



MEDIA RELEASE

24 March 2020

Avoiding scams and accessing reliable health information online – how Good Things Foundation is helping Australia’s isolated and vulnerable seniors

With scams targeting Australia’s seniors when they are at their most vulnerable, Good Things Foundation is helping seniors get online safely and access reliable health information.

At a time when online scams are becoming more and more sophisticated and are playing on increased levels of fear in the community, such as fake text messages and scam emails, it’s especially important that seniors and minority groups are continuously educated on how to stay safe online.

In light of the Federal Government’s increased restrictions on aged care and social gatherings, being able to search the internet for reliable health and wellbeing information is critical. Good Things Foundation recently launched its *Health My Way* program which provides resources for seniors and all Australians to enable them to access health information online such as government updates and how to identify the symptoms of Covid-19.

Good Things Foundation’s top tips to spot unreliable health websites:

1. **The site wants to sell you something:** If a website is made by a company that is selling a product, the information contained may not be reliable. They may be trying to convince you to buy their product by providing vague or false information, or advertising.
2. **The website is out-of-date:** The information on websites has to be checked and updated regularly to remain reliable. Most websites providing health information will have a date somewhere on the page where it was last updated, so you know it’s current and accurate.
3. **The website is written by a private company or individual:** More trustworthy health and wellbeing information will usually come from websites ending with .gov, .org.au or .edu. This shows you that the website has been written by a government department, non-profit or educational institution such as a university, rather than a business or individual.
4. **The website won’t give you information until you create an account or give it information about you:** Websites offering genuine health and wellbeing information won’t make you create an account or give away personal information about you before offering this information.

Good Things Foundation also manages the Australian Government funded Be Connected network of 3,000 partners. The network provides seniors, minority groups and those with disabilities training to get online and access information online through webinars, videos and online links.

Over a quarter of a million Australians have been able to access the skills and training they need to get online safely thanks to the Be Connected Network. Network Partners are from a range of industries such as community centres, libraries, Men's Sheds, disability organisations, employment services providers, and multicultural community groups.

People needing support to learn digital can access:

- Health My Way resources: <https://www.beconnectednetwork.org.au/training-resources/healthmyway-resources>
- Be Connected learning site: <https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/>
- Be Connected Helpline 1300 795 897

-Ends-

Available for interview: Jess Wilson: National Director, Good Things Foundation

For further information, interviews or images, please contact:

Biarta Parnham, Momentum2

0438 337 408 / bparnham@momentum2.com.au

Information for editors:

- The Be Connected Network & Grants program is managed by Good Things Foundation - a social change charity with the vision of a world where everyone can benefit from digital. Find out more at www.goodthingsfoundation.org.au
- Be Connected is an Australian government initiative to increase the confidence, skills and online safety of older Australians.