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Dear Members,

At BCA we value our members and everything you bring to the organisation. The work we do is guided by the discussions we have with members at our events and through our various feedback and communication channels. A key part of our mission is to connect with people who are blind or vision impaired. Because of this, we’ve started our BCA Member Letter to keep you updated with the work we’re doing, our new initiatives and latest updates, and opportunities to get involved. This will accompany our Blind Citizens News magazine and will provide you with essential information. If you want to know more about any of our programs, events or work, please feel free to call us on 1800 033 660.

Kind Regards,

Blind Citizens Australia

# Supporting Positive Mental Health

A question that we are regularly asked about is if there are psychologists, counsellors, and mental health professionals who are blind or vision impaired, have lived experience of disability or, have experience working with people with disability. To support members in locating professionals in this field, we are currently compiling a register of mental health professionals. We will provide members access to this register so that you can search for a provider to speak with.

If you or someone you know may be interested in registering themselves or their business, please contact us so that we can direct you to the register.

Later in the year, we will make the register available to you to assist you to locate professionals you may wish to work with.

# Your Input Wanted

Some of the areas that our Policy team will focus their attention on throughout 2022 include pedestrian safety; COVID-19 (including the independent administration and interpretation of Rapid Antigen Tests); Independent, secret, and verifiable voting; the Disability Royal Commission and the redesign of the Disability Employment Service.

If you would like to share your thoughts, experiences, or perspectives on any of these matters or anything else that is important to you please call us on 1800 033 660.

Your feedback will be collated and stored in line with our privacy policy. It will be used to inform our submissions, policy development, position statements, and advocacy work. None of your identifying details will be used without your express permission.

# What’s On at BCA

Throughout 2022 we will be continuing many of our regular events and initiatives. We’re also excited to be adding some new events and content throughout the year. The details for some of the events are listed below – for the most up to date information, topics, and meeting connection details please give us a call on 1800 033 660. All meetings can be joined through a computer, smart device, or landline telephone (charged at the cost of a local call).

## Peer Connect Groups

Would you like to meet with some other like-minded members to discuss a topic of interest? We have a number of Peer Connect groups running every month. Each group focuses on a different topic and is a great opportunity to come along and meet some other members who share a similar interest to you.

At present, we have groups on independent travel, music, gardening, assistive technology, and so much more. Call us to find out how you can join in.

## Happy Hours

Our Happy Hours are back for 2022. Each Thursday evening at 7:30pm AEDT join us to discuss a different topic of interest. You can contact us to hear the topic of the upcoming Happy Hours.

## Trivia

Are you interested in some virtual trivia? Each Saturday evening a dedicated group of members come together for a competition of the mind. We have a different host and theme each week and new contestants are always welcome. The game begins at 8:00pm AEDT each Saturday.

## BCA Inform

On the first Tuesday of each month we gather from 7:30pm – 9:00pm AEDT to discuss a different topic of interest to members. Our BCA Inform events are regularly attended by guest speakers and subject matter experts and provide an opportunity for in-depth and detailed discussion.

# Later this year…

In the second half of the year, we will be launching Round 3 of the BCA Hugh Jeffrey Scholarships Program. We will be offering 5 scholarships valued at $5,000 each to members who are starting or continuing their tertiary studies.

We are also investigating options for running the second Executive Leadership Program later in 2022. If you are a current leader within your workplace or community and would like to take the next step in your leadership journey, this course may be for you.

We will be providing updated information on these, and many more events and initiatives throughout the year. To stay up to date call us on 1800 033 660 and either listen to the pre-recorded information or speak with one of our staff. If you have an email address and would like to receive our weekly Member Update emails, then please share your address with us. Many of the details of these events and initiatives will also be shared on our weekly radio program and podcast, New Horizons. BCA also regularly shares updates and sector news on Facebook, Twitter and You Tube.

BCA looks forward to connecting with you in 2022.