

2020 Annual Edition

# Eldercare Matters





*"This was the closest the fire has ever been," said Ellie, who left work at The Village on the day of the December bushfire to come home and help fight the flames. "To see it heading towards our property was definitely an eye opener, but it was amazing to see everyone pull together – there were fire bombers, the CFS and farmers in their trucks – all working as one to protect the community. By looking out for each other we've been able to bounce back. It's great that nine months later we can walk through this healthy wheatfield."*

**Above and Back Cover:** Sisters Jemma (left) and Ellie Adams, both work as personal carers at Eldercare The Village in Maitland, as well as working on the nearby family farm and as volunteer fire fighters.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



**Front Cover:** Eldercare The Village resident John Birkin (left) with farmer Malcolm McCauley inspecting healthy new growth in a wheatfield on the McCauley property in Maitland. Malcolm and his wife Ellen have been volunteers at The Village for more than 20 years, since Malcolm's mother was a resident at the facility. John also had a career working on his own family's farm in the region and he looks forward to spending time with Malcolm who visits with him every Friday. John has a personal goal to get back into a tractor and Malcolm is working with him to help him achieve this goal.

The Maitland fire in December started in a field adjacent to the McCauley farm and came right up to their house, scorching trees, fences and the paddocks across the road. "It was scary; the worst fire I've experienced", said Malcolm.

As 2020 dawned, our community in Maitland was reeling from the shock of bushfires that came within a kilometre of the township just before Christmas on 20 December, scorching fields and coming dangerously close to properties. These awful fires, which also impacted our Eldercare community on the Lower Yorke Peninsula and South Australians on Kangaroo Island and in the Adelaide Hills, were perhaps an omen of the year to come.

This year has tested our resilience; as an organisation, as a community and as a country. All Australians have been affected, first by bushfires and then by the COVID-19 pandemic. No industry has been more impacted by COVID-19 than aged care, which was already being scrutinised by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Like the crops around Maitland however, Eldercare has risen to the challenge; and is perhaps stronger than ever.

Eldercare has spent the last five years building a culture focused on our core values of respect, accountability and connection. These values were the starting point for the innovative service delivery programs that we've developed over recent years which align well with the requirements of new Aged Care Quality Standards which came into effect from 1 July 2019. All 11 Eldercare facilities are compliant with the new standards and are fully accredited.

Having invested the time and resources needed to ensure our service delivery was meeting the latest quality standards meant Eldercare had the agility to shift focus onto its pandemic procedures. Whilst COVID-19 has been shocking, it has also given us opportunity to test all our systems and processes. We've developed quick response teams, industry partnerships and relationships with government that have kept our residents, their families and our staff safe.

Meanwhile, the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, which began in October 2018, has continued to examine every aspect of the aged care sector in Australia, including the industry response to COVID-19.

Additional hearings were held in August when outbreaks had struck aged care facilities in NSW and Victoria. The Commissioners, The Honourable Tony Pagone QC and Ms Lynelle Briggs AO, delivered a special report on COVID-19 and aged care on 1 October.

The report concluded that there are immediate actions that should be taken by the Australian Government to support the aged care sector, including providing for adequate staff that can facilitate more visits between residents and their loved ones, increasing allied and mental health services, establishing a national aged care plan and advisory body for COVID-19 and deploying infection prevention and control experts into aged care homes.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 the final report of the Commission has now been delayed until late February 2021.

Meanwhile Eldercare Consumer Engagement Coordinator Chris Morris had been conducting focus groups and guided interviews with residents and their families to understand how they were coping with COVID-19 and whether they were satisfied with how Eldercare was responding to the pandemic. The findings have informed the focus of Eldercare Matters this year, which is recognising key concerns that aged care consumers have had in 2020 and how Eldercare has addressed them.

In 2020 Eldercare made the difficult decision to close Elanora, our aged care facility in Stansbury. The demand for residential aged care on the Lower Yorke Peninsula has decreased significantly in recent years and with consistently low occupancy levels, Elanora was not financially viable. I am pleased to say however that all residents were successfully moved to new care facilities and apart from a small number of staff that elected to take redundancy packages, new employment was found for all staff at our other sites. Our remaining two facilities on Yorke Peninsula are now enjoying high occupancy and renewed vitality as a result.

I am very proud of the resilience and teamwork shown by all of our staff, but none more so than our team on the Yorke Peninsula. They have lived by our values, being accountable, promoting connection and most importantly, respecting residents, families and each other.



**Jane Pickering**  
Chief Executive

Eldercare The Lodge resident Harry Landau has his blood pressure checked by Clinical Care Manager Jessica Traeger.

*“Our Case Management Model has been particularly valuable this year, when there has been a lot of anxiety over resident health and safety due to COVID-19. As our clinical leaders coordinate the care for a specific group of residents, they’ve been able to build close relationships with these residents and their families, and I think this has enabled more open communication,”*  
said Jessica.

Our purpose is to deliver peace of mind with our care. This is Eldercare's commitment to you.



