About this story

Working jointly with family and services can bring about huge gains for clients who need support with maintaining their independence and linking in with their community. When the opportunity to have a ‘go’ is provided in a supportive environment it can bring about renewed confidence, help regain skills and strengthen social, community and family connections.

Meet Rita

About 10 years ago Rita lost her licence and became reliant on HACC services for transport to and from her appointments.

Asked if she would like to get her licence back so she could have more independence, Rita told her care workers that it was too difficult – all the changes to the road laws made her feel uncomfortable and afraid. Undeterred, Rita’s care workers convinced her to have a go at the mock test on the VicRoads website to see how she fared. She did well, and this provided the first step in building her confidence.

Working with others

The centre then made contact with Wimmera Uniting Care and arranged for Rita to do an assessment to be eligible for help. This help paid for her initial test, which she passed. Rita now had a learner’s permit, which provided a huge boost to her confidence.

The next stage involved a bit more help not only from community care workers but family members as well. Fully licensed family members took Rita on drives and Wimmera got involved again – paying for some professional lessons.

After three months of on-road practice, Rita went for her computer-based diving test, which she passed.

Unfortunately, however, Rita failed the practical driving test when attempting to negotiate a three-point turn.

It was a huge setback for Rita and she became disillusioned. She was reluctant to try again for fear of failure.

After a few weeks Rita’s care workers spoke with her family members, encouraging them to throw some more support behind her and to convince her to not give up.

Within the next month, and after a few more driving lessons, Rita re-sat the driving test. This time she passed.

Rita was on the road again.
Reflection

How do you go about finding what was important to the person?

How do you involve the ‘family and community’ in supporting the client?