

HEALTH

Elderly encouraged to open homes up for help

BRIMBANK'S elderly are being encouraged to live at home longer as part of a homeshare program delivered by Care Connect.

Homeshare matches seniors and people with a disability living in their own homes with people willing to provide 10 hours of household support in exchange for free accommodation.

The program is aimed to match students and low-income earners with the elderly and disabled, providing a win-win for both parties and also easing Melbourne's rental pressure.

Homesharers would not be required to provide personal care – rather help with simple chores such as walking the dog, cooking, shopping or gardening.

Both homeowners and homesharers are extensively interviewed and background checked to determine their individual needs and strengths before being perfectly matched.

While there are no case studies yet in Brimbank, the program is proving a success around Melbourne's north-west.

“With Australia's population ageing and the proportion of individuals who live alone on the rise, we need to find new ways to support each other as a community,” Care Connect chief executive Paul Ostrowski said.

“Homeshare is a unique way of bringing together people with complementary needs, so that they can assist each other in a safe, supported environment.

“For many of our clients, the biggest bonus is not so much the chores that the homesharer can help with, but the sense of security and safety that comes with having someone else in the house, particularly overnight.” The program is being delivered in partnership with Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre.