

Community Conversations for Emergency Planning with Older People: Synthesis Report of Forums in Cairns, Bundaberg and Hinchinbrook Shire

September 2025



Image description: A room of people seated at round tables are watching a man speak at a lectern. An image is displayed on a screen at the front of the room. It is a picture of palm trees blowing in a cyclone.

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Introduction

As the first stage of the Partnerships for Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) Implementation Project, three forums were conducted in Bundaberg, Cairns and Ingham between May and August 2025. Each forum was slightly different in structure to work best with the community involved—and to incorporate the feedback of preceding forums. The purpose of the forums was to bring together a diverse group of people to learn together about person-centred and organisational emergency preparedness strategies that could be implemented across various sectors to positively impact the safety and wellbeing of all older people in emergencies. The forums were an opportunity for attendees to learn from others in their community about the preparedness, capabilities and support needs of older people and the emergency preparedness of organisations that support them. It was a chance to discuss and learn from others about the good practices being implemented across different sectors, organisations and groups. Participants were invited to identify local disaster risks and discuss their preparedness for emergency events, as individuals and as representatives from various organisations with responsibilities to the people they support and to their staff.

The objectives of the forum were:

- To foster strategic partnerships between council and organisations to improve emergency management for older people.
- To promote participation in the P-CEP Facilitator Online Certificate Short Course to build capacity for implementing person-centred emergency preparedness.
- To identify strengths and barriers in the organisational preparedness of the aged care sector in these QLD communities and surrounding areas.

The Councils worked with their established networks to engage people from three stakeholder groups and invite them to attend. These groups include:

- Aged care, disability, health, and community service providers.
- Emergency services and government staff involved in disaster management and inclusion.
- Older people and carers, including older First Peoples, Elders and community leaders.

Attendees

A total of 90 people from across these stakeholder groups attended the forums.

Role of Attendee	Cairns	Bundaberg	Hinchinbrook	Total
Government Worker (Federal, State or Local)	11	5	8	24
Emergency Services Personnel	4	5	2	11
Disability, Aged Care, Health or Community Service Provider	17	14	5	36
Worker/Member for Disability Advocacy or Representative Organisation	3	3	0	6

Community Members and Leaders (including older First Peoples, people with disability, and carers)	2	7	0	9
Other *	4	0	0	4
Total attendees	41	34	15	90

*Other includes worker for policy and leadership organisation for Indigenous equality; representatives from a residents' association; project support officer.

Purpose of this report

This synthesis report consolidates key findings from the Community Conversations Emergency Planning forums in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Bundaberg, Cairns and Shire of Hinchinbrook. The aim is to identify common themes, challenges, and opportunities, while highlighting promising practices across the three forums. These insights provide a roadmap for advancing inclusive emergency management by addressing systemic barriers, fostering collaboration, amplifying community-led solutions, and incorporating culturally inclusive and age-friendly approaches. For more specific information, please see individual forum reports for each area.

We have analysed the recordings of small group and large group discussions from the three forums and have identified key themes which capture the experiences and expertise of the participants representing a diverse range of individuals, sectors and organisations. The key themes are presented below followed by six recommendations for advancing inclusive emergency planning.

Overview of key learnings:

1. Older people face disproportionate risks during emergencies and additional factors can compound this risk.
2. Older people must actively prepare for disasters, as emergency services may not always be available to assist.
3. Collaboration increases organisational preparedness of service providers.
4. Planning is needed to increase accessible transport and accommodation options in evacuation.
5. Accessible information and effective communication channels are essential in emergencies.
6. Personal and community-driven engagement builds foundations for disaster resilience.

Key Learnings Across Forums

Learning 1: Older people face disproportionate risks during emergencies and additional factors can compound this risk.

All three forums emphasised the heightened risks faced by older people during emergencies. They also identified that older people may face amplified risk due to additional circumstances, such as disability, dementia, reliance on medical equipment or assistive technology, limited literacy, homelessness, limited English language, poverty or financial instability, lack of digital literacy, isolation, discrimination and lack of social supports.

