistenti, tra cui:

- Servizi di assistenza agli anziani: il CO.AS.IT. Ha continuato a fornire supporto essenziale agli anziani italo-australiani attraverso vari programmi, garantendo il loro benessere e qualità della loro vita. I finanziamenti da parte del governo federale australiano sono fondamentali per mantenere un sostegno adeguato alle famiglie e a una comunità che invecchia.
- Pacchetti di assistenza domiciliare, gruppi di sostegno sociale, programmi di visite a domicilio, servizi di sollievo e l'intero spettro

dei programmi di sostegno domiciliare del Commonwealth, oltre al sostegno per accedere a MyAgedCare.

- Educazione, Lingua e Cultura: il CO.AS.IT. ha continuato un programma di successo nel campo dell'istruzione con finanziamenti significativi da parte del governo italiano e del governo dello Stato del Victoria. I finanziamenti sono necessari per mantenere gli Assistenti linguistici, il Doposcuola, Il Girotondo, il Centro Risorse e i Corsi di lingua per adulti.
- Patrimonio Culturale e storico: documentare la storia del popolo italiano a Melbourne e in Australia fa parte del nostro lavoro sul patrimonio culturale e storico della nostra comunità. La Società Storica

Italiana e il Museo Italiano sono una componente vitale del patrimonio italiano di Carlton, Melbourne e dell'Australia.

- Attività culturali: l'organizzazione ha promosso attivamente la cultura italiana attraverso mostre d'arte ed eventi culturali, favorendo un forte senso di identità e comunità tra gli italo-australiani.
- Gioventù e Istruzione: il CO.AS.IT. ha ampliato le sue iniziative educative, aiutando i giovani italo-australiani a eccellere nei loro studi e a impegnarsi con la loro eredità.

4. Coinvolgimento della comunità

Il CO.AS.IT. ha mantenuto un legame forte e profondo con la comunità italo-australiana attraverso attività di sensibilizzazione, eventi regolari e



5. Patrocinio e partenariati

Il CO.AS.IT. è sempre stato un convinto sostenitore dei diritti e dei bisogni della comunità italo-australiana. L'anno scorso, l'organizzazione si è impegnata attivamente in iniziative di advocacy. Ha promosso partenariati con altre organizzazioni comunitarie, agenzie governative e parti interessate per garantire che la voce della comunità venga ascoltata e che i suoi interessi siano protetti.

6. Prospettive future

Il rapporto annuale evidenzia inoltre gli obiettivi strategici e le priorità del CO.AS.IT. per il prossimo anno.

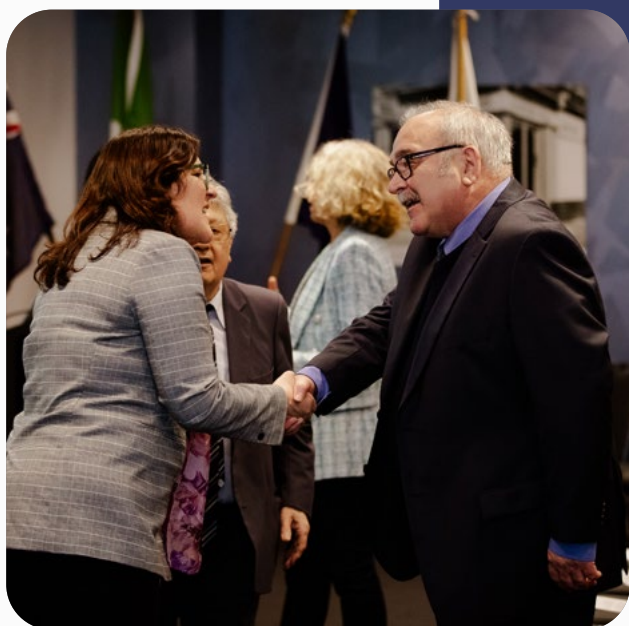
L'organizzazione resta impegnata ad espandere i propri servizi, a soddisfare le esigenze in evoluzione della comunità e ad essere una voce per la popolazione italo-australiana a Melbourne. Il CO.AS.IT. mira a mantenere la propria stabilità finanziaria fornendo servizi innovativi e significativi.

7. Conclusione

Il rapporto sull'anno finanziario 2022-2023 di CO.AS.IT. Melbourne riflette un anno di crescita, servizio e impatto sulla comunità. L'organizzazione continua a essere un faro di sostegno, cultura e sostegno per gli italo-

australiani a Melbourne.

La dedizione del CO.AS.IT. alla propria missione e alla comunità che serve è incrollabile, e il suo impegno nel migliorare la vita degli italo-australiani rimane più forte che mai. Con una solida base finanziaria, un'ampia gamma di programmi e un approccio reattivo ai bisogni della comunità, il CO.AS.IT. è ben posizionato per un futuro luminoso e promettente.



CEO'S REPORT



// CO.AS.IT., with its rich tapestry of achievements, has carved a profound positive story in the fabric of Australian and Victorian society. A story that weaves together Aged Care, Education, Culture, Heritage, and Community and Senior Citizens Empowerment.

CO.AS.IT. C.E.O.
On. MARCO FEDI



CO.AS.IT. is committed to providing quality services for the Italian-Australian community through continuous improvement and innovation.

CO.AS.IT. has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to embracing challenges and fostering transformation. From community services such as WitCare Hub for existing and new migrants to C.U.T.E., CO.AS.IT.'s Università della Terza Età, from Home Care Packages to volunteers in our Visitation program, from Il Girotondo, Italian childcare program to Senior Citizens, from Italian Language programs in schools and bilingual schools to adult learning, from the language assistant program to our resource centre, from the Italian Historical Society to the Carlton based Museo Italiano, we maintain a strong presence in Victoria.

In Aged Care, CO.AS.IT. has embraced the challenges of an aging population and paved the way for innovative solutions. The organisation's proactive approach to evolving healthcare needs has led to the creation of pioneering programs and services that cater to older people. CO.AS.IT.'s holistic care models prioritise physical, emotional, and mental well-being, enhancing seniors' quality of life. CO.AS.IT.'s ability to adapt and innovate in the context of complex demographic challenges and an endemic shortage of care workers is a testament to our dedication.

Education has also witnessed CO.AS.IT.'s resounding success. Our Language Assistants program has brought the richness of Italian language and culture to learners in Victorian State and Private schools, fostering cross-cultural connections and linguistic proficiency. Il Girotondo program's integration into childcare centres has nurtured young minds with a love for the Italian language & culture, instilling cultural awareness from an early age. The spectrum of learning doesn't end here – CO.AS.IT.'s adult courses and after-school programs have

empowered countless individuals to engage with the Italian language and culture, fostering lifelong learners and promoting intergenerational ties.

The remarkable restructuring of Museo Italiano epitomises CO.AS.IT.'s commitment to preserving Cultural Heritage, realised through collaboration and partnership with the State Government of Victoria. This partnership reflects their dedication to safeguarding the legacy of Italian migration and culture within Australia. Furthering their impact, the collaboration with the Italian Historical Society and the rapport established with Museo dell'Emigrazione in Genova has solidified CO.AS.IT.'s presence as a cultural bridge, fostering connections between past and present.

The global diaspora remains at the core of CO.AS.IT.'s international efforts. Our far-reaching endeavours continue to bridge geographical divides,

In the realm of Senior Citizen Empowerment, CO.AS.IT.'s commitment shines through the CO.AS.IT. Università della Terza Età (C.U.T.E.) program. This initiative is a testament to our strong belief in the power of lifelong learning and active aging. By providing seniors with opportunities for intellectual exploration and social interaction, CO.AS.IT. underscores the value of everyone's contribution, promoting a vibrant and engaged senior community.

In conclusion, CO.AS.IT.'s journey is one of remarkable positivity, fuelled by innovation, resilience, and unwavering commitment. Our impact extends across Aged Care, Education, Cultural Heritage, and Senior Citizen Empowerment, creating a tapestry of inspiring and resonating success stories. As we continue to navigate the ever-changing landscape of



fostering connections between Italy and communities worldwide. Through cultural events, educational programs, and community engagement, CO.AS.IT. ensures that the bonds between Italy and its global diaspora remain strong and vibrant.

challenges, CO.AS.IT. stands as a great experience to illustrate the profound transformations that can be achieved through dedication, innovation and a deep-rooted connection to community and heritage.



Il CO.AS.IT., con i positivi risultati raggiunti, continua a creare una storia che intreccia assistenza agli anziani, formazione e istruzione, cultura, patrimonio storico, identità e tutela degli anziani e dei più deboli. Simbolo di innovazione e resilienza, la nostra organizzazione ha dimostrato un impegno costante nell'affrontare le nuove sfide.

Il CO.AS.IT. ha dimostrato un impegno costante nell'accettare le sfide e nel promuovere la trasformazione. Dai servizi comunitari come WitCare Hub, per migranti esistenti e nuovi, al C.U.T.E., Università della Terza Età del CO.AS.IT., dai pacchetti di assistenza domiciliare e centri diurni, ai volontari del nostro programma Visitation, da Il Girotondo, programma di lingua italiana per l'infanzia agli anziani dei circoli pensionati, dai Programmi di lingua italiana nelle scuole pubbliche e private del Victoria fino alle importanti

scuole bilingui, dal doposcuola fino all'apprendimento per gli adulti, dal programma di assistenti linguistici al nostro Centro Risorse, dalla Società Storica Italiana al Museo Italiano con sede a Carlton, manteniamo una forte presenza nei servizi, nella storia e nella cultura del Victoria. Nell'assistenza agli anziani, il CO.AS.IT. ha affrontato le sfide poste dall'invecchiamento della popolazione ed ha aperto la strada a soluzioni innovative. L'approccio proattivo

dell'organizzazione nella gestione delle esigenze sanitarie ha portato alla creazione di programmi e servizi rivolti alle persone anziane. I modelli di assistenza olistica del CO.AS.IT. danno priorità al benessere fisico, emotivo e mentale, migliorando la qualità della vita degli anziani. La capacità del CO.AS.IT. di adattarsi e innovare, nel contesto di complesse sfide demografiche e nel contesto di una carenza endemica di operatori sanitari, è una testimonianza della nostra dedizione.

Anche la formazione delle persone e l'istruzione sono state al centro del successo del CO.AS.IT. Il nostro programma di Assistenti Linguistici ha portato la ricchezza della lingua e della cultura italiana agli studenti delle scuole pubbliche e private del Victoria, favorendo le connessioni interculturali e la competenza linguistica.

L'integrazione del programma Il Girotondo negli asili nido ha coltivato nelle giovani menti l'amore per la lingua e la cultura italiana, instillando consapevolezza culturale fin dalla tenera età.

Il nostro lavoro nella formazione non finisce qui: i corsi per adulti e i programmi doposcuola del CO.AS.IT. hanno consentito a innumerevoli persone di apprendere lingua e cultura, di impegnarsi con la lingua e la cultura italiana ogni giorno, favorendo quindi quel processo di apprendimento permanente e promuovendo i legami intergenerazionali.

La straordinaria ristrutturazione del Museo Italiano esemplifica l'impegno del CO.AS.IT. nella conservazione del patrimonio culturale, realizzato

attraverso la collaborazione e la partnership con il governo dello Stato di Victoria. Questa partnership riflette la loro dedizione alla salvaguardia dell'eredità della migrazione e della cultura italiana in Australia. Ulteriore impatto, la collaborazione con la Società Storica Italiana e il rapporto stabilito con il Museo dell'Emigrazione di Genova hanno consolidato la presenza del CO.AS.IT. come ponte culturale, favorendo le connessioni tra passato e presente.

La diaspora globale rimane al centro degli sforzi internazionali del CO.AS.IT. I nostri sforzi ad ampio raggio continuano a colmare le divisioni geografiche, favorendo le connessioni tra l'Italia e le comunità di tutto il mondo. Attraverso eventi culturali, programmi educativi e coinvolgimento della comunità, il CO.AS.IT. garantisce che i legami tra l'Italia e la sua diaspora globale rimangano forti e vibranti. Nell'ambito della tutela dei cittadini anziani, l'impegno del CO.AS.IT. traspare attraverso il programma CO.AS.IT. Università della Terza Età (C.U.T.E.). Questa iniziativa testimonia

la nostra forte fiducia nel potere dell'apprendimento permanente e dell'invecchiamento attivo. Fornendo agli anziani l'opportunità di continuare o intraprendere l'esplorazione intellettuale e l'interazione sociale, il CO.AS.IT. sottolinea il valore del contributo di tutti, promuovendo una comunità "senior" vivace e impegnata. In conclusione, il viaggio del CO.AS.IT. è caratterizzato da una notevole positività, alimentato da innovazione, resilienza e impegno costante. Il nostro contributo si estende dall'assistenza agli anziani, alla formazione e istruzione, dal patrimonio culturale alla nostra storia, alla tutela delle persone. Mentre continuiamo a navigare nel panorama in continua evoluzione delle sfide globali, il CO.AS.IT. rappresenta un buon esempio, pronto ad affrontare le profonde trasformazioni in atto, pronto a raggiungere, attraverso dedizione, innovazione e attraverso un legame profondamente radicato con la comunità, nuovi traguardi e successi.



MEET THE LEADER EMMA CONTESSA

// Throughout the past year, our dedicated team has continued to uphold our mission of providing quality care and support to our valued clients enabling them to live independent and fulfilling lives in the comfort of their own homes.



Aged Care Director
EMMA CONTESSA



I am proud to present an overview of the accomplishments of the Aged Care Services Department for the year 2023, highlighting our pursuit of excellence, safety and compliance.

Quality Care Department (QCD)

This dedicated department oversees the critical aspect of Clinical Care, ensuring that our services meet the highest standards of quality and safety. Comprising a team of highly skilled registered nurses, their expertise has been instrumental in elevating our care provision to a level that promotes the safety, health and well-being of all our consumers.

Throughout the year, our QCD has expertly monitored and enhanced the clinical care of HCP and CHSP consumers, ensuring that they align with best practices and regulatory requirements. Their efforts have resulted in improved health outcomes for our consumers who can have confidence in the quality and safety of the care

they receive.

As we move forward, the QCD remains central to our objective of delivering high quality care to older Italians. The QCD's dedication and expertise is vital to our ongoing success, and we look forward to further achievements in the future.

I also reflect on the achievements and initiatives of our other Aged Care Programs, which collectively contribute to the well-being of older Italians, by providing care services that support older people, empowering them to age with dignity, respect, and independence.

Home Care Packages Program (HCP's)

Our Home Care Package program continues to flourish and remains at the forefront of our efforts to support older Italians. Currently, we are supporting over 400 older Italians in receipt of HCP's, of Our team of dedicated Care Managers plays a pivotal role in making this program a success.

They strive to ensure that each consumer receives the personalized care and support required to meet their individual needs and preferences to continue living in the comfort of their own homes.

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

Throughout the past year our CHSP services continued to provide support to individuals requiring flexible respite care, personal care, domestic assistance and nursing services. CHSP services are predominately assigned to older people not in receipt of an HCP. In 2023, over 150 individuals received one or more CHSP services.

Social Support Groups (SSG's)

Our SSG's continued to provide an environment where our consumers socialize with peers, establish friendships, share stories, and engage in meaningful activities. These groups are an avenue for consumers to connect and engage with others and

most importantly, foster a sense of belonging and well-being.

Visitation Program

The Visitation Program has continued to shine throughout the past year. Our wonderful team of over 200 volunteers bringing countless joy and companionship into the lives of many socially isolated older Italians, and truly embody the spirit of giving.

Customer Relations Officer (CRO)

In November we established the CRO position to formalize our approach to consumer engagement. The CRO role is to obtain valuable consumer feedback, not only through surveys but also one-on-one interactions, and manage consumer complaints and compliments. The CRO also oversees distribution of the monthly Aged Care Services newsletter.

Access and Support Program (A&S)

Navigating the complex landscape of Aged Care can be challenging for

some older people. We are fortunate to have an A&S worker who supports and guides older members of our community to access services through My Aged Care, ensuring their timely access to the services they need.

Home Support (Italcare)

A special thanks to our remarkable Home Support Workers. Their commitment cannot be overstated. They are the unsung heroes who bring our services to life. Without their dedication, compassion, and tireless efforts, our Home Support programs would not exist.

In conclusion, I am proud to lead a team of compassionate, skilled individuals committed to enhancing the quality of life for older members of our community. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all staff, volunteers, and partners for their continued support as we look forward to another year of meaningful service.



Nel corso dell'ultimo anno, la nostra impegnatissima squadra di operatori ha continuato a sostenere la nostra missione: fornire assistenza e supporto di qualità consumatori dei nostri servizi, consentendo loro di vivere una vita indipendente e appagante nel comfort delle proprie case.

Sono orgogliosa di presentare una panoramica dei risultati ottenuti dal Dipartimento dei servizi di assistenza agli anziani per l'anno 2023, evidenziando la nostra costante ricerca per servizi di eccellenza, rispondenti a criteri di sicurezza e conformità ai requisiti di legge.

Dipartimento di assistenza alla qualità (QCD)

Questo specifico dipartimento supervisiona l'aspetto critico dell'assistenza clinica, garantendo che i nostri servizi soddisfino i più elevati standard di qualità e sicurezza. Composto da un team di infermieri altamente qualificati, la loro esperienza è stata determinante nell'elevare la qualità dei nostri servizi di assistenza a un livello che promuove la sicurezza, la salute e il benessere di tutti i nostri consumatori.

Nel corso dell'anno, il nostro QCD ha monitorato e migliorato con perizia l'assistenza clinica dei consumatori HCP e CHSP, garantendo che si allineassero alle migliori pratiche e ai requisiti normativi. I loro sforzi hanno portato a risultati sanitari migliori per i nostri consumatori che possono avere fiducia nella qualità e nella sicurezza delle cure che ricevono.

