

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Ageing

Minister for Multicultural Affairs



Wednesday, 22 October 2025

HONOURING VICTORIA'S OUTSTANDING SENIORS

Charity founder and youth advocate Patrick Templeton has won the prestigious Premier's Award for Victorian Senior of the Year for his extraordinary contribution to the lives of children and families living in public housing.

Minister for Ageing Ingrid Stitt today recognised the dedication and community leadership of Mr Templeton and 16 other recipients at Government House.

The Victorian Senior of the Year Awards have celebrated the achievements of older Victorians for more than 30 years – honouring those who share their time, knowledge and expertise to enrich their communities.

Together with his wife Chris, Mr Templeton founded Operation Stitches in 1996 – a community organisation that has made a lasting difference for young people experiencing disadvantage and complex challenges.

Through weekly mentoring sessions, outreach activities and family events, Mr Templeton empowers young people to believe in their potential – building trust and connection within the community through home visits, school partnerships and one-on-one support.

His work creates safe, welcoming spaces where children and families can come together, connect and thrive – ensuring young people's voices are heard and that they have access to the opportunities they deserve.

Other category award recipients include:

- Aunty Jo Russell, recipient of the Emerging Impact Award
- Kate Donelan, recipient of the Positive Ageing Award
- Dilnaz Billimoria, recipient of the Promotion of Multiculturalism Award
- Dave Cox, recipient of the Veteran Community Award.

The Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria Senior Achiever Awards were presented to 10 inspiring Victorians for their contributions – from mentoring young people and supporting people with disability, to improving digital literacy in multicultural communities and providing peer support to those living with illness.

To read the profiles of each of the 2025 Victorian Senior of the Year Awards recipients, please visit: seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/awards.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ageing Ingrid Stitt

"Older Victorians make an enormous contribution to the state and all of this year's award recipients remind us that giving back has no age limit – their dedication continues to shape a stronger, more caring Victoria for us all."

"The awards are a highlight of the Victorian Seniors Festival – a month-long celebration for older Victorians and I encourage everyone to get involved in the wonderful events continuing to take place across the state."