Points raised in the forums:

- Economic and social inequalities can limit older people's capacity to prepare, respond to and recover from disaster events. The increased cost of living may be a barrier to taking preparedness actions, such as buying supplies.
- There is a lack of proactive measures to identify and support people who face higher risks. Some older people living in the community did not have emergency plans and were not connected with people who could support them to make them. Attendees were concerned that there were older people in their communities that were isolated and not seeking out the support they may need.
- Homelessness and housing instability was a recurring concern in all the forums. At the Cairns and Bundaberg forums, attendees emphasised the risks for older people who are experiencing homelessness and not connected to services who could support them prior to and during disaster events. In Hinchinbrook Shire, attendees identified that housing shortages after disasters were forcing older people into aged care facilities or other temporary arrangements that are not designed to meet their needs. They recognised that Hinchinbrook Shire and surround communities "have an accommodation shortage everywhere".

Illustrative quotes:

- *If you don't have the money. Or if you don't have a car. Or you live in a house on a floodplain. That's the inequity we're talking about. (Cairns)*
- *The cost of living has forced people to be reliant to an extent. We can't go and do the big shop in October [the start of cyclone season] anymore. No. Because people can't afford to. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *Because of the whole cost of living pressures, sometimes you have to choose one [preparedness action] over the other. [...] And we're not going to be as prepared as what all these documents say we should be, because it's not the reality. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *On a good day, if someone's got dementia, they are functioning, but if you've got them on a bad day, especially if things are changing. [...] It can start to affect them. They're slower, they're more confused. (Cairns)*
- *She has no one come and do any service for her. She lives alone. She's got two children, but they live far away. She has MyAgedCare and they have done a couple of bits for her,*

but she doesn't have anyone come around and she says—and these are her words—I don't ask for help. (Bundaberg)

- *My worry is that if they're homeless, how do we support them in that situation if there's a disaster? How would we engage with anything or they don't get any support from...? Do we reach out and do more awareness? (Cairns)*
- *I think before Jasper some of the service in town went to the known areas to speak to some of the [people experiencing homelessness] they knew of. But there's always going to be some people that we just don't know. (Cairns)*
- *The other thing was there was a question that came up around how do we best support people who are living in homelessness? We didn't quite have the answer to that, did we? But it was certainly something around a concern for older people. (Cairns)*
- *We've had residents who've had to come into aged care facilities because they could no longer care for themselves or their child after a disaster [and had nowhere else to go.] (Hinchinbrook Shire)*

Suggestions and solutions shared:

- There are older people in the three LGAs and their surrounding communities who require preparedness support. Attendees suggested that outreach and community engagement strategies (such as stalls at markets and awareness-raising events) are needed to support people not typically receiving services to build a person-centred plan and to connect them with people or organisations that can fill any gaps in their preparedness.
- Attendees recommended action around homelessness and housing insecurity, but acknowledged these issues needed further consideration. In both the Cairns and Bundaberg forums, attendees suggested outreach services target people experiencing homelessness to make emergency plans prior to disaster events. In the Hinchinbrook Shire forum, attendees called for better recovery planning to prevent displacement and ensure accessible housing options in their communities.

Learning 2: Older people must actively prepare for disasters, as emergency services may not always be available to assist.

In all three forums, attendees addressed and dispelled a commonly held belief in their communities. They had observed that many people—including but not limited to older people—expected emergency services to be available to assist them during disaster events. However, as attendees explained, emergency services do not “have the capacity to save everybody” and resources are likely to be over-stretched at these times (Cairns). One Bundaberg attendee emphasised that people needed to understand that they “can't rely on somebody coming to [their] door” for emergency warnings or rescue.

Across all three forums, there were attendees who emphasised that personal preparedness was necessary given the disaster risk in their region. They explained that “by the time the disasters come in, it's too late” (Bundaberg) and that “people need to have planning conversations nice and early” (Hinchinbrook Shire). Attendees recognised that everyone in their communities needed to have a personal plan, tailored to their support needs and

capabilities, to reduce their disaster risk and reduce reliance on emergency services. In particular, older people with diverse circumstance and functional support needs required comprehensive plans that had been communicated to others, tested and regularly reviewed.

