

# LIVING CONNECTED NEWSLETTER

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## Reflecting on 2019

Living Connected helps elders use technology to remain independent, active and engaged as they age. In 2017-18 we grew mainly through community sessions in the Illawarra and in aged-care facilities in the Shoalhaven. This year we have expanded our network of centres to cover the region along the NSW South Coast from Bulli to Bega. In addition, we have been able to ramp up our home visit program, with substantial funding from a one year Be Connected Capacity Building Grant. This is where we had identified the most need from the research on which the Living Connected service is based. A condition of the grant is that we don't charge for our services, although many of our clients do offer to pay. While the support is appreciated, we would like to reduce our reliance on short-term grants.

Look at the latest map of the Living Connected Network (<https://livingconnected.org.au/about/our-network/>) which shows how much we have grown this year.

## Preparing for 2020

We are looking forward to continuing to deliver all the popular services we have been offering this year. We are also looking forward to taking part in the Young Mentors program being developed by the Federal Government's Commissioner for eSafety. This new program aims to train High School students as digital mentors for seniors. In our experience the students get as much out of this as the elders they mentor.

Our challenge for 2020 is sustainability, not relying too much on grants that may not be forthcoming in the future. We have created a flexible network structure through great partnerships, we have a great team of mentors and a learner-led way of operating that is viable and meets the needs of elders struggling to adapt to the digital world.

Critical to a flexible networked organisation is the role of administrator and we have been so fortunate in having Kim Leach in that role while we have been going through our first couple of chaotic start-up years. Although she will still be around doing some home visits when she can, we will not have Kim in the admin role in 2020. I am sure that everyone who has met Kim will appreciate how much we will miss her. However, we are always very proud when one of our team benefits from their experience with Living Connected to step up in their career.

## Seasons Greeting from Living Connected

It is always a pleasure to join the residents for breakfast at IRT Greenwell Gardens < Nowra before our computer group meets. At the last one for the year, Donna made sure there was plenty of Christmas fare



A big thank-you to everyone who has been part of our organisation in 2019!