



Showcasing Faith Community Nursing: Colleen the teapot

I have long been a proponent of collaboration rather than competition amongst faith based ministries. Last month I went to an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) workshop with Peter Kenyon, the founder of the Bank of Ideas (<http://www.bankofideas.com.au/>). The workshop was hosted by the Uniting Communities sponsored group 'Faith in Action'. It was refreshing to be in a group of people who were talking about ministry that works with people's assets to affirm and build their strengths, to empower them to meet their own needs. I was enthused by a great example of how ABCD works, so let me introduce you to 'Colleen'...

People at Uniting Communities in SA wanted to help older people stay safely within their own homes. Their research found older people were concerned about two key things—taking their wheelie bin out for collection each week, and having a neighbour close by who could look in on them a couple of times a week just in case something untoward happened. The team at Uniting Communities set about looking for creative ways to address these issues and connect their community and 'Colleen' was born!



People get an invite to morning tea with 'Colleen', the world's largest teapot. Many walk down their street to see the lovingly restored 1950s caravan, and so their conversations begin. After a while conversations move from Colleen to 'who's who?' and 'what's going on in our street?' Then when people are asked if anyone can help a neighbour by saying *Hi* and rolling out their wheelie bin, there are always volunteers available! Issue resolved. The bonus is that people make a commitment to catch up regularly and when Colleen moves on, she leaves behind a more connected community. It's



primary health care and community engagement that builds the capacity of local communities making them healthier and safer for all.

Colleen the Teapot is a joint collaboration of Uniting Communities, Campbelltown Council and The Eastern Regions Men's Shed of Rotary. She has attracted a wide range of community supporters. You can read more about her at: <http://colleenthecampbelltowncaravan.wordpress.com>

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