Points raised in the forums:

- Personal emergency preparedness increases disaster resilience. Familiarity and written documentation of plans can empower and reassure older people and their families in an emergency event.
- Lack of personal preparedness can put further resource strain and risk on emergency services personnel.
- The expectation that emergency services will be available to support people during disasters promotes a false sense of security and leads to complacency around emergency planning and preparedness. Attendees across all three forums recognised that complacency was a barrier to preparedness.
- Older people may require specific equipment, medication, medical care, support workers, accessible transport, accessible and/or specialised facilities, the assistance of formal and/or informal supports, and access to power. Because of these complexities and considerations, they may require extra support to plan for emergencies and contingencies.
- In addition to individuals, service providers often find themselves overwhelmed during emergencies, relying on emergency services to fill systemic gaps. Emergency service workers at the forums stressed the importance of putting plans in place prior to disaster events.
- Service providers who were facilitating P-CEP planning with clients living in residential facilities and in the community reported that this approach was effective and was improving disaster resilience amongst clients and staff.

Illustrative quotes:

- *That's why we need to get in and get them working on this type of readiness, so that they know what to do, but others know they're there, too. But at the end of the day, you can't rely on somebody coming to your door either. You have to work, you have to rely on your own planning.* (Bundaberg)
- *A lot of people in society, they default to "the emergency services will take care of this for me." ... it's more understanding that those services will be overwhelmed immediately. [...] They need to be able to take some action themselves.* (Cairns)
- *There's a mindset, not with everybody, but in general, there's a mindset for all different types of people that the emergency services have the capacity to save everybody. So they outsource their responsibility in the hopes that someone else will pick it up for them.* (Cairns)
- *Support providers ringing up saying, 'you need to go and get this person,' and it's like, no, you need to be responsible for putting everything in place prior.* (Hinchinbrook Shire)
- *People in that situation, in time of crisis, don't often have the capacity to think of who I'm supposed to call. Whereas if it's written down in their plan, they go, "Oh, that's right, if this happens, I'm going to call this person and here's the number. And if they don't answer, I can call these people."* (Bundaberg)

- *We are just constantly talking to each other and importantly to our clients about what we might do should something happen, so that when it does, they have some understanding of why we're saying to them, grab your bag, grab the pillow, grab your pet, let's go. It's not: "Where are we going? What's happening? What's changing?" There's some familiarity. Our clients are learning. They're taking it on board, which is great.* (Bundaberg)

Suggestions and solutions shared:

- P-CEP was identified as a promising practice for supporting individuals with disabilities and older people to create tailored emergency plans that reflect their specific needs, capabilities, preferences, and circumstances. For example, Burdekin Shire Council partnered with Queenslanders with Disability Network to deliver P-CEP workshops in the Burdekin community. These workshops provided structured support for individuals to identify their specific risks and integrate their needs into emergency planning. In Bundaberg, service providers from the disability and aged care sectors discussed P-CEP planning as part of their intake process for new clients and emphasised the importance of regularly reviewing P-CEP plans. Attendees also highlighted the need for trigger points and contingencies in P-CEP plans, ensuring they are location-specific, effective and adaptable during rapidly evolving disaster scenarios. There were also conversations about the role of P-CEP in fostering co-design and collaboration between individuals, service providers, and emergency services.
- Community engagement and preparedness messaging through various channels can raise people's awareness about disaster risks and the need for emergency planning. Schools were identified as valuable conduits for preparedness messages, with children passing on information they receive at school (such as emergency preparedness packs/resources and presentations by emergency services personnel) to parents and grandparents. In Hinchinbrook Shire, attendees explained how Meals on Wheels in the area have begun including disaster preparedness materials in their deliveries.

Learning 3. Collaboration increases organisational preparedness of service providers.

Service providers play a critical role in maintaining the safety and wellbeing of older people in a disaster. However, their capacity is stretched during disaster events, and they may struggle to maintain support services to their clients, particularly those living in the community rather than residential aged care facilities. In all three forums, attendees explained the various reasons for this: road closures due to flooding, which may isolate both staff and clients; reduced capacity of services because staff are managing their personal circumstances; and loss of access to critical resources due to highway closure cutting off supplies. Attendees recognised the importance of organisational preparedness and highlighted the need for greater collaboration with other organisations. Some service providers were sometimes unable to physically reach clients to support them but were able to co-ordinate with other organisations who had the proximity or resources to access their clients.

