

# Co-operatives and mutuals as a way of managing your services

## Innovation and accountability

### The Hatchery's Governance in Aged Care: Governing Through Change

Melina Morrison, CEO BCCM

the future  
of social care





# Welcome and introductions

## Today's purpose:

- Explore the potential for co-ops to innovate and reform the way aged care is governed and operated

## The BCCM

- Australia's national peak body for co-operatives **and** mutuals
- Eight in 10 Australians are members of a co-op or mutual
- 1,848 active co-ops and mutuals in Australia
- Combined turnover of \$37.76 billion



# Well-known successful co-ops and mutuals in Australia





A profile view of an elderly man with a white beard, looking out a window. The lighting is soft and natural, highlighting the texture of his beard and the contours of his face. The background is a dark, textured wall.

“A shocking tale of neglect”

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety interim report





# Co-ops and Mutuals – innovation in aged care



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Aged Care Minister Anika Wells said she was:

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**“intent on fostering innovation in the sector so it is more agile and needs-based ...**

**Aged care needs more innovation and unique thinking to ensure older Australians have care suited to their circumstances.”**







**“Innovation” is  
not just a word**



# What are Co-operatives and Mutuals?

“Co-operative and mutual enterprises form when people come together to achieve an objective that they could not achieve alone. They are a rational alternative to investor-owned business when the objective is different from maximising return to shareholders.” – BCCM

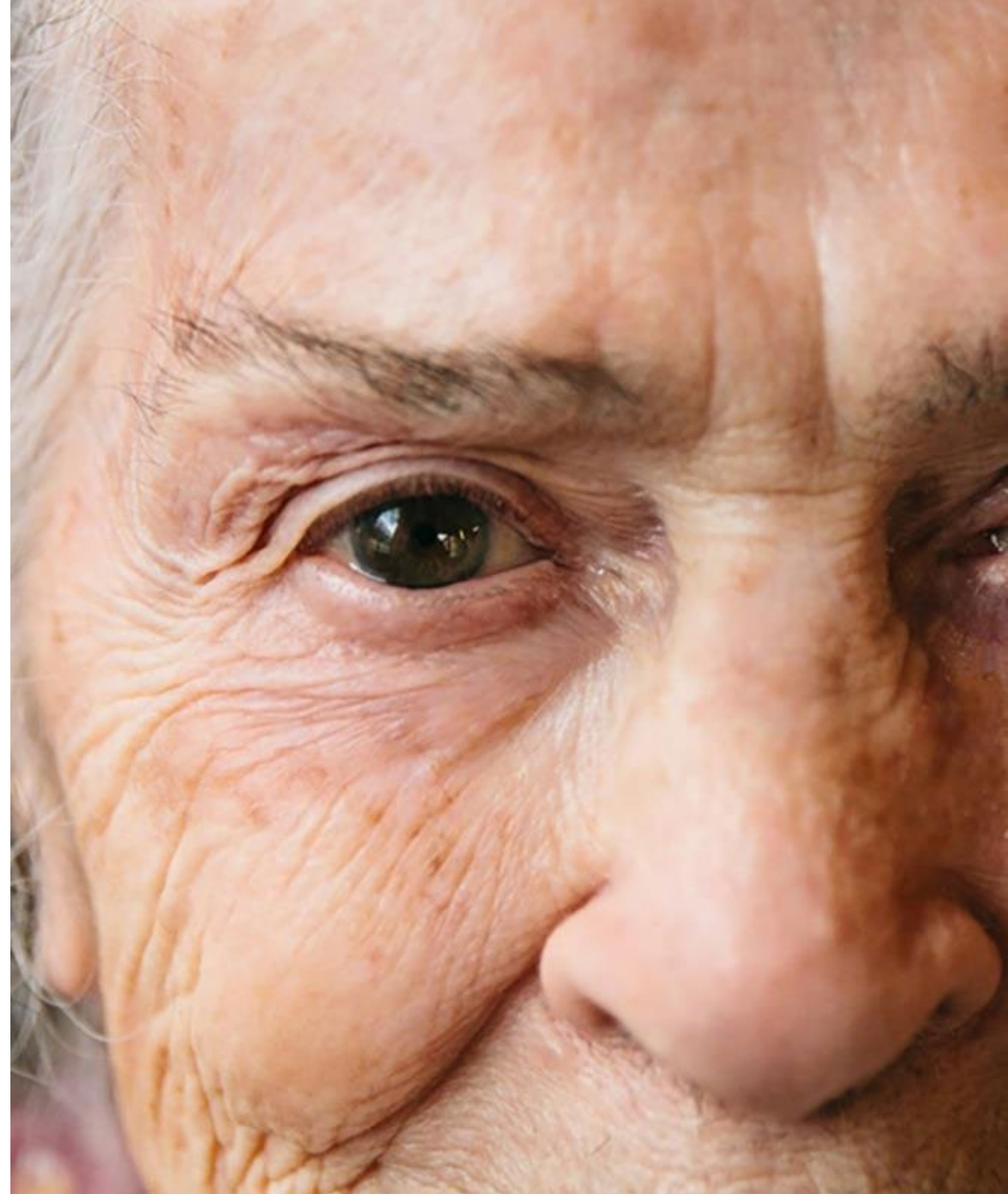




# Seven Co-operative Principles inform how co-ops are governed

Co-operatives and mutuals are designed  
around **seven international principles**:

- Voluntary and Open Membership
- Democratic Member Control
- Member Economic Participation
- Autonomy and Independence
- Education, Training and Information
- Cooperation among Cooperatives
- Concern for Community



# Why are co-operative and mutuals innovative?





# Co-ops and mutuals – accountability



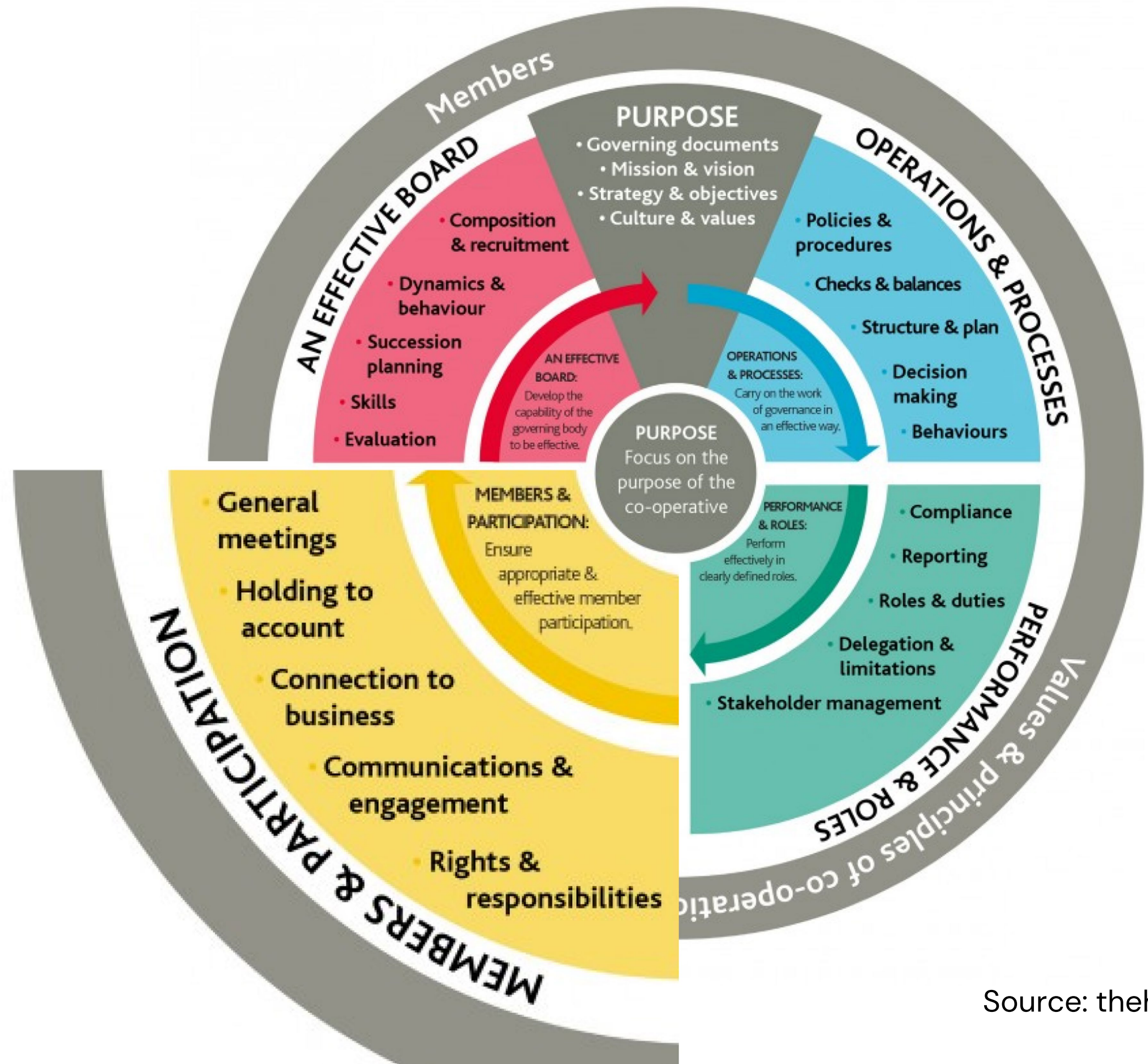
# Why ownership matters

1. Who owns the enterprise tells you about the motivation of the enterprise and why it is in business. (e.g. wealth creation, support vulnerable people, deliver public services, create impact).
2. This motivation informs the purpose of the enterprise and who are its primary beneficiaries.
3. Depending on purpose, beneficiaries can be shareholders, consumers, workers, a community, policy holders or multi-stakeholder.





# The key elements of governance



Source: thehive.coop



# Accountability – in the DNA of co-ops





# Care Together Program and project examples – innovation and accountability in action



# The Care Together Program

Care Together will assist successful projects to develop sustainable service delivery in areas where current approaches are not working, including a focus on regional, rural and remote parts of Australia.

Care Together will embed co-operative values and principles into each project to demonstrate how a diversity of ownership in care and support services can deliver improved outcomes for workers, consumers and communities.

- **12 projects** to provide sustainable workforce solutions in thin markets
- **A mix of new co-ops and mutuals and growth projects**
- A flagship shared services innovation project





# Theory of change

The overarching goal of the Care Together Program is to contribute to dignified, safe, quality social care for vulnerable people in all settings, including regional, rural and remote places, delivered by empowered, well-trained workers in decent jobs.

Three outcomes:

1. Increased diversity of ownership models in social care that include co-operatives and mutuals
2. Barriers that limit the adoption of co-operatives and mutuals in social care in thin markets are removed
3. Shared understanding among key stakeholders about the factors that drive successful innovation in thin markets, with a commitment to ongoing investment







“Our vision is to transform aged care by empowering the true decision-makers. Power needs to be in the hands of the consumers – older people and their families.”

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Sophia Petrov, National Manager Policy Engagement, COTA Australia

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“We are over-stretched as a collection of individuals and our client participants are not always getting the level of support that they should. This would change for the better if we were all working under the mutual support umbrella of a co-op with well-designed service delivery patterns.”

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Moruya Independent Workers

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“The idea of shared support and the efficiencies that it brings is really something that we want to see leveraged. Sadly, while there’s been some innovation in housing for people with disability, there’s been very little innovation in that area of shared support.”

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Carolyn Finis, head of Co-Design, Summer Foundation

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“We chose the co-operative model because long term succession is built into the design and governance of a co-operative, based on shared values and principles.”

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Co-operative Care Wagin

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# Learning from the world

- Elevate is a US shared services co-op in home care
- Cooperative Home Care Associates (CHCA) is a Bronx-based, worker-owned agency that employs over 2,050 staff, predominantly Latina and African-American women.
- In Italy, 14,000 co-operatives provide care to 12% of the population.





“I believe co-operative and mutual enterprises in human services can increase diversity and choice at a time when there is a weakening of community trust in the quality and safety of services provided to vulnerable people. This is especially so in disability, aged care and in services for protecting children and young people.”

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Robert Fitzgerald AM, NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner

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# Join the BCCM Social Care Community of Practice

Visit

[caretogether.coop/event-and-education/](https://caretogether.coop/event-and-education/)

Email the Care Together team

[caretogether@bccm.coop](mailto:caretogether@bccm.coop)





# Questions?





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