



SOCIAL CONNECTION TOOL

for Residential Aged Care

Proudly supported by

Uniting



Social Innovation
Research Institute

Duty of Care statement: please read aloud to resident before using the Tool

This Social Connection Tool is a set of questions to enable a conversation to understand your needs and wants for social connection.

The Tool enables conversations about the people who are important to you, when you have contact with them, and what kinds activities you enjoy doing with other people.

These questions aim to enable staff to understand the hobbies or interests that you enjoy. That could be just about anything – for example, singing, listening to music, art, cooking, getting outside in nature and so on. The questions in the Tool help to identify opportunities to have good social connection while living in your home in residential care.

The questions also ask you about how you enjoy connecting with others, such as in a group or just with one other person, and the rooms and places in the facility and the local community that you might like to spend time with others.

To get the best results, use the Tool when you feel relaxed, comfortable and calm. Very occasionally, there might be things about the Tool that make you feel uncomfortable or that brings on difficult emotions.

This is not the intention of the Tool, but it's possible that such feelings could occur. If you are experiencing distress and would like support while using the Tool or afterwards, we encourage you to speak to the Facility Manager or Lifestyle Coordinator. They can also refer you to an independent counselling service if you want to.

Alternatively, you can contact **Lifeline on 13 11 14.**

The Tool has been designed by people like you, living in residential facilities and the staff who care for and support them.

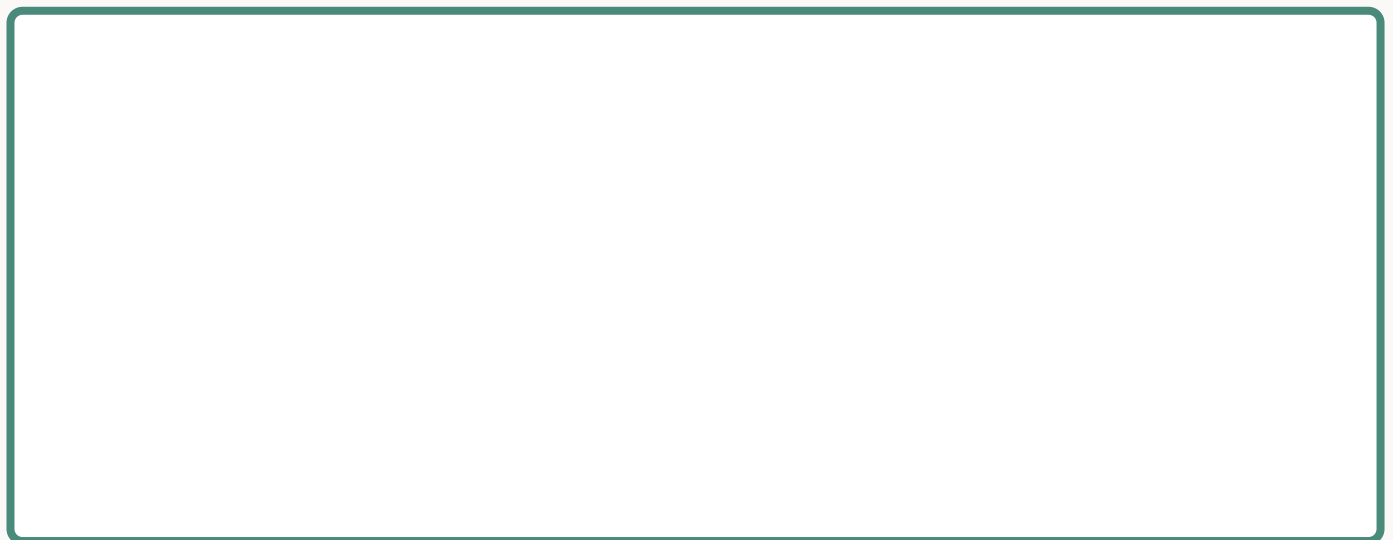
Production of the Social Connection Tool is by Uniting NSW.ACT, The Salvation Army Aged Care and Swinburne University's Social Innovation Research Institute.

Questions about **individual social connections**:

- 1 What's your favourite way of spending time with people?
Prompt: phone or video calls? Face to face? Doing an activity?



- 2 Who are the people most important to you?
Prompt: who do you like spending time with? Who do you like to keep in contact with on a regular basis?



- 3** How do you currently maintain these friendships and connections?
Prompt: in person, phone or video calls, emails? How often are you in contact with these people?

- 4** What interests, hobbies or groups have you been involved in over the course of your life that have connected you with other people? If it was possible, would you want to continue these activities?
Prompt: What kinds of activities have you previously done regularly with others e.g. different clubs and hobbies, playing sports or a fan, cooking, eating, socialising?

- 5** Friendship and social connection involve both giving and receiving. What do you feel you give to others (or could give) and in turn, what do you feel you receive from your connections?

Prompt: is there anything that you have done for people in the past that you would like to continue to do?

- 6** What or who makes you feel better or gives you comfort, if you are feeling sad or a bit low?

Questions about **how you enjoy connecting:**

- 7** Would you like to make new friends here? If yes, what ways are most comfortable for you to meet new people?

Prompt: one on one, in a group, during morning tea or whilst doing an activity? If you don't want to make new friends here, could you help me to understand a bit more about that?

- 8** Are there any activities that are not available that you would like to participate in?

Questions about **places and spaces of social connection**:

- 9** Are there any places in the community that you would like to visit? Either in the local community or in the community that you lived in previously? Maybe you could even visit some places online?

- 10** What places in this building are you most comfortable to chat and be around others? What is it about those places that makes you feel comfortable?

11 What are some ways you would like to maintain or improve your social connections and relationships? *(Please tick or cross)*

☐

a. I would like to meet new people (including people out in the local community)

☐

b. I would like to be supported to continue regular social contact with my current friends and networks

☐

c. I would like to learn new things, hobbies or skills of interest

☐

d. I would like to visit places out in the community

☐

e. Other (please suggest)

If you have any questions about the
Social Connection Tool please contact

Jasmine Knox
Swinburne University of Technology
jmknox@swin.edu.au