

Notes for Kathryn Greiner AO
Chair, NSW Ministerial Advisory Committee on Ageing
Universal Design Conference
Lower Town Hall, Sydney Town Hall
Thursday 21 August 2014 (Day 2).
Kathryn to speak at 9:00 (approx. 10 mins plus questions)

Acknowledge:

- Traditional owners of the land, past and present.
- The Hon. John Ajaka, MLC, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for the Illawarra
- Keynote Presenters: Kay Saville-Smith and Dr Gerald Craddock
- COTA Executive team

Universal Design: Everyone, Everywhere 5-10 minutes of speaking

- Creating more liveable communities has been identified as a policy priority in both NSW 2021 as well as more specifically in the NSW Ageing Strategy, the National Disability Strategy NSW Implementation Plan and in the NSW Carers Strategy.
- While these policies target different population groups there is considerable overlap as Carers, People With Disability (PWD) and Seniors actually have similar needs, issues and priorities in terms of achieving their potential throughout their lives, including - accessible built environment, reliable, regular and accessible transport, access to social participation, attitudes of respect and inclusion - to name a few.

- I will take a few minutes to outline the context and rationale for policy development that addresses the liveable community needs of all three groups.
- “Create Age-Friendly Local Communities” is a highlight of the NSW Ageing Strategy. Evidence suggests that seniors wish to age in place, either in their actual family home or in the same locality. Policies around aging in place aim to support people to grow old with dignity in their own homes whilst at the same time remaining active and engaged members of their communities.
- Older people who took part in COTA NSWs consumer consultations and the COTA 2012 Survey, revealed that a sense of community was enormously important and that living in a diverse community with different aged residents was important. The report states that ‘safe and equitable access to the public domain and to public facilities such as transport and recreational activities require attention to design details.....features such as level footpaths, adequate and appropriate street seating and lighting, way finding and easy access to toilets.’
- The National Disability Strategy NSW Implementation Plan recognises the importance of ensuring access to mainstream services in our community so that people with disability enjoy the same rights and opportunities that others take for granted. Behaviours and attitudes was the highest priority area identified by people with disability. Societal attitudes toward people with disability were viewed as one of the greatest challenge as it impacts on all facets of a person’s life from employment opportunities to daily living. Participants supported the ‘need to change behaviour to change attitudes’.

- The NSW Carers Strategy was developed through a year long collaborative process which revealed that important issues for Carers are respect and recognition, inclusion in decision making, and access to services they may need. Echoing the needs of people with disability, Carers stated that they need the wider community to have better attitudes towards themselves and the people they care for, including a better acceptance of disability and a willingness to help.
- Carers would like to incorporate the needs of the person they care for into daily activities. For example, the availability of toilets/facilities to change an adult, the capacity of the shop attendant to keep an eye on someone whilst they try on clothes in the changing room, the availability of a crèche for adults who need supervision at the shopping centre. Carers need the broader community to support them in small every day ways to make engagement with the community easier and to help them make communities more liveable for the people they are caring for.
- Liveable communities are communities that make life more manageable and enjoyable for people. Liveable communities enable all people to lead active lives and access their community, easily and safely. Liveable communities build independence, health and wellbeing through planning and designing accessible and inclusive social and physical environments that provide opportunities for active citizenship, regardless of age, ability or responsibilities. From the built environment to respectful engagement, to maximising employment and housing options, liveable communities are inclusive for all, including those with specific needs.
- A number of recognised frameworks exist that define a liveable community and which describe how a liveable community may be

implemented. These include the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Age Friendly Cities. This program developed through extensive consultation and includes a practical list of areas to assist local government planners to create or further develop age friendly cities.

- Within the program the WHO have articulated 8 domains that, combined, lead to more liveable communities. The 8 domains include - the built environment, transport, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication, and community support and health services
- Although each group may have different priorities within the framework, these domains are applicable to all; the WHO program provides a practical way forward to pursue more liveable communities for seniors, carers and people with disability.
- The common themes in what stakeholders want are a sense of community, and the importance of diversity. People want to feel safe, equal and respected, and the built environment needs to support this. For all groups, the importance of being able to get around to engage with their communities is vital. Awareness, behaviour and attitudes need to underpin the strategic planning for the built environment to support inclusion of older people; people with disabilities and carers.
- By harnessing the joint efforts and influence of the ageing carers and disability groups within the community there is a much greater chance of bringing about substantial and sustainable change in this area.
- A common approach to target the further development of liveable communities has been endorsed by the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Ageing, The Disability Council NSW and the Carers Advisory Council.

