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MEDIA RELEASE

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Italian presentations on the journey of ageing

Italian-speaking seniors and their carers are encouraged to attend a free information session about the **emotional phases and changes typical of the senior years**. The sessions, which are presented by Co.As.It. (Italian Association of Assistance), will be held in five different locations around Sydney throughout November.

Dr Charlie Pollicina, renowned psychologist from Rete Italia, will present a session on the factors that impact on the elderly community both within society and within the family unit. Among other topics, he will discuss isolation and loss of function and how they influence the emotional state of individuals as they get older.

Dementia expert Benedicte Cruysmans will also present a session about other emotional and behavioural changes experienced by the elderly. These commonly include:- a loss of short-term memory, confusion, a change in personality, apathy and withdrawal, and the loss of ability to do everyday tasks.

“Most seniors who experience one or more of these signs consider them a normal part of growing old, while others don’t want to accept that they have them,” said Dr Pollicina. “So either they tend to think nothing can be done about it, or they don’t want to seek help.”

“There are a wealth of health and community services that seniors and carers can access to help manage the transition of older age, but the first step is for them to accept and be comfortable with these changes and to realise that there are many other individuals and families who are experiencing the same types of circumstances,” he said.

The information sessions are open to seniors and their families and carers and will be **conducted in Italian**. As seats are limited, attendees are encouraged to book in advance into their local session. “*Ageing today: The Italian Perspective*” will be held on 11 November at Burwood RSL, 16 November at Five Dock RSL, 20 November at Bankstown Sports Club, 23 November at North Ryde RSL, and 25 November at Club Marconi in Bossley Park. All sessions start at 10.30am and refreshments are included.

Co.As.It., has been working for 41 years to enhance the quality of life of the Italian-Australian community in NSW, and is presenting these sessions thanks to the funding from **the Department of Health and Ageing**.

For more information or to book into a session, call Katy Davies on (02) 9564 0744.

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