



# SUPPORTING ACTIVE AGEING IN AUSTRALIA

## A RESEARCH BRIEF BY THE UNSW AGEING FUTURES INSTITUTE

Are our government policies and programs fit to support the diverse needs for fulfilling lives as we age?

### BACKGROUND AND CURRENT ISSUE

Australia has a rapidly ageing population. Recent policy reforms continue to promote ageing in place in community and away from specialised institutions, an arrangement that is also preferred by older people themselves. The WHO's guidance on active ageing highlights eight specific domains that promote healthy, fulfilling lives as we age, ranging from care and support services, to age-friendly built environments, and opportunities for social connections and civic participation. Less is known, however, of how policies and programs support and promote these different domains.

### SUMMARY OF CURRENT RESEARCH

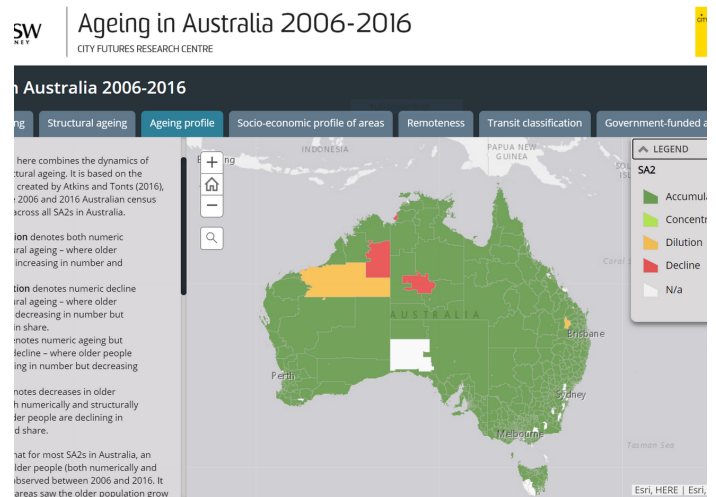
We reviewed 85 policy documents across Australia's three-tiered government system to assess in what ways they support and promote active ageing. There was a notable focus on care and support programs and much less on other aspects, which likely reflects on-going reforms (though focus is primarily on residential aged care). Local governments, the WHO's intended implementers of age-friendly support because of their familiarity of their local communities, were limited in resourcing and delegated authority to design and run suitable programs.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

There is continued need to move away from outdated views of old-age frailty and debilitation, towards design and support that cuts across other domains that contribute to healthy and fulfilling lives as we age. This is especially important at the local level, where most of our daily living occurs. The resourcing and capacity challenges that local governments face in responding to these needs must be supported by appropriate investments and delegation.

### REFERENCES

1. Judd, B. et al. (2020) "Introduction: Ageing in place in the Western Asia-Pacific". In Ageing in place: Design, planning and policy responses in the Western Asia-Pacific.
2. Liu E. et al. (2022) "The World Health Organization's impacts on age-friendly policymaking: A case study on Australia" Australian Journal of Social Issues.
3. Liu E. et al. (2020) CityViz: Ageing in Australia 2006-2016. City Futures Research Centre, Sydney5



	Cultural diversity	Care and support services	Transport	Walkability	Housing
Australia	Multicultural Australia - United, Strong, Successful	Commonwealth Home Support Program	The Whole Journey Guide	National Cities Performance Framework	National Housing and Homelessness Agreement
	Multicultural Access and Equity Policy Guides		National Policy Framework for Land Transport Technology	Advisory Note on Streetscape, public outdoor areas, fixtures, fittings and furniture	Commonwealth Rent Assistance
	Bringing Australians Together		National Transport Technology Action Plan (2016-2019)		
New South Wales	NSW Ageing Strategy 2016-2020	NSW Ageing Strategy 2016-2020	Future Transport 2056	Older Persons Transport and Mobility Plan 2018-2022	State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors of People with a Disability) 2004
	Multicultural NSW Strategic Priorities 2018-2019		Older Persons Transport and Mobility Plan 2018-2022		
Ageing-specific policy(s)					
Acknowledgement of ageing-related challenge(s)					
No focus on older cohort					

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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