Many aged care and disability service providers at the Cairns and Bundaberg forums stated that personalised plans were typically made during client intake. However, they did not often

explain the role clients played in creating these emergency plans or whether they understood what they entailed. At the core of collaborative and inclusive planning is the individual themselves. Emergency plans must be centred around the person at high-risk who is receiving services; collaboration between the individual, their family and informal supports, and service providers is essential to ensure plans are relevant, effective and viable.

Points raised in the forums:

- Providers can collaborate with partner organisations to help to address gaps in emergency preparedness and ensure continuity of care, rather than relying on emergency services or leaving clients without critical services in a disaster event.
- People receiving aged care or disability services may have multiple providers. Attendees suggested that these organisations collaborate to make person-centred emergency plans that work for the clients they share. Clarification of roles and responsibilities would assist to coordinate efforts.
- Stories were shared about how collaboration between different aged care and disability organisations helped to increase the safety and wellbeing of clients and staff during a disaster. Some providers reported strong partnerships with competing services, as well as services they shared participants with.
- Older people's support needs could change rapidly and that it is important that plans are regularly reviewed and information is updated. This requires collaboration with between the individual and their formal and informal supports.
- Not all aged care facilities had considered organisational emergency preparedness as part of their responsibility as providers. One Bundaberg attendee offered an example where older people received no support from the organisation supporting their care about individual or organisational emergency plans.
- Attendees identified that one of the challenges to good collaboration was staff turnover due to short-term contracted roles. Relationships and trust took time to re-build. It also resulted in loss of local knowledge which disrupted service continuity and emergency planning efforts.

Illustrative quotes:

- *Support providers ringing up saying, 'you need to go and get this person,' and it's like, no, you need to be responsible for putting everything in place prior. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *Even though we're oppositions, we work together. And yes, I'm quite happy that we work together, because there's things that they do that we don't do. And I think when it comes to a disaster, everyone's got to work together. (Cairns)*
- *We had carers drop off clients at evacuation centres and leave, or call us to go and get someone because they couldn't reach them. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *It wasn't us versus them... we worked together, but this needs to happen more consistently. (Cairns)*
- *A lot of organisations don't collaborate because their funding is competitive. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *Anyone that's in supported independent living or you share a participant through organisations, [we co-ordinated to identify] who's got duty of care for this period. [...]*

When this cyclone came up, it was: "you're probably best to do this, we can do this afterwards." And we shared. There were no issues really. [...] And it wasn't one group trying to dump the hard work. It wasn't like: "Ohh this is going to be crap, you do it." It was: "look, we'll take on this because we're best suited" and yeah, so that worked out really well. (Cairns)

- *We try to do it at least every six months where we invite the Emergency Services and others to come in and give presentations. We do our P-CEP planning with them on an individual basis and constantly reviewing those. (Bundaberg)*
- *Somebody might come in independent in our village and be fine 12 months ago, but actually they've gone downhill since, and it's really important for the people within those roles to be very aware of where your residents and people are. You have to make sure that paperwork is done. (Bundaberg)*
- *My mother lives in a village that is privately owned. And the manager doesn't live there anymore. And all they've got there is a phone to ring 000. (Bundaberg)*
- *We're having intergenerational conversations with grade 12 students leaving home and older people who've been through disasters. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *We lose local knowledge when staff leave, and clients are often left picking up the pieces. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *Organisational emergency preparedness must include mechanisms for training new staff and retaining knowledge and good relationships. (Cairns)*

Suggestions and solutions shared:

