TECH SAVVY SENIORS

SA PROGRAM - 2017 TO 2022

Digital inclusion means being able to access, afford or have the digital capability to connect and use online technologies effectively. Participation in the online world facilitates access to social networks, information and services that improve personal wellbeing and give people greater control over their lives. Reducing the gaps between digitally included and excluded communities ensures the social, cultural and economic benefits of the digital economy are shared more equitably.

Telstra's purpose is to build a connected future so that everyone can thrive. From a digital inclusion perspective, this involves ensuring all Australians - particularly those most at risk of digital exclusion - have access to digital infrastructure, services and products; and the confidence and ability to maximise their use and value. The Tech Savvy Seniors program assists seniors to develop the skills and confidence to use technology for socialising, accessing online services or conducting personal business. This contributes to improved personal wellbeing, enhanced social participation and improved access to important information and services that support active ageing.

The Tech Savvy Seniors South Australian program was launched in 2017 as a joint initiative of the State Government through the Office for Ageing Well, Service SA, Telstra and the Libraries Board of South Australia (through Public Library Services). It began with a pilot in the Riverland, and then expanded to include 24 library services in regional locations throughout South Australia. Over a five-year period, almost 8,000 seniors were trained across the state, in 12 different course types.

Using Culture Counts, Telstra was able to measure the digital and social inclusion outcomes within South Australia's ageing communities as a result of their participation in Tech Savvy Seniors courses. The consistent, online measurement methodology captured immediate course outcomes such as confidence and knowledge in using digital technologies; short-term outcomes including increased use of digital technologies; and longer-term outcomes including wellbeing, social participation and active ageing. Along with important program statistics recorded by trainers, a large database of evidence has been generated showing the huge impact and value of the Tech Savvy Seniors program in South Australia over its five-year run.

TECH SAVVY SENIORS PROGRAM LOGIC

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
Increased confidence to use digital technologies	Increased use of digital technologies to mediate relationships with close social networks	**Wellbeing** Strengthened or maintained family relationships; Access to emotional support; Positive self-esteem; Maintained physical and mental health; Pursuit of an engagement in personal interests.
	Increased use of digital technologies to support involvement in community life	**Social Participation** Engaged in physical and creative activities through community groups; Contribution to community through volunteering in community organisations; Maintained and/or broadened social networks; Reduced risk of social isolation.
Increased knowledge of how to use digital technologies	Increased use of digital technologies to access information online	
	Increased use of digital technologies to utilise government and business online services	**Active Ageing** Ability to access information online for decision-making; Ability to contribute to local decision-making; Ability to engage in online economy; Engagement in life-long learning, with support from organisations such as local libraries

SA PROGRAM

8,000
Seniors trained

24
Library branches

12
Course types across 20 competencies

EVALUATION

4,451
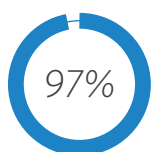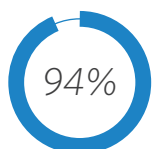Participant survey responses

2,311
Trainer survey responses

57%
Survey response rate

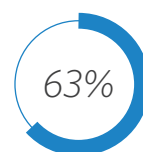## COURSE PERFORMANCE

97% *Agreed that the trainer and training resources were helpful and informative*
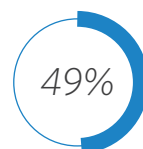
94% *Agreed that the training was run at the right pace for them*

CONFIDENCE WITH TECHNOLOGY
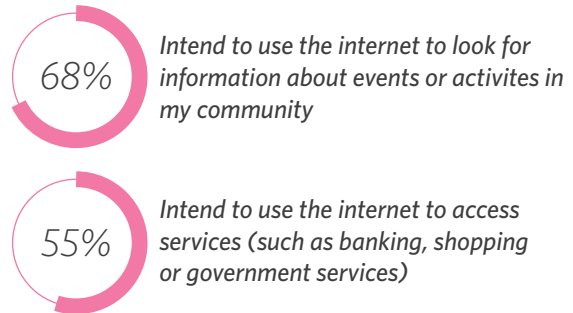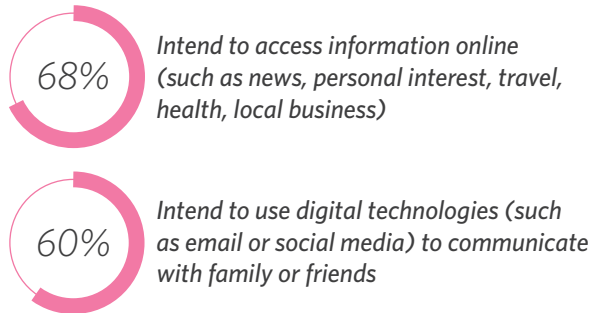
Directly after the course:

63% *Feel confident using some digital technologies (such as computers, tablets or smart phones)*

49% *Are able to explain how to use some digital technologies (such as computers, tablets or smart phones) to a friend or family*
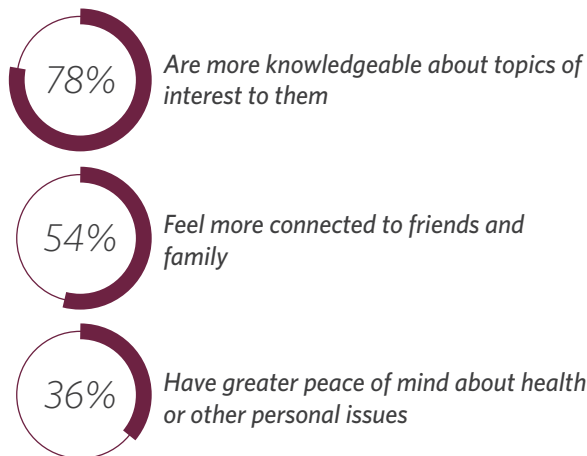
INTENDED TECHNOLOGY USE

Directly after the course:

68% Intend to access information online (such as news, personal interest, travel, health, local business)

68% Intend to use the internet to look for information about events or activites in my community

60% Intend to use digital technologies (such as email or social media) to communicate with family or friends

55% Intend to use the internet to access services (such as banking, shopping or government services)

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

6 weeks after the course:

Wellbeing Outcomes

78% Are more knowledgeable about topics of interest to them

54% Feel more connected to friends and family

36% Have greater peace of mind about health or other personal issues

Social Outcomes

53% Are more engaged with what's going on in the world (current events and issues)

40% Are more involved in community activities and events

25% Have formed social networks with people outside their community

Active Ageing

82% Have gained new skills to use in everyday life

68% Have access to a greater choice of goods and services

54% Have greater confidence in making informed decisions

33

Net Promoter Score

99% Likely to participate in another Tech Savvy Seniors Training Course
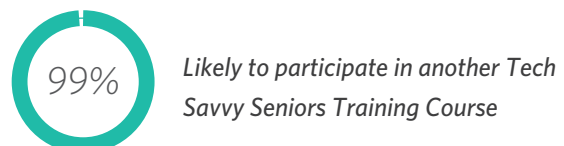
The Tech Savvy Seniors program grew and evolved during its five years of implementation, with new courses, materials and processes added to keep pace with changing technologies and meet the needs of diverse communities. Survey responses show that many seniors began the courses completely lacking the knowledge and confidence to engage with any digital devices, yet quickly felt empowered as they learnt and practiced basic digital functions. Trainers have been adept at working with seniors of differing abilities, giving them the physical and mental tools needed to overcome certain barriers to inclusion. Through partaking in a series of sessions, seniors have developed understanding, skills and confidence, opening many doors to safe and successful digital participation.

Building on the fundamentals of phone, computer, tablet and internet use, delivery partners were given the flexibility to respond to specific areas of interest in their communities to help participants develop their confidence online. Options included courses on managing digital assets, cyber safety, social media, online shopping, sharing photos online, how to video call, how to use government websites and apps including myGov, Medicare and the SA Border Pass. Repeat participants reported much greater self-reliance and more meaningful participation in the modern world.

The Tech Savvy Seniors program trained almost 8,000 seniors over five years in more than 2,300 sessions at 24 library branches in rural and regional South Australia. Over 94% of seniors agreed that the courses were helpful, informative and run at the right pace for them. Two thirds felt confident with using digital devices following the courses, and almost half felt they could teach others what they had learnt. The majority of seniors said they will now use digital technologies more frequently for accessing information and services online, looking for information about community activities and communicating with friends and family. Active ageing, social participation and wellbeing outcomes were generated for many seniors, with course participants gaining new skills and feeling more knowledgeable in the weeks following their Tech Savvy Seniors courses. The results show that large numbers of seniors in South Australia have gained a broad mix of positive outcomes from their program participation, contributing to greater digital inclusion overall.

"We were given plenty of time to practice the skills and ask questions, which were answered in a way I could understand."

"Excellent topic and tutorial - as mature age people we are keen to keep up with technology but need direction."

"I will definitely be using Facetime more to be in contact with my Granddaughter. Thank you so much."

"I am glad these courses have come up - because we are the lost generation - we want to learn and to understand how to use Notebook, Computer and Phone. Being old we are slow learners - thanks for being patient."

"What a fantastic idea these sessions have been, giving elderly people the opportunity to grasp the digital age."

Office for Ageing Well and Seniors Card

Government of South Australia
SA Health

SENIORS CARD

Culture Counts