

Community Connectors- Sample Role Description

Your Neighbourhood House or Centre may tailor this role description to accommodate their needs and the needs of the community in your area. Therefore the Neighbourhood House manager might amend it and provide you with an updated role description.

1. Role purpose

The Active Neighbourhoods for Older Australians (ANOA) Community Connectors Program aims to increase physical activity among older adults, particularly those who don't regularly join in activities and are socially isolated, through increasing (and maintaining) attendance at physical activity classes in Neighbourhood Houses.

Older people who are not engaged in activities and are socially isolated may not be aware of the physical activity classes available at your Neighbourhood House. They may also have lower confidence levels and do not attend classes for this reason.

Receiving the encouragement and support from a Community Connector (who is also an older person) may be the key to making them feel welcomed and comfortable to attend a physical activity class (and hopefully continue attending).

As a Community Connector volunteer, you will be trained to connect with older people in the community with two overall Community Connector goals:

- a) raise awareness of the benefits of physical activity and the physical activity programs available at your Neighbourhood House, and
- b) provide personal support and a welcoming environment for those who begin attending physical activity classes.

To put it simply, a Community Connector will raise awareness and provide information and support to other local older people.

2. Key skills and characteristics required

- Completed Community Connectors training (in either a group setting or online)
- Current volunteer at NH or willing to become a volunteer
- Friendly and welcoming
- Motivated and enthusiastic

- Currently involved in physical activity program/s at the Neighbourhood House (preferably), or actively involved in the Neighbourhood House for a period of time
- At least 55 years of age
- Good communicator/listener
- Relatable (i.e. gets on easily with a range of different people and is within the same age group)
- Aware and empathetic when dealing with other people
- Connected in other ways within the community (e.g. attends other local clubs, volunteers at other local organisations/groups)
- Willing to adhere to their Neighbourhood House's volunteer policies and procedures
- Willing to meet regularly (frequency to be determined) with the Neighbourhood House manager or designated staff member to discuss the progress of the role.

3. Tasks

At a minimum, Community Connectors will undertake the following tasks:

- Proactively inform other local older people (e.g. friends, neighbours) about the importance of physical activity
- Proactively encourage (when appropriate) older people to attend physical activity programs at the Neighbourhood House or at least to come along and have an initial look at the programs
- Assist people with information about transport options to reach the Neighbourhood House
- Be present at the Neighbourhood House the first few times when older people (with whom they have had contact) come to the Neighbourhood House to view or attend the physical activity programs
- Support these older people to meet other people within the Neighbourhood House

Optional (only within the discretion and at the direction of the Neighbourhood House manager)

Community Connectors may also play a more expanded role, which may include

- Attend local events and local organisations/clubs (with the Neighbourhood House manager or other staff member) to talk about the importance of physical activity for older people and the Neighbourhood House physical activity programs
- Assist new participants with transport to/from the Neighbourhood House

- Participate in the physical activity classes with new participants with whom they have connected
- Conduct follow-up calls to anyone they've connected with if that person hasn't attended for a first time or attended classes in a while (this would only be with the permission of the new person)
- Organise regular catch-ups with new participants at the Neighbourhood House over tea/coffee
- Speak with other older people at the Neighbourhood House, who may be interested in becoming Community Connectors (this would be after a period in the role)

4. Support and development

- All Community Connectors will need to undertake Community Connectors training
- All Community Connectors will have support from the Neighbourhood House manager or designated staff member to discuss the progress of the role
- All Community Connectors will be covered by the Neighbourhood House insurance arrangements