

Media Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Bernice helps drive website redesign

When Bernice Turbill was asked for her input in a website redesign project, she was only too happy to help.

The 94-year-old has been a keen user of digital technology for the last 15 years, ever since she inherited her son's second-hand computer.

She now has her own computer and iPad, which she uses to keep in touch with family, order online books and search for information. She keeps up to date with technology with help from ACH Group support worker Matt Griffin, who is also an IT specialist, when he visits once a week.

Bernice was a member of a pre-launch test group appointed to trial ACH Group's new website which went live in December. The group of 10 included six who were aged 65 years and older, two health referrers, a student and a new employee, aged 19 years.

They were part of a workshop at the company's head office at Mile End, where they were each given a laptop or tablet and asked to review and test the website, then answer a series of questions about the experience. They participated in a group discussion and their feedback was captured, consolidated and used to amend the website where required.

Among her suggestions, Bernice felt the text could be darker, she identified repetitive information and suggested that the banner speed be slowed.

"I enjoyed the workshop and having the opportunity to contribute," she says. "A lot of people who are my age think they are too old to use computers but they just need a bit of encouragement to get started."

ACH Group Website Design Team Leader Michelle Kelly says the web developers felt it was important to involve people from a range of ages in developing the new website.

"We wanted the website to be easy to navigate and to include relevant information," she says. "We felt that it was a great opportunity to seek input from our customers to help shape our overall user experience."

Information technology is especially important for Bernice, who has a vision impairment and can no longer drive, garden or read printed books. It allows her to keep in touch with family interstate.

"Without a computer I wouldn't be able to read books any more, I would have to rely on audio books," she says. "Matt showed me how to enlarge the fonts on e-books which I order from the library. I play games like Solitaire, I look things up to help me with the Saturday quiz, and send emails to my family. It's a wonderful way of communicating."

Bernice believes that many older people would benefit from information technology but are often apprehensive. "I think there are a lot of older people who don't even use a mobile phone, or a computer, but it's not hard," she says. "Most people could do it if they had a bit of encouragement. It really is within people's reach. Older people are a little bit challenged in today's world and they say I won't do that, it's for young people. But I don't think we need to accept that."

Visit ACH Group's new website at www.ach.org.au

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About ACH Group

ACH Group is a not-for-profit aged care organisation that has been offering services to support good lives for older people in South Australia since 1952. As well as accommodation options across Adelaide, the Fleurieu Peninsula and East Melbourne, the group offers a range of health, wellbeing, respite and support services, help at home and social activities. Our 1700 specialist staff and hundreds of volunteers share the belief that older people should be valued and respected, connected to their communities and in control of their lives.

For further information or comment, please contact Anna Randell on (08) 8159 3632, 0417 856 361 or ARandell@ach.org.au.