- Attendees recognised that collaboration, co-ordination and communication was important to ensure safe and timely responses for at-risk clients and to avoid duplicating services. Some attendees suggested formal partnerships, community of practice groups, and forums like the one they were attending, in order to establish and maintain networks and address communication gaps between sectors and organisations.
- In all forums, attendees recommended building strong cross-sector partnerships to improve inclusive emergency management efforts. This would enable resource sharing, reduce duplication of effort, and streamline communication during emergencies.
- In the Bundaberg Forum, service providers spoke about collaborating with emergency services to hold workshops for their clients. They would invite emergency services personnel to deliver presentations and answer questions. This supported P-CEP planning as disaster risk was personalised, localized and informed by reliable information.
- Collaboration supports the sharing of valuable local knowledge. Across the forums, attendees recognised the importance of building, maintaining and retaining the local disaster risk knowledge of their staff. They called for training and capacity building for both new and more experienced workers. They also suggested that succession planning to preserve local and institutional knowledge and positive cross-sector and community relationships.
- Workforce instability and staff turnover posed a challenge for good collaboration; however, attendees had ideas about how to overcome this. They recommended changes to funding structures to enable a more secure and permanent workforce. This would support organisations to retain good staff with local knowledge, build and

maintain strategic partnerships in their communities and embed inclusivity and accessibility into their emergency management systems.

Learning 4: Planning is needed to increase accessible transport and accommodation options in evacuation.

Transport and evacuation centres often exclude people with functional support needs. This is a significant gap for older adults and people with disability during emergencies. Lack of quality accessible transport and accommodation prevent timely evacuations and create additional risks for people. Attendees drew attention to the inaccessible facilities in some evacuation centres. They also explained that alternative options, such as hotels, are often inaccessible for people with disability. At each of the forums, attendees identified community assets that were available or could be leveraged in an emergency; however, they recognised that these resources were not being effectively utilised. People were often unaware of them or unsure how to access them when they needed them. There were some examples given by attendees, particularly in the Bundaberg Forum, where service providers had pre-planned and co-ordinated with other organisations to ensure they had multiple accessible evacuation options.

Key points raised in the forums:

- Older people may require specific resources (equipment, medication, medical care, support workers, accessible transport, accessible or specialised facilities, access to power, etc.) Their emergency plans may be complex and require communication and co-ordination with other people or organisations. For example, people who are dependent on powered medical devices like oxygen concentrators or CPAP machines may require generators when there are power outages in the area, but access to these requires planning in advance of emergencies.
- Some attendees called for stronger networks and partnerships between organisations, so that people knew what assets were available to be utilised in an emergency. Sharing this knowledge was necessary to creating a unified approach to emergency preparedness, particularly around tailored or inclusive services provided through local councils and community organisations.

Illustrative quotes:

- *In the Burdekin, there's at least one taxi that is equipped to move somebody in a wheelchair, but it's a one-man operation, and he comes when he feels like it.* (Hinchinbrook Shire)
- *There's very little accommodation for disability needs. A couple of motels are accessible, but beyond that, there's nothing.* (Hinchinbrook Shire)
- *It's hard to develop an effective plan if you don't have all the information about where are those centres that provide those inclusive services? So, I think there might be an opportunity in terms of communication within the community around where do those people go, such as places to evacuate to, so then they can include that in their plan.* (Bundaberg)

- *I need electricity to keep the chair going. I sleep with an apnoea machine, so I need a certain amount of power. Other people, they need more oxygen. [...] I've got an 8 kVA generator. So, the three houses down the road, as soon as the power goes off, the generator sits in the middle of us all in the centre house. (Cairns)*

Suggestions and solutions shared in the forums:

- Attendees discussed the process of making a Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) plan with people who required specific resources in an emergency. P-CEP can help to identify supports that can be leveraged in an emergency and can encourage older people to be connected with formal and/or informal supports that could assist them with transport and accommodation in an emergency.
- Attendees suggested asset mapping of community resources to support awareness and understanding about what is available in an emergency.

Learning 5: Accessible information and effective communication channels are essential in emergencies.

Effective emergency preparedness requires clear and accessible information which is communicated in timely and inclusive ways across the community. In each forum, attendees emphasised the need for tailored messaging and multi-modal communication strategies to ensure information reaches everyone. The inclusion of non-digital methods is particularly important for older people who may not have knowledge, tools or ability to access digital communications. In Bundaberg and Hinchinbrook Shire forums, disaster dashboards were praised for providing real-time updates, but participants noted that non-digital communication methods were needed to ensure people who could not access these resources still received this important information. Non-digital methods could include radio, posters, conversation (formal and informal) and community announcements.