Mentre andiamo avanti, il QCD rimane centrale per il nostro obiettivo di fornire assistenza di alta qualità agli italiani più anziani. La dedizione e la competenza del QCD sono vitali per il nostro successo continuo e non vediamo l'ora di ottenere ulteriori risultati in futuro.

Rifletto anche sui risultati e sulle iniziative degli altri nostri programmi di assistenza agli anziani, che contribuiscono collettivamente al benessere degli italiani anziani, fornendo servizi di assistenza che supportano gli anziani, consentendo loro di invecchiare con dignità, rispetto e indipendenza.

Programma di pacchetti di assistenza domiciliare (HCP)

Il nostro programma di pacchetti di assistenza domiciliare continua a prosperare e rimane in prima linea nei nostri sforzi per sostenere gli italiani più anziani. Attualmente offriamo servizi e supportiamo oltre 400 anziani italiani che ricevono assistenza ogni giorno.

Il nostro team di Care Managers dedicati svolge un ruolo fondamentale nel rendere questo programma un successo. Si sforzano di garantire che ogni consumatore riceva l'assistenza personalizzata e il supporto necessari per soddisfare le proprie esigenze e preferenze individuali per continuare a vivere nel comfort della propria casa.

Programma di sostegno del Commonwealth (CHSP)

Nel corso dello scorso anno i nostri servizi CHSP hanno continuato a fornire sostegno alle persone che necessitavano di cure di sollievo flessibili, cura personale, assistenza domestica e servizi infermieristici. I servizi CHSP sono assegnati prevalentemente alle persone anziane che non ricevono un operatore sanitario. Nel 2023 oltre 150 persone hanno ricevuto uno o più servizi CHSP.





Gruppi di sostegno sociale (SSG)

I nostri SSG, centri diurni, hanno continuato a fornire un ambiente in cui i nostri consumatori socializzano con i colleghi, stabiliscono amicizie, condividono storie e si impegnano in attività significative. Questi gruppi rappresentano una via per i consumatori per connettersi e interagire con gli altri e, soprattutto, promuovere un senso di appartenenza e benessere.

Programma di visite a domicilio

Il Programma di Visite ha continuato a dare grandi risultati durante lo scorso anno. Il nostro meraviglioso team di oltre 200 volontari porta innumerevole gioia e compagnia nella vita di molti italiani anziani socialmente isolati e incarna davvero lo spirito del "dare".

Responsabile delle relazioni con i clienti (CRO)

A novembre abbiamo istituito la posizione di CRO per formalizzare il

nostro approccio al coinvolgimento diretto dei consumatori. Il ruolo del CRO è quello di ottenere preziosi feedback dai consumatori, non solo attraverso sondaggi ma anche interazioni individuali, e gestire reclami e complimenti dei consumatori. Il CRO supervisiona anche la distribuzione della newsletter mensile sui servizi di assistenza agli anziani.

Programma di accesso e supporto (A&S)

Muoversi nel complesso panorama dell'assistenza agli anziani può essere difficile per alcune persone anziane. Abbiamo la fortuna di avere un operatore A&S che supporta e guida i membri più anziani della nostra comunità nell'accesso ai servizi tramite My Aged Care, garantendo loro un accesso tempestivo ai servizi di cui hanno bisogno.

Assistenza domiciliare (Italcare)

Un ringraziamento speciale ai nostri

straordinari operatori di supporto domestico. Il loro impegno e lavoro, ogni giorno, sono la nostra forza. Sono gli eroi non celebrati che danno vita ai nostri servizi. Senza la loro dedizione, compassione e sforzi instancabili, i nostri programmi di sostegno domestico non esisterebbero.

In conclusione, sono orgogliosa di guidare un team di persone compassionevoli e competenti impegnate a migliorare la qualità della vita dei membri più anziani della nostra comunità. Estendo i miei più sentiti ringraziamenti a tutto il personale, ai volontari e ai partner per il loro continuo supporto.

AGED CARE PACKAGES

The Home Support team is a dedicated example to the core beliefs, mission, and values of CO.AS.IT.



As a cornerstone of the Italian Community in Melbourne, our Home Care staff continue to provide essential care, compassion, and services with an ever-growing demand for in-home services.

Our further commitment to ongoing regulatory change by the Australian Government has also underpinned our efforts and growth to best support our ageing community. I wish to congratulate the staff on meeting the expectations of the Department of Health and Aged Care, with efforts resulting in a stellar compliance achievement. CO.AS.IT is also committed to supporting positive change in the sector as the Australian Government continues to respond to the Royal Commission into the Aged Care Sector.

After substantial consideration we have also understood the importance of linking the care management and support service components of our overarching delivery service. Home Care now incorporates the previously titled Italcare department to form Home Support. This department is responsible for actioning end-to-

end service delivery for our in-home supports through Home Care Packages (HCP) and Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services. Home Support liaises directly with the further-expanded Quality Care department, to ensure all aspects of care needs are met.

Our ventures to advancing our I.T. infrastructure continue from our last report. We continue to expand communication between Care Recipients, their families, and CO.AS.IT personnel, as a focal aspect to ensure we continue to provide quality and safe services. As pioneers in the sector, CO.AS.IT has developed an easy-to-operate QR communications platform, which is now present in each of our Care Recipient homes. COVID-19 taught us the importance of easy and urgent manners of communication, and we became well accustomed to using QR codes. CO.AS.IT has taken this concept and prepared an urgent response framework, which can be used by anyone at the home to provide immediate alerts to our Home Support department, and act accordingly with

minimal delay. Our care recipients and staff can rest assured that we are ready to act at a moment's notice.

The Home Support team continues to collaborate closely with other departments of CO.AS.IT, including the Education and Culture teams. Through our efforts – such as collaborating on the Open House Tours, we have seen the importance of engaging Italian Culture holistically, bringing such experiences to all who interact with our organisation. Maintaining Italian culture is vital to the longevity and persistence of the substantial knowledge it represents and is well received by our care recipients.

Together, CO.AS.IT continues to prepare to move into the next era of aged care support within Australia. We continue to seek out information and innovate our working practices to ensure that our ageing community remains well-supported, whilst also ensuring growth and sustainability for the organisation. We look forward to entering 2024 and beyond, well-equipped to support our community.

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS



Over the past year, our commitment at SSG has been to provide exceptional care and support to all our clients. We take pride in fostering an environment that radiates warmth and hospitality, where every client feels secure and supported.

At our SSG centres, the principles of dignity and respect underpin all that we do. We believe these values are not just ideals but an absolute necessity.

To accomplish this, our staff works tirelessly to provide a daily program of activities designed to stimulate cognitive function, improve communication skills, and enrich the social and cultural experiences during the time our clients are attending our centres.

We continue to prioritise safety, especially with the ongoing challenges posed by COVID. As a precaution, we maintain social distancing and infection control measures at all our centres to safeguard our consumer's health and well-being.

We acknowledge that SSG attendance numbers have declined during the past year mainly due to the natural progression of ageing clients and transitions to Aged Care Facilities or other care arrangements. Our dedicated SSG Assessment Officer is diligently managing our waiting list and welcoming new clients, both from internal referrals and through the My Aged Care portal. While the process can at times be arduous and time-consuming, we remain confident that our client numbers will increase in the coming months with targeted marketing activities that are in progress.

In the spirit of innovation and creativity, we are constantly exploring new initiatives to enhance the clients' experiences. One such event is the visit of Scotch College year 10 students to the Rosanna SSG centre in October, as part of an Italian language exchange program between students and our SSG clients. These inter-generational activities enrich the lives of both our clients and participating students.

Furthermore, we recently conducted a survey of our SSG clients. This comprehensive survey, conducted through one-on-one discussions and postal responses,



received enthusiastic participation from our clients. Consequently, we have recommended that future surveys be predominantly conducted face to face, coordinated by our Customer Relations Officer.

Our commitment to staff development and training is strong. The SSG team actively engages in both mandatory and optional training to continually improve their skills, ensuring that they provide the best possible service. Since implementing the new SSG staffing structure, we are delighted to report the cohesion and collaboration among staff has reached new heights. The unity has made them more agile in adapting to changes that not only benefit our clients but also contribute to the growth of CO.AS.IT generally. We are proud to report that staff members are working harmoniously to meet and exceed the goals and objectives of the SSG Program.

In closing, CO.AS.IT's SSG Program remains steadfast in its commitment to providing excellent care, upholding the values of dignity and respect and continuous improvement to meet the socio-recreational needs of our clients. We thank our clients, their families, our dedicated staff and our valued partners for their support in achieving these goals. Together, we look forward to enriching the lives of those we support and creating lasting friendships in the years ahead.

VISITATION PROGRAM



As we conclude 2023, we reflect upon another successful year of the Visitation Program that provides services through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP).