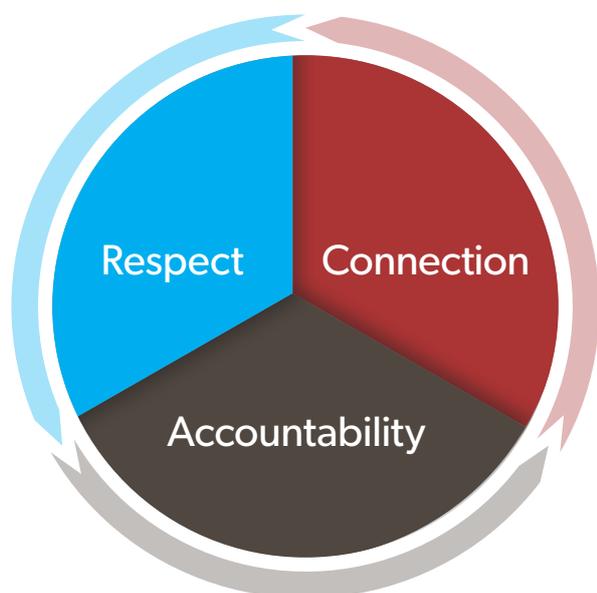
# RESPECT



We protect the dignity, rights  
and values of the individual.

# OUR VALUES ARE AT THE HEART OF OUR SERVICE

Peace of mind comes from staff, residents and their families knowing they will be treated with respect. We work toward building connections for wellbeing and we are an organisation that can be held accountable. These values of **respect, accountability** and **connection** underpin Eldercare's strategic directions and business plan.



Eldercare Allambi resident Bev Young is assisted with a craft project by volunteer Melanie Zeryhun-Wondimu.

Kenneth 'Woody' Woodford has been a resident of Eldercare Allambi at Glengowrie since January 2020. He has always loved the arts and was an actor in Singapore for children's show Romper Room for 11 years from 1984. Woody takes great pride in colouring pictures for friends because "art brings joy to people," he says.

Our values are at the heart of our service which focuses on the following key themes:

**Wellbeing** Eldercare's 'mind, body, spirit' approach recognises that wellbeing is achieved through good health, a sense of purpose, positive connection, meaningful activity and dignity.

**Individuality and choice** Eldercare's services are shaped by collaboration with our residents. Staff get to know residents during initial and ongoing assessments so that their care is individualised and reflects their aspirations and needs.

**Dignity of risk** Enabling residents to make their own decisions is key to their dignity. Eldercare staff work with each resident to determine their wishes, ensure they are aware of any risks, and then support them to make those outcomes possible.

**Connection** Social connections which enable people to feel supported and valued are important for the mind, body and spirit. Building and maintaining friendships and links to community is particularly important in aged care.

**Consumer engagement** Eldercare is committed to engaging with residents and their representatives in all aspects of their decision making. This supports person-centred care, where the choices, values and rights of individuals are respected and enabled.

**Diversity and inclusion** Through recruitment, training, role-modelling and addressing inappropriate behaviour, Eldercare demonstrates its commitment to residents, families, staff and volunteers ensuring they are treated fairly and can live and work free from discrimination.

# ACCOUNTABILITY



We are all responsible for working safely and with integrity.

# OUR SERVICE MEETS ALL QUALITY STANDARDS

The Eldercare values, together with our key themes (wellbeing, individuality and choice, dignity of risk, diversity and inclusion, connection, and consumer engagement), provide a checklist that is considered in our program development, staff training and business planning. Addressing these themes has meant that Eldercare's business objectives are closely aligned with the requirements of the Australian Government's new Aged Care Quality Standards which came into effect on 1 July 2019.

To receive accreditation by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, which monitors and assesses compliance with the standards, providers must be able to demonstrate acceptable performance against them.

Eldercare conducts internal performance reviews, as a part of our continuous improvement program, to ensure we meet the requirements of the standards. This prepares the organisation for audits by the Commission. Eldercare has had numerous visits during 2020, including specific checks for compliance with COVID-19 infection control standards.

All of Eldercare's 11 care facilities are fully accredited against the quality standards that providers must meet to ensure quality service and safety for consumers.

To ensure we meet our rigorous levels of accountability, we are conducting extra checks to relevant systems and processes each time a new issue is highlighted by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Compliance with all quality standards was an important foundation from which to respond to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Eldercare formed the COVID-19 Action Group in late January. The group has met at least weekly to discuss the latest directives from the Department of Health, decide on policies, procedures and communications, and discuss feedback from conversations with staff, residents and their representatives to understand how they are managing.

Eldercare Board members work with the Executive team to set the strategic direction and policy framework for the organisation. Pictured at a Finance Committee meeting are (L – R) Executive Assistant Shauna Watt, Chief Executive Jane Pickering, Corporate Services Executive Scott Morgan, Board Chair James Lawes and Board member Rev Dr Graham Humphris.




 Clinical Leader Joy Graham with a medication trolley at Eldercare Sash Ferguson in Mount Barker.

# CONNECTION



We develop vibrant and supportive relationships based on warmth and generosity.

# WE CONSULT WITH OUR CONSUMERS AND STAFF

Eldercare is committed to engaging and partnering with consumers and staff in all aspects of their decision making to support person-centred care, where the choices and rights of individuals are respected and enabled. Residents, their representatives and staff have the right to participate in service planning and influence the decisions that affect them. Their input is integral to improving our services.

Consultation has been particularly important in 2020 during the pandemic. A COVID-19 hotline was set up in April for residents, their representatives and staff to ask questions and voice concerns. Six focus groups and