Attendees concluded that communication channels need to be inclusive and available in accessible formats (such as Easy English or Auslan) in order to reach all community members. They also needed to be up-to-date and consistent across all channels to reduce confusion and support people to be well-informed.

Points raised in the forums:

- In Bundaberg, service providers explained that they would regularly call their clients to check in with them and ensure they had regular updates. They collaborated with other organisations and agencies so that the information they were transmitting to others was accurate and up to date.
- Attendees across all forums stated that there were many older people in their communities who lacked awareness of local hazard risks and their severity. They noted that their ability to act on emergency information due to inaccessible messaging formats or unclear instructions put them at further risk.

- Attendees identified that there was a lack information about accessible places to evacuate to. This made making plans more difficult for individuals and organisations as they did not have all the information to make choices.

Illustrative quotes:

- *Not everyone is on Facebook—posters in chemists or doctor's surgeries can help reach more people.* (Hinchinbrook Shire)
- *People don't understand what a 'watch and act' alert means for them, in their specific location.* (Cairns)
- *We had a lot of clients that couldn't access the disaster dashboard because they didn't have the technical skills to do so or the comprehension to understand what it was they were looking at.* (Bundaberg)
- *You can't make any personal decisions if you don't know what's available. [...] What does an evacuation centre look like, and the reality of it?* (Bundaberg)
- *Radio is very good with community messaging, especially for the elderly.* (Hinchinbrook Shire)

Suggestions and solutions shared in the forums:

- Attendees suggested communication strategies which combined digital and non-digital methods of reaching the community. Printed flyers, radio broadcasts, and in-person communication were seen as methods to address communication gaps and promote inclusion.
- In Bundaberg and Cairns, service providers recommended calling older clients to ensure they had received important risk information and were safe and alert. This also gave them the opportunity to hear their fears, issues or concerns and either allay or address them, through regular communication.
- In Cairns, attendees discussed the importance of keeping disaster information accurate and consistent. They recommended keeping social media pages updated with only the most relevant information and noted that sometimes people did not check the timestamp of posts and could be accessing old or inaccurate information.

Learning 6: Personal and community-driven engagement builds foundations for disaster resilience.

All forums emphasised the importance of community-driven engagement strategies to raise awareness and reach people in need of preparedness support. Creative approaches, such as intergenerational conversations, were seen as effective ways to build trust and strengthen preparedness. Engagement on a personal level builds trust and supports relationship-building between individuals, organisations, emergency services and the community. foster a shared culture of preparedness across generations and communities.

Intergenerational conversations were suggested to foster awareness and relationships between generations. Schools were identified as valuable conduits for preparedness messages.

Attendees emphasized how children pass the information and resources they receive at school to their parents, grandparents and communities; they recognised that disaster awareness in children could influence older generations and increase their awareness and motivation to take preparedness actions.

Illustrative quotes:

- *Intergenerational conversations help younger people understand how to prepare, while older people share their lived experiences. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *We're having intergenerational conversations with grade 12 students leaving home and older people who've been through disasters. (Hinchinbrook Shire)*
- *To get it out there, we discussed the markets. We have markets everywhere today. So, to have something out at each market, so that it's there, it can talk to the population. I don't think we will hit the younger generation. They're too busy to do it with everything else. But the generation, [...] the ones that need the help, those with mobility issues, all that. Most people of that age are at markets. [...] We can at least get the conversation going. (Cairns)*
- *Putting the message out to young children, they are vulnerable, they are part of this group as well. They have parents, they have grandparents, they go home and they say, "I got this pack today from whichever group has turned up, Red Cross, SES, RFS, whoever" and that pack then has just started a conversation within a household, which then goes to the next household. So that's a growth, and it's got to be a learning tool that we start somewhere. (Cairns)*
- *Sometimes starting with the older members, it doesn't filter back down. But starting with the younger members, it'll filter up. But I think starting at every opportunity is a great point. But yeah, the packs for young children, get them out in the schools. Get Ready Queensland and P-CEP, it needs to be pushed to the schools. That is our broadest capture of an audience where we can push a message that will then trigger a change within community. (Cairns)*