Our volunteers are currently visiting over 200 socially isolated older people who are living independently in their own homes. These collaborative efforts of our dedicated volunteers and committed staff together have continued to develop companionship and connection within our community.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to our volunteers, whose selfless commitment has been the driving force behind the program's success. Their human connection has alleviated the loneliness and isolation faced by many elderly individuals. I also extend my appreciation to our hard working and committed team, Daniela Montesano, Davide Vigiano, Tania Barbaro, Marianna Cibir, Mary Penco, Rina Afflitto and Concetta Tartaglia. Their leadership, organisational skills, and dedication have laid the foundation for the program's continual growth, which is evident with the addition of over 80 new volunteers in the past 12 months, further highlighting its broad appeal that engages dedicated individuals.

Our staff commitment towards ongoing professional development, including Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S), First Aid, Dementia training and other specialised training showcases their dedication to providing exceptional care and support.

The recognition of the Visitation Program within the community, has been strengthened even more through our annual celebratory occasions which are the Pranzo and National Volunteer Week.

This year the Regional Coordinators



have facilitated 2 zone meetings provided by CO.AS.IT., each in their local areas, to provide training and as an exercise for the volunteers to connect and engage. Guest speakers included a nurse from CO.AS.IT. who provided insights into the nursing services and an educator from the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria who addressed the topic of Elder Abuse.

Meetings play an important role in facilitating meaningful interactions amongst our volunteers. These gatherings provide a platform for volunteers to come together, exchange ideas, share experiences, and establish stronger connections with one another. It is also a valuable opportunity for training and skill development.



Volunteer Survey Analysis

The analysis of the volunteer surveys has revealed a loyal and satisfied group who find genuine fulfillment in their roles. The achievements stand as a testament to the mutual partnership between our volunteers, Regional Coordinators and consumers. Their combined efforts have illustrated the deep impact of human connection and the positive transformation it brings to the lives of those often burdened by solitude.

These insights show how the program has built important relationships and effective communication. Our current

pool of over 200 volunteers represents a compassionate force dedicated to uplifting our community's most vulnerable.

Consumer Survey Analysis

Consumer surveys have provided deep insights into the program's transformative impact on the lives of elderly individuals residing in private homes. The program has effectively tackled social isolation, achieving an impressive 95% satisfaction rate. The positive feedback underscores the program's effectiveness in reducing loneliness and enhancing overall well-being.

In conclusion, the Visitation Program's accomplishments are a testament to the dedication of our volunteers, the solid commitment of our staff, and the organisation's firm approach to reducing social isolation. As we journey ahead, the program's growth, recognition, and impact stand as beacons of hope for elderly individuals living independently. We remain determined in our pursuit of community, companionship, and well-being, guided by the belief that a simple visit can transform lives.



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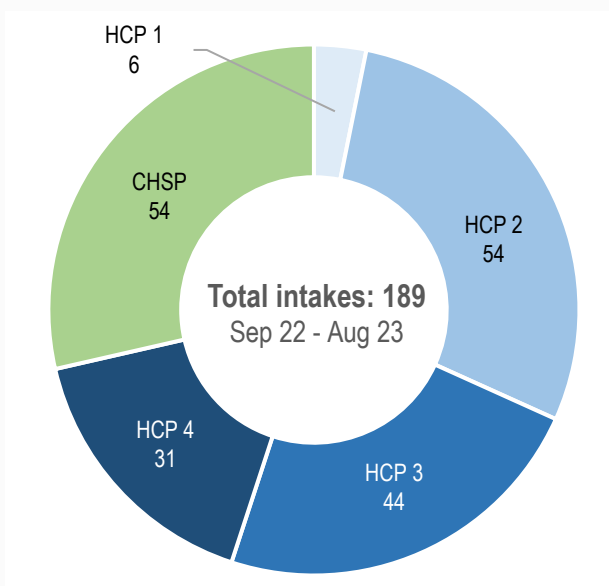
CLINICAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Clinical Governance Committee plays a pivotal role in ensuring the quality, safety, and effectiveness of CO.AS.IT services. Comprising multidisciplinary experts, it monitors clinical practices, evaluates outcomes, and implements evidence-based protocols. This committee fosters continuous improvement by identifying and addressing risks, promoting patient-centred care, and aligning policies with regulatory standards. Through robust review, education, and collaboration, it enhances clinical excellence, facilitates professional development, and cultivates a culture of transparency and accountability within our organisation.

QUALITY ADVISORY CARE COMMITTEE

With the new ASQSC requirement of a Quality Advisory Care Committee, we have developed a Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference for the function of this Committee. The Quality Advisory Care Committee will play a vital role in ensuring and enhancing the quality of not only our Clinical Care, but also the Quality of all CO.AS.IT Aged Care Services. This Committee will comprise of multidisciplinary experts, it evaluates Clinical Care and Service Delivery, Consumer Outcomes, and Safety Protocols. Through regular assessments and analysis of data, the committee identifies areas for improvement and recommends evidence-based strategies. A fundamental pillar of this committee is collaboration with associated stakeholders, sharing best practices, and implementing quality standards, the committee continuously promotes optimal care and service delivery, mitigation of risks, and maintains compliance with regulations. Its proactive efforts will contribute to a culture of excellence, consumer satisfaction, and the ongoing delivery of safe and effective services through CO.AS.IT.

INTAKE AND ASSESSMENTS



Intake and assessments are crucial functions for our Aged Care Agency at CO.AS.IT.

Intake involves gathering initial information about consumers seeking care, understanding their needs, and guiding them through the process. Assessments delve deeper, evaluating the consumers health, living situation, and support requirements. This informs personalised care plans tailored to their needs and encompasses the premise of 'person centred care'. These functions enable CO.AS.IT to allocate appropriate resources, plan services, and match support staff effectively.

Overall, intake and assessments ensure our consumers receive the right care, enhancing their quality of life and promoting their well-being within the community.

CLINICAL CARE COORDINATOR

The role of our Clinical Care Coordinator at CO.AS.IT serves a pivotal role in ensuring the well-being of our cohort of consumers.

The CCC intersects between the Registered Nurses, the Case Managers, the Consumer, Consumer Representatives, and healthcare professionals to coordinate and oversee the clinical aspects of care. They maintain and uphold quality standards by ensuring that nursing and care services meet regulatory requirements and industry best practices. Our CCC is prepared to handle medical emergencies and critical situations, ensuring swift and effective responses. Accurate records of Clinical Assessments, Care Plans, and Progress Notes, aiding communication, and future decision-making. This includes reviewing thoroughly various assessments of consumers health needs, offering professional advice and oversight to the team, making recommendations to care plans, and regularly reviewing and updating these plans as conditions change. The Clinical Care Coordinator oversees outcomes of medical appointments, hospital admissions, discharges, coordinates in home nursing services, monitors health progress, and guides with Clinical oversight when Clinical Incidents occur. By managing the clinical aspects of care, the CCC ensures the Consumer receives appropriate and effective Clinical oversight, fostering their overall health and quality of life.

In essence, the Clinical Care Coordinator serves as a linchpin, orchestrating various aspects of care to ensure CO.AS.IT Consumers receive comprehensive, high-quality, and person-centred support.



DIV 1 NURSE - COMMUNITY NURSING STAFF AT COASIT

Within CO.AS.IT Aged Care Services Department, our Nurses play a vital role in ensuring the health, well-being, and overall quality of life for our consumers.

- Comprehensive Clinical Assessments are regularly conducted to monitor and identify consumer's medical needs, chronic conditions, and potential risks.
- Nurses work with our Case Managers to assist with Care Planning, not only in the Clinical landscape, but also in addressing physical, emotional, and social needs while considering the consumers preferences.
- Nursing services, such as Medication Management and Pain Management, they administer medications, monitor dosage, and educate consumers and their representatives about correct medication routines. Our Nurses regularly monitor vital signs, track health changes, and detect potential issues early to prevent complications. Wound Care is provided via wound assessments, dressing changes, and follow-up care to ensure proper healing and prevent infections. They educate consumers and caregivers about managing chronic conditions, healthy lifestyle choices, and self-care techniques.

Nurses request Input via the consumers primary health care giver for up-to-date health summaries and oversight.

- Our nurses collaborate with other healthcare professionals, therapists, and agencies to ensure holistic care is considered.

- CO.AS.IT Nurses regularly monitor consumers' health status, track changes, and adjust care plans as needed to ensure optimal health outcomes.
- In case of medical emergencies, our nurses can often provide care, and coordinate further medical assistance.



ACCESS & SUPPORT PROGRAM



The Access and Support (A&S) Program, unique to Victoria, has continued to play a valuable role in supporting the older Italian community to access subsidised aged care services via the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP).



The Access and Support worker at CO.AS.IT has continued to assist consumers who are experiencing a variety of barriers in accessing home support services via My Aged Care, the National entry point and gateway for older people requiring aged care services.

Over the last financial year, a total of 190 consumers were supported through the A&S Program whilst at various stages of their My Aged Care journey.

Most of the consumers were referred to the Program by the Assessment Agencies, the Regional Assessment Services (RAS's) based locally, and the Aged Care Assessment Services (ACAS's) attached to hospitals.

The A&S worker has worked collaboratively with the following assessment agencies: Moonee Valley RAS; Melbourne RAS; Yarra RAS; Merri Bek RAS; Darebin RAS and Hume RAS.

The A&S worker has also worked concertedly with the North/West ACAS and Bundoora ACAS facilitating the consumers' transition to Packaged care.

In such instances, the A&S worker is requested to follow-up and assist consumers with uptake of CHSP/entry level services, finding a suitable CHSP provider, linking them to providers, liaising with providers, as well as

assisting the consumers and their families with system understanding, navigation and care-coordination of services.

The Program's initial intention as defined by the Department, was to provide consumers with short-term care coordination of services, up to twelve weeks.

However, this time frame has proved to be unrealistic over the years and especially in recent times, with consumers presenting with complex care needs and other contributing issues such as consumers' vulnerability due to lack of family support, elder abuse, family discord, social isolation, and mental health issues.

Over the last 12 months, the A&S worker's period of involvement with the consumers has doubled, with most of the consumers now being assisted until they have successfully transitioned to a Home Care Package.

Therefore, the once important founding principle of the A&S Program that consumers were of a "transient" nature and required only short-term support, is no longer applicable.

Another new and emerging systemic issue seriously impacting on the delivery of services to consumers, is the growing number of CHSP service providers

unable to accept new consumers due to "insufficient capacity" or having to place consumers on lengthy waiting lists for services.

As a result, consumers are now waiting longer to access entry level/ CHSP services. It is not uncommon therefore, that their home care packages particularly (level 1 or 2) are assigned whilst consumers are still waiting for CHSP services to commence.

Early this year, the Care Finder Program, commissioned by the Primary Health Networks (PHN's) was introduced across Australia.

The role and functions of the care finders have many similarities with those of the A&S workers. That is, to provide specialist and intensive assistance to vulnerable people to access aged care services and to connect with other relevant support services.

It is envisaged that the Victorian A&S Program will continue to have a complimentary role alongside that of the Care Finders until June 2025, when the new Support at Home Program will be launched in line with the proposed Aged Care Reforms.

So, for the A&S workers in Victoria it will be "business as usual" until June 2025, when the positions will most likely cease to exist.

CUSTOMER RELATIONS

My focus as the Customer Relations Officer has been on improving the relationship between our organization supporting our consumer and their family members who represent them.



The areas of particular importance are as follows:

- Surveys to our HCP , Visitation and SSG consumers and producing analysis of those surveys.
- Working with our Care Managers to intercept any minor issues or concerns before they escalate.
- Assembling and assisting with the publication of our Monthly newsletter.
- Handling and managing consumer complaints.
- Setting up a Consumer Advisory Body of consumers/family representatives to discuss ongoing concerns amongst our cohort.

In November 2022 I reached out to approximately 400 clients on the Home Care Package (HCP) via phone and email and informed them I would be forwarding an Aged Care Survey to them to complete and return at the earliest. The analysis of the surveys

was completed in April and results submitted to the board in early May.

Even though the return rate was approximately 33% there was a clear indication that our organization is trending in the right direction.

Our overall satisfaction rate was 89%, and 98% of our clients believe our services have improved their quality of life and culturally our clients feel that their identity is valued and respected.

Between the months of June to August I also looked at our Visitation program and created a survey for those clients who receive this service from our volunteers and analysis was sent to our Visitation Manager. With an encouraging result of 95% overall satisfaction, it reflects a positive appreciation of our visitation program.

In the month of July, I conducted a face-to-face survey at our SSG venue in Rosanna to obtain some direct feedback from our consumers on the quality of food as there was

a change in the preparation of food served to our consumers. There were some interesting comments and recommendations which were noted and discussed with the SSG Manager and then an analysis provided to our CEO.

Surveys were also sent to consumers who attend the Trieste and Licodia clubs, and completion of that analysis is expected by mid-September.



ITALIAN SENIOR CITIZENS' CLUBS OF VICTORIA

After two years of forced inactivity due to Covid, the Italian Senior Citizens Clubs have returned to “live”.



For the CO.AS.IT pensioners' clubs, 2022 began under the banner of optimism and in the hope that as soon as possible the serious inconveniences suffered in the previous two years, due to CCOVID, would become a distant memory.

It can be said that the Clubs, like all other organizations, have been able to enjoy a gradual return to normality since the beginning of the year and this fact has brought back so much serenity and harmony within them. It also brought great benefit for mental health and physics of the many members who have suffered, in some cases quite seriously, from the lack of associative life.

First of all this year it was possible to resume face to face (and therefore no longer having to resort to video conferences) the bi-monthly information meetings of the presidents and delegates of the Clubs, which for some time now have been comfortably held at the Vizzini Social Club of Coburg. These meetings are very

important events because they allow both CO.AS.IT and Clubs to have a direct dialogue on current topics that are of greatest interest to the elderly and to the Clubs themselves. CO.AS.IT, through its CEO Marco Fedi (who was a constant presence on these occasions), pays particular attention to the open and inclusive approach towards members of the Italian community, in particular those who work tirelessly for the Italian community. These community moments were prepared, as always, with care by the Coordinator of the Clubs, Francesco Pascalis, and by the Chairman of the meetings, Frank Di Blasi, and they served above all to address various problems, both of a social and health nature:

- anti COVID vaccination campaign and updates on the restrictions still in force at the beginning of 2022;
- resumption of the face to face Annual General Meetings;
- relations with local authorities that provide aid to clubs (Department

of Premier and Cabinet and Municipalities)

- relations with other community organizations and joint participation in particular events (Italian Republic Day, Carlton Italian Day, etc.);
- launch of the University of the Third Age project;
- hearing problems in adulthood;
- updates on Australian pension services;
- the services that CO.AS.IT makes available, including those that are made possible by the willingness to volunteer on the part of many members of the community and that can be improved through a more articulated interaction between all the forces within CO.AS.IT;
- Alzheimer's disease, possible prevention / slowing of the disease
- news in the field of information / communication in Italian language in Australia ("Il Globo - TV").

It should be noted that one of the topics that are most characterising the action of the Coordination of Clubs is that relating to the launch of the so-called "University of the Third Age". In essence, this is a project that was presented in 2022 and launched in an experimental phase but which, given the flattering welcome by the Clubs, will be fully structured and strengthened during 2023.

As is well known, initiatives involving the University of the Third Age have already existed for some time in all the most advanced countries, and Australia is one of them. Obviously, however, the courses are held in English. CO.AS.IT, in synergy with the Clubs, was able to ascertain that it would be a benefit for the elderly Italians to be able to access a similar service, in this case, however, offered in Italian.

A large number of scientific studies over the years shows that intellectual activity helps aging people maintain an overall well-being. It can mitigate, reduce and even prevent the risk of contracting mental diseases like Alzheimer's.



MEET THE LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND HERITAGE TEAM



I would like to congratulate all the members of the Language, Culture and Heritage Department for the success of their programs and for all their very many and varied contributions to the Department.

*Language, Culture
and Heritage Director*
FERDINANDO COLAROSSO



LANGUAGE
CULTURE
HERITAGE

The individual reports that follow highlight a year of enduring success. To mention just a few:

- Doposcuola successfully returning to face-to-face teaching
- Adult Italian program expanded to include parents of students in bilingual schools-Footscray PS and Brunswick South PS
- IHS with new and significant acquisitions and expanded Museo tours inked to the Heritage Festival and Open House Melbourne Festival
- Museo Education with the return of the many school visits
- Cultural program with its significant exhibitions and numerous cultural events
- Il Girotondo: successful launch of Italian Kinder program
- The return of Language Assistants from Italy
- The Resource Centre as the engine of support for teachers of Italian
- Special programs for VCE students studying Italian

Overall, a contribution CO.AS.IT. can be proud of.

Vorrei congratularmi con tutto lo staff del Dipartimento Language, Culture ed Heritage per il successo dei loro programmi e per i loro numerosi e variegati contributi al grande Dipartimento Education.

Le relazioni individuali che seguono evidenziano un anno di successi ormai consolidati.

Per citarne solo alcuni:

- il ritorno del Doposcuola all'insegnamento in classe
- il Programma di Italiano per Adulti è stato ampliato per comprendere i genitori degli studenti delle scuole bilingui: Footscray PS e Brunswick South PS.



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- IHS (Società Storica Italiana) con nuove e significative acquisizioni e l'incremento delle visite al Museo in occasione dell'Heritage Festival e del Festival Open House Melbourne
- il Programma di Educazione presso il Museo Italiano che ha visto la ripresa di numerose visite scolastiche
- il Programma Culturale con le sue importanti mostre e i suoi numerosi eventi culturali.
- Il Girotondo: il programma per bambini della scuola materna in italiano che è stato lanciato con successo
- Il ritorno degli Assistenti Linguistici dall'Italia
- Il Centro Risorse che ha agito come centro di supporto per gli insegnanti di italiano
- i nuovi Programmi speciali per gli studenti VCE che studiano l'italiano

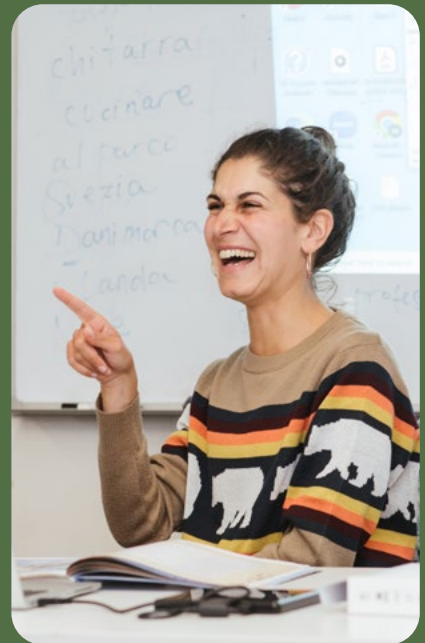
Nel complesso, un contributo di cui il CO.AS.IT. può essere orgoglioso.

ADULT CLASSES



The Italian Language Program for Adults continues to provide a high-quality Italian language program for adult learners as part of the services offered by the Italian Language, Culture and Heritage Department. In 2023 there has been an average of 20 classes and approximately 120 students attending each term. Students attend weekly 2 hour classes and continue to have access to free membership to the CO.AS.IT. Resource Centre where they can borrow grammar books, novels, DVDs and CDs to enhance their learning of the Italian language. CO.AS.IT. offers a variety of classes including the well-established progressive program from Beginner to High Advanced and

several special classes such as the Cinema & Conversazione course and the Contemporary Italy conversation course. Following the Covid pandemic, the Adult program continues to offer fully online and semi-online options for its students participating from interstate. In January, three Intensive Programs were run over 4 days with Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced levels being catered for. Once again, as part of its ongoing commitment to the Italian program at Brunswick South and Footscray primary schools, CO.AS.IT. has offered the parents of students of these two bilingual schools the possibility of attending classes free of charge.



LANGUAGE



LANGUAGE ASSISTANT PROGRAM



This year, 30 Language Assistants were assigned to schools in Victoria to support and enhance the teaching of Italian. Of these, 25 came from the Italian universities with which CO.AS.IT. has agreements.

The Assistants arrived in April and, after a week's induction at CO.AS.IT., began working in the selected schools at the start of term 2.

The Assistants work alongside teachers of Italian, prepare Italian teaching resources, participate in the planning of activities and work with individual students and groups.

This longstanding and highly regarded program represents a major contribution to the teaching of Italian in Victorian schools. CO.AS.IT. is grateful for the funding support received from the Italian and Victorian governments.



VCE STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM



VCE Intensive Program

As now for many years, CO.AS.IT. organised a two-day intensive program for students of Italian completing Units 3&4. On Tuesday 24th September and Wednesday 25th September from 9am until 4pm, 23 students worked with three expert VCE teachers in preparing for the school year ahead. The intensive program consisted of activities aimed to revise what learnt so far in Italian and to immerse the students in the Italian language as a way of preparing them for the challenges of the final VCE Italian exam.

June Mock Orals

During the June School Holidays, CO.AS.IT organised an opportunity for Unit 3&4 students to practice the first part of their VCE Final Oral exam for Italian. 65 students from a variety of schools in Victoria participated to the 20-minute sessions over. The feedback received shows that students appreciated the opportunity to practice speaking in front of an unknown audience and mimic the conditions of the end of the year exam.

September Mock Orals

Following on the success of the June Mock Orals, CO.AS.IT. organised another opportunity for the Italian students preparing for the end of the year exam to practice their final oral exam. This time students were able to practice the whole exam and receive detailed feedback by expert VCE teachers and assessors.

Two events were organised in collaboration with VATI (Victorian Association Teachers of Italian):

Mock Written Exam – as in the past years, a practice written exam was created for students and teachers of Italian in order to have extra exams to practice on in preparation for the end of the year VCE Italian exam. The exam followed the structure and outlined requirements from VCAA.

VCE Preparation Day – This event was held on Tuesday 19th September at the Catholic Leadership Centre. Students were able to book one of the three 2-hour available sessions and participate to two workshops dedicated to prepare for the oral and written VCE final exam.



IL GIROTONDO



Il Girotondo is delighted to mark its first year of running a language program across 14 selected centres in Melbourne.

We've been busy, with 28 classes conducted every week for 40 weeks each year, catering to nearly 500 students aged 3 to 5 years.

Over the past year, we've developed a variety of resources in-house to make our program self-sufficient. We're proud to say that we've produced 18 books, as well as flashcards and games.

Our program has been a great year of learning for kids, introducing them to the benefits of learning a second language at a young age. We keep things interesting by changing the program topics every week, aligning with children's natural inclination to learn through play.

In addition to language learning, we've also exposed the kids to Italian culture through unique experiences like "La Festa della Repubblica," the "Venetian Carnival," and hands-on exploration of different Italian regional foods.

Il Girotondo's program has proven to be a hit with all our centres. We're proud of the achievements we've made and the positive feedback we've received. Our mission is to continue improving and providing a top-notch language and culture program.



DOPOSCUOLA



The After-Hours Italian Language Program (Doposcuola), an accredited Community Language School with the Department of Education is a well-established and essential component of CO.AS.IT's Education services. The program provides and facilitates Italian language classes on a weekly basis for students in Preschool, Primary and Secondary levels and caters for all students from both Italian and other language backgrounds.

The Italian language program is planned and structured in line with the Victorian Curriculum for Languages; and the Preschool classes with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF). The experienced teachers who facilitate the language program are all qualified and dedicated to engaging the students in learning the language and culture. The teachers and

Education staff are committed to the care, safety and wellbeing of students attending the After-Hours Italian Program, and have all undertaken the Child Safe training course, as part of the Victorian Government's compulsory Child Safe Standards guidelines

In 2023 a total of 154 students were enrolled in the Italian language program. This year, the program continued to be delivered onsite in a more settled learning environment. As well as the normal language classes, students were involved in many engaging activities such as the Pizza making day for Secondary students, Dante Alighieri Poster Competition for Primary students, and Italian film screenings.

Provision of Professional Learning activities for teachers involved in the program is important to ensure that teachers continue to develop their skills, knowledge, and pedagogy, to facilitate a high-quality program for students. This year teachers participated in various professional activities including team level planning; CLV - Community Languages Victoria State Conference, Italian language maintenance courses, and online workshops offered by CO.AS.IT., VATI, CLV and Department of Education.

The CO.AS.IT. After Hours Italian Language Program was facilitated successfully in 2023 through the professionalism of the teachers, strategic planning, active participation of students in classes and the support of parents.

CO.AS.IT.'s reputable relationship with parents, stakeholders, the Department of Education (DE) and the Community Languages Victoria (CLV) contribute to the success of the After-Hours Italian Language Program.



MUSEO ITALIANO EDUCATION PROGRAM



The Museo Italiano Education programs are based on the permanent exhibition related to Italian migration to Australia and their contribution to Australian society.

The programs are offered for students from upper Primary to VCE level and include staff-led presentations conducted bilingually or in Italian, as well as self-guided programs supported with supplementary material for students to enhance their learning experience. The Museo Education programs cater for students learning Italian; as well as students studying English, History, Multiculturalism, Diversity and Global perspectives.

The CO.AS.IT. Museo Italiano website provides educational kits and materials for teachers to download based on the exhibition and the theme of Italian migration to prepare students for their visit to the Museo Italiano, including post-activities to follow up at their school.

School bookings in 2023 were positive with increased numbers of students and school excursions to Carlton. A total of 1941 students visited the Museo Italiano (Feb-Oct) for either a self-guided visit only (947 students) or to attend a staff led presentation offered on Wednesdays or Fridays only (994 students).



ITALIAN RESOURCE CENTRE

The calendar has so quickly turned to the end of 2023 and CO.AS.IT. Resource Centre has completed another year of service to teachers and students of Italian.

Circa 220 schools and over 450 teachers have had access to the library either by personally selecting their own material or making contact via email or phone to arrange for items to be mailed out via post. The sourcing and developing of new resources are also important tasks undertaken by the Education Team as material needs to cover a broad spectrum to cater to the needs of each individual student whether at a pre-school level or advanced.

Cataloguing is also vital to the operation of the Resource Centre ensuring that library standards are adhered to, proper indexing of content and correct locations are recorded enabling easy access to materials both on-line and in presence. This task although often completed silently, needs to be sharp and precise. End-processing tasks and shelving is meticulously completed by a volunteer whose work is invaluable. During the year, items from the Italian Historical Society Collection have been reclassified as "rare books" requiring a cataloguing adjustment as have some previously deselected texts which have been reclassified. Copyright issues must also strictly be adhered to ensuring compliancy with the law and staff is updated



Once per term (March, May, August, December) the library is open on Saturday from 10.00 am until 2.00 pm for the convenience of patrons - teachers, students, and parents (even grandparents). Attendance is good as it is during the school holiday periods with the presence of teachers high as they take advantage of this time to plan and select resources for their Italian language programs. The library becomes a space for teachers to meet as a group, interacting with each other and sharing teaching strategies. This is particularly vital for graduate Italian language teachers and mainstream teachers newly appointed to an Italian language teacher role.

As it has been the norm, the usual practice of developing new material for the educational publication *Orizzonti* has continued with three issues completed. The titles for 2023 have been:

- *L'italiano e la sostenibilità: XXIII Settimana della Lingua Italiana nel Mondo*
- *Migrazione: il movimento dei popoli and il turismo delle radici.*

Input into editing and formatting come from several staff members to ensure a quality product. This material, often in excess of 80 pages, is sent to teachers via hyperlink. Furthermore, new material is also developed through the

translation of texts from English into Italian as well as educational activities written for *In Classe* a monthly insert in *Il Globo* Newspaper.

Communication with teachers about library events is sent out via email in the form of a Newsletter and includes new additions to the collection, teaching and learning strategies and job vacancies for teachers. Hygiene has continued as a priority since COVID19 with a cleaner wiping all resources upon their return before shelving.

C.U.T.E. UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

The C.U.T.E. Project - CO.AS.IT. University of the Third Age - is a socio-educational program designed to promote the mental well-being of older people through the stimulation of study, reflection and discussion on various topics.



It is scientifically proven that learning is not only an effective way to stimulate the mind and develop intelligence but is also a means of preventing brain aging and, if practised in a friendly and relaxed context, also creates beautiful opportunities for meeting, socialisation and human solidarity.

It is mainly aimed at all those who, in the process of gradually reducing their working activity or already retired, wish to use their free time in an intelligent and stimulating way. The C.U.T.E. classes take place exclusively in Italian and offer older people in our community the opportunity to learn and experience new facts and notions, addressing various topics, including history, geography, astronomy, customs, literature and music. The sessions last an average of an hour and a half weekly.

The courses started in June 2022, initially at two centres, the

Community Centre in Camberwell and the Basilicata Social Club in East Brunswick. With the start of the 2023 school year, three more courses were added at the Community Hub in Glenroy, the Library and Learning Centre in Avondale Heights and the INCA Patronato in Coburg. A class also began in July 2023 at the Casa d'Abruzzo Club in Epping and is expected to start at the Veneto Club in Bulleen in early 2024.

The project is proving to be a success, and there is a strong appreciation for the initiative from many people in our community, especially women and, above all, individuals who, demonstrating a certain intellectual and cultural vivacity, want to keep this predisposition alive.

Around 90 registered participants are in the six community centres mentioned above, but registration requests are increasing. In addition, expressions of interest in the project are being received from individuals and associations, accompanied

by specific requests to start similar sessions in other parts of the Melbourne metropolitan area, especially in the neighbourhoods located in the eastern region.

C.U.T.E is not just another service offered by CO.AS.IT., in addition to those already in operation, but it is also a further testimony and demonstration of its commitment to wanting to concretely honour all aspects of its social and educational "mission" in favour of the Italian community.

Il Progetto C.U.T.E. - CO.AS.IT. Università della Terza Età - è un programma socio-educativo che è stato ideato per promuovere il benessere mentale degli anziani attraverso lo stimolo allo studio, alla riflessione ed alla discussione su vari argomenti.

E' scientificamente provato che l'apprendimento non è solo un modo efficace per stimolare la mente e sviluppare l'intelligenza ma è anche un mezzo per prevenire l'invecchiamento del cervello e, se esercitato in un contesto amichevole e rilassato, crea inoltre bellissime opportunità di incontro, socializzazione ed umana solidarietà.

È particolarmente rivolto a tutti coloro che, in fase di graduale riduzione della propria attività lavorativa o già in pensione, desiderino impiegare il proprio tempo libero in modo intelligente e stimolante. Le classi del C.U.T.E. si svolgono esclusivamente in lingua italiana e offrono agli anziani della nostra comunità la possibilità di imparare e sperimentare fatti e nozioni nuove, affrontando vari argomenti fra cui storia, geografia, astronomia, costume, letteratura e musica. Le sessioni sono della durata media di un'ora e mezza ed hanno cadenza settimanale.

I corsi hanno preso avvio nel giugno del 2022, inizialmente presso due centri, il Community Centre di Camberwell e il Basilicata Social Club a East Brunswick. Con l'inizio dell'anno scolastico 2023 sono stati aggiunti altri 3 corsi, rispettivamente presso il Community Hub di Glenroy, il Library and Learning Centre di Avondale Heights ed il Patronato INCA a Coburg. Nel luglio 2023 ha poi avuto inizio il corso presso il Casa d'Abruzzo Club ad Epping e per il principio del 2024 è previsto l'avvio di un corso presso il Veneto Club a Bulleen.

Il progetto si sta rivelando un successo e si sta riscontrando un deciso apprezzamento all'iniziativa da parte di molte persone della nostra comunità, soprattutto donne e soprattutto soggetti che, dimostrando una certa vivacità intellettuale e culturale, vogliono continuare a tener viva questa loro predisposizione.



Ad oggi, si conta un totale di circa 90 iscritti nei 6 centri comunitari sopraindicati ma le richieste di iscrizione sono in aumento. Oltre a ciò, stanno pervenendo espressioni di interesse al progetto da parte di singoli e associazioni, accompagnate da precise istanze ad avviare analoghe sessioni in altre parti dell'area metropolitana di Melbourne, soprattutto nei quartieri situati nella zona orientale.

Il C.U.T.E non è solo un altro servizio offerto dal CO.AS.IT. in aggiunta a quelli già in funzione ma è anche un'ulteriore testimonianza e dimostrazione del suo impegno a voler onorare in modo concreto tutti gli aspetti della sua "mission" sociale ed educativa in favore della comunità italiana.

CULTURAL PROGRAM

// Statistics for 2023:

4 temporary exhibitions.

45+ events.

Approximately 2300 attendees at events across the year.

Approximately 17,000 hits on Cultural Program articles on CO.AS.IT. website.



CULTURE



Staffing and operations

The addition of the Community Engagement Officer to form the Cultural Program Team has made it possible to expand and enhance activities and to develop collaborations across CO.AS.IT's Italian Language, Culture and Heritage Department. In particular:

Forward planning for 2024 has begun with an emphasis on introducing more events aimed at the target demographics of younger generations and non-Italians.

A promotional campaign for the Italian language classes has begun with posters being spread around the businesses in Carlton to encourage the community to learn Italian as they wait in line in shops, cafés, and restaurants.

A social media campaign, which will continue into the future, has begun for Language and Culture to spread the reach of the programs and engage the community.

Exhibitions

Immigrant Networks (Migrant Camps; Snowy Hydro; Port Kembla Steelworks; Woomera; Melbourne Suburbs): 15 November 2022 – 17 March 2023.

Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man: Ugo Tognazzi and Comedy Italian Style: 28 April – 28 July 2023.

Guglielmo Giannini: Showman and Politician: 11 May – 28 July 2023.

The P.R.omised Land: New Italians in Australia. An Art Project by Angela Viora: 12 September – 22 December 2023.

Events

Book launches, music performances, talks, workshops, roundtables, culinary walking tours, dinners, masterclasses, and movie screenings, featuring renowned local and international authors, musicians, academics, and artists as well as the fundamental contribution of the community.

Diaspore italiane

Continuation of the successful collaborations with international partners of the Diaspore italiane network

(MEI – Museo nazionale dell'emigrazione Italiana, Genova; the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, Queens College, City University of New York, MUNTREF Museo Nacional de la Inmigración, Universidad Nacional the Tres de Febrero, Buenos Aires) for the fifth Diaspore Italiane. Italy in Movement session, to be held in Genova and Rome in December 2023.

International and cross-institutional collaborations and endorsements:

Italian Cultural Institute (Melbourne); Dante Alighieri Society (Melbourne); ComItEs; The University of Melbourne; Monash University; La Trobe University; Deakin University; The Australian National University; The University of Western Australia; The University of Tasmania; Edith Cowan University; AALITRA (Australian Association for Literary Translation); Università degli Studi di Pavia; Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia – Cineteca Nazionale (Rome); Centro Studi del Teatro Stabile di Torino; Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione CSAC (Università di Parma); Rai Teche; Università di Milano; Archivio Tognazzi (Università di Pavia, in collaborazione con il Comune di Cremona); the Ascolta Women writing collective; La Mama Theatre; RACV; La Famiglia Siciliana.



ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

// The CO.AS.IT. Italian Historical Society (IHS) continues to work successfully with the Italian and Australian communities to collect, preserve and share as widely as possible all aspects of Australia's rich and vibrant Italian immigration story.