Suggestions and solutions raised in the forums:

- Attendees suggested that community engagement strategies be inclusive, flexible and involve two-way dialogue. They emphasised the importance of one-on-one conversation and listening to people's answers and working with their life circumstances and support networks. Attendees expressed that P-CEP was an effective method to structure these conversations, working at the pace of the person involved.
- Community events—such as markets, presentations to schools, intergenerational conversations and movie nights— provide opportunities to promote P-CEP and engage diverse groups in preparedness conversations. These events are particularly effective for reaching marginalised groups and fostering preparedness in informal, accessible settings. Attendees reported that this is already happening in some Queensland communities with success.
- Attendees emphasised that it is important to use every opportunity to start conversations around preparedness. Different age cohorts may require different messaging but, as one attendee in Cairns explained, targeting preparedness messaging

at children can trigger change within a community. Schools could issue resources to children which prompt older adults to take planning actions themselves.

Next Steps and Recommendations

The following recommendations align closely with the project's goals and core activities to advance P-CEP implementations, foster partnerships, and scale inclusive emergency preparedness strategies in the three Queensland locations. The first three recommendations are directly aligned with the planned activities of the Partnerships for P-CEP Implementation Project. The subsequent three recommendations are longer-term strategies that could be built upon and supported by the efforts of local champions collaborating with their councils to drive P-CEP implementation forward.

1. Community champions can access training to facilitate P-CEP with older people in Queensland

- **Action:** Collaborating4Inclusion will train P-CEP champions in each region to implement P-CEP as facilitators and educators. These champions should represent diverse stakeholders, including aged care and disability service providers, First Nations communities, local and state government, emergency services, and advocacy groups.
- **Focus:** Community champions will be provided with practical tools to co-design plans with individuals, ensuring they reflect specific needs, trigger points, and contingencies.
- **Outcome:** Local capacity to embed person-centred emergency preparedness within communities and organisations.

2. P-CEP Facilitators will be invited to join a Community of Practice to advance their P-CEP knowledge, skills and partnerships.

- **Action:** People who finish the P-CEP Online Certificate will be invited to join a Community of Practice to support shared learning among P-CEP facilitators, service providers, emergency services and community leaders.
- **Focus:** The group will be facilitated by Collaborating4Inclusion and will promote ongoing collaboration to exchange insights, address challenges, and refine P-CEP implementation with older people in real-world contexts.
- **Outcome:** Partnerships between Strengthen partnerships and improve the quality and consistency of P-CEP delivery across regions.

3. P-CEP collaborators will be invited to co-design resources to support P-CEP implementation in Queensland.

- **Action:** Key collaborators—including those who finish the P-CEP Online Certificate—will be invited to co-design resources to support P-CEP implementation with older people, including older First Peoples and older people with disability and/or long term conditions.

- **Focus:** The experiences and lessons learned from the practice of these key collaborators will be used to co-develop resources to further advance P-CEP knowledge and practice.
 - **Outcome:** The resources will reflect the diverse perspectives of the collaborators and the people they have facilitated P-CEP with. These resources will be adaptable to different cultural and geographic contexts.
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Conclusion

The systemic barriers that older people—including First Peoples, people with disabilities, and people with long-term or chronic conditions—experience place them at greater risk of harm in disaster events. Various circumstances can cause further barriers that undermine individual preparedness. People who attended the forums acknowledged the need to identify and address these barriers; however, they also recognised that fostering a culture of resilience and preparedness in their communities would empower people and instil a sense of personal responsibility.

The forums in Bundaberg, Cairns, and Hinchinbrook demonstrated the critical importance of advancing P-CEP implementation to build inclusive, resilient communities. By training local champions, fostering partnerships, and expanding P-CEP to include age-friendly and culturally inclusive approaches, this project will address some of the systemic barriers and empower communities to prepare effectively. Continued collaboration and shared learning through a Community of Practice will ensure that inclusive emergency management evolves to meet diverse needs and priorities and provides peer support for those who are working to advance emergency preparedness in their communities. This approach will not only strengthen preparedness but also build trust, equity, and resilience across the regions, creating a model for inclusive emergency management nationwide.

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