HERITAGE



It has been a busy and rewarding year at the Italian Historical Society (IHS) with many opportunities to collect and promote Australia's vibrant Italian immigration story. The nomination of the IHS Italian Carlton Project for a prestigious 2022 Victorian Australian Museums and Galleries Award, was a crowning achievement. This recognition by Victoria's Museum and Galleries peak body acknowledges the high calibre and importance of the work of the Society. The project provides engaging ways of exploring Italian Carlton and is a valuable reminder that when we are in Carlton, our rich Italian heritage surrounds us.

The ever-growing interest in Italian family history research resulted in an article by Elizabeth Triarico, Manager of the IHS & Museo Italiano, titled "An introduction to sourcing Italian genealogical records" being published in Ancestor, the Journal of the Genealogical Society of Victoria. The article showcases the Society's many online resources, provides links to a range of useful Italian based family history web sites and tools, and includes a rare image from the IHS Collection of four generations of

Rinaldi women, taken in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia in c1925.

Acquisitions continue to grow steadily and include those of national significance: an original 1970s Carla Zampatti dress and three original artworks by artist Giorgio Faggioni, whose work is featured in the National Gallery of Australia Collection: two original print engravings The Bricklayer and On the Beach, and an original painting L'Addio Dell'Emigrante. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all our generous donors and lenders and everyone who has supported the Society throughout the year.

Free Guided Tours of the Museo Italiano proved extremely popular during the Australian Heritage Festival in April-May and the Open House Melbourne Weekend 2023 (OHM) on 29 and 30 July. This is the second consecutive year that the Museo Italiano guided tours have been selected for OHM. This year 117 people attended the tours, (more than double last years' attendance) and included people from all backgrounds, ranging in age from 3 to 93 and some from regional Victoria. The numerous

positive responses to the OHM Museo Italiano tours have been overwhelming and greatly appreciated.

Manager, Elizabeth Triarico showcased the important work of CO.AS.IT. and the Society in presentations given at the Deakin University Multicultural Museums: Diasporic Cultures, Australian Heritage Workshop, on 21-22 November and the 2023 Oral History Victoria Symposium: Oral history across and within communities, held at CO.AS.IT. on 23 June 2023.

It was a great pleasure to welcome Monash University intern Virginia Romanato to the IHS where she reviewed and translated a selection of key oral histories. Recorded in the 1980s, the IHS Oral History Collection includes rare interviews with Italian migrants who arrived in Australia in the 1920s and are in Italian, English, Italian and English and in Italian dialects. Virginia's highly professional translation and research skills and insights into the use of the Italian language have been invaluable in improving access to this unique collection.



LAUNCH OF WITCARE HUB



We are excited to unveil WitCare Hub, a comprehensive service designed to support and inform migrant workers, students, and working holiday VISA holders, arriving from Italy in the post-COVID-19 era.



With a steadfast commitment to their well-being and seamless integration into their new environment, the WitCare Hub aims to be a trusted resource, providing essential information and assistance throughout their journey.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about unprecedented challenges for individuals relocating to new countries. As Italy begins to recover from the impact of the pandemic, it is crucial to offer tailored support to those embarking on new opportunities

abroad. The WitCare Hub recognises the unique needs and concerns of migrant workers and students, particularly in a post-pandemic context.

Our comprehensive range of services encompasses vital areas such as healthcare, accommodation, legal support, language assistance, and cultural orientation. Through our dedicated team of professionals and partnerships with local organisations, we will ensure that individuals arriving from Italy have access to accurate

and up-to-date information and personalised guidance tailored to their specific circumstances.

Given the lingering effects of the pandemic, the WitCare Hub's focus on healthcare is paramount. We will provide detailed information on vaccination protocols, testing facilities, and local healthcare resources to ensure individuals can access appropriate care and stay informed about the latest health guidelines.

Moreover, recognising the challenges newcomers face in navigating legal processes, the WitCare Hub will offer guidance on visa requirements, work permits, and immigration procedures, easing the transition for individuals as they settle into their new lives.

By establishing the WitCare Hub, we aim to empower migrant workers and students arriving from Italy, enabling them to make informed decisions, navigate their new environment confidently, and build a solid foundation for success. We are committed to their well-being and integration, and the WitCare Hub will play a pivotal role in facilitating their journey post-COVID-19.

GENEROUS DONATION OF 'CARRETTO SICILIANO'



On 27 August at the CO.AS.IT. of Melbourne, an event of extraordinary cultural importance took place, in which the Sicilian Family, representing eight Sicilian Clubs of Victoria, donated a precious Sicilian Cart to the Italian Museum.

This gesture not only marked a sort of handover but also helped to ensure the preservation of a unique piece of history and tradition.

The Sicilian Cart, an icon of traditional Sicilian craftsmanship, represents countless aspects of island life. Each cart is an actual work of art, the result of months of commitment by skilled artisans. The woodworking, wrought iron, sculpture and pictorial decoration that incorporates scenes of daily life come together in a masterpiece that embodies the richness and variety of the Sicilian cultural heritage.

The Sicilian Family generously donated the Cart to the Italian Museum, and last Sunday's ceremony was a moment of celebration and recognition. During the event, two prestigious awards were presented. The 2023 Sicily Prize was awarded to Orazio Mammola, recognising his commitment to promoting and preserving Sicilian culture. The Premio Carretto Siciliano was instead awarded to James Merlino, who demonstrated a sincere interest in Italian traditions.

The art of the Sicilian Cart is an aesthetic expression and a vehicle for passing on the past to the new generations. For this reason, the Sicilian Family has also donated a scholarship for teaching the Italian language, focusing on Sicilian culture. This gesture demonstrates a tangible commitment to promoting and educating Italian roots in the local community.

CO.AS.IT., represented by the CEO Marco Fedi, the Director of the



Department of Education Ferdinando Colarossi and the Manager of Cultural Programs Paolo Baracchi, expressed profound gratitude to the Sicilian Family for their significant contribution.

Also present at the event was the President of Com.It.Es. Victoria & Tasmania Ubaldo Agliano, Giuseppe Daloiso, representative of the Consulate General of Melbourne and some members of the Board of Directors of CO.AS.IT., Cav. Vito Cassisi and Mrs. Silvana Sgro'.

The Cart donation and the scholarship represent a passing of the baton between the generations, a link between the past and the future that

will help keep Italian and Sicilian culture alive in the Melbourne community.

Sunday's event was more than just a donation. It symbolised the commitment to preserving cultural roots, the importance of preserving traditions that are in danger of disappearing, and the strength of the community to promote its heritage.

Thanks to the Famiglia Siciliana and CO.AS.IT., the Sicilian Cart will find a worthy refuge in the Italian Museum of Melbourne, remaining permanently available to the community to continue to inspire and educate future generations about the history and beauty of Sicily.

FINANCIAL REPORT

// CO.AS.IT. continues its outstanding financial performance and remains in a solid financial position. The company's business kept growing and recorded a \$1.77 million surplus for the financial year. The increased revenue and well-managed operating costs reflect healthy business growth.



Substantial and fixed assets form a solid financial foundation for the company. The financial assets are allocated in different forms, e.g., cash equivalents, term deposits and investments, to achieve an optimal financial return and manage well-balanced risks. For the Finance Department, 2023 is a year full of dynamic growth and innovation.

After introducing a new cloud-based rostering system, CO.AS.IT. is now better positioned to serve its aged care clients with more flexibility, accuracy and efficiency. To facilitate that change, a brand-new Purchase Order team was established within the Finance Department, responsible for purchase order issuing and invoice matching. This team, consisting of three dedicated members, has developed a robust record reconciliation system, ensuring faster invoice tracking and data analysis. This system simplifies the ordering process and significantly improves the spending budget management. A timely reconciliation between the rostering and general ledger systems brings a more proactive accounting data quality control in place. More importantly, introducing and implementing the purchase order system enables CO.AS.IT. to respond to clients' needs more quickly and effectively.

Facing continual changes to the regulatory requirements and increasing management reporting demands, the

Finance Department takes more initiatives to deliver high-quality internal and external financial reports with limited resources and time. We launched several process optimisation and automation projects this year to improve efficiency and productivity. The accounting system was migrated to the cloud in May 2023. Compared with the previous server-based system, the cloud-based system is more flexible, secure, reliable, and efficient. We analysed existing accounting processes during the year and identified those repetitive and time-consuming tasks. Automation software and tools were introduced and implemented to replace manual work as much as possible. The automation frees up accounting staff from routing tasks, saves time and improves data accuracy and consistency. It also minimises the risks of human errors and ensures compliance with accounting standards and regulations. The performance of the automation is very encouraging. Onerous accounting tasks could now be completed through streamlined and standardised processes within a much shorter time and with minimal human intervention. The Finance Department continues to improve and optimise the accounting process with our commitment to quality, timely and reliable accounting data.

Thanks to each member's support and contributions, we had a fruitful 2023. The staff's dedication, professionalism and teamwork enable the Finance Department to meet the highest performance standards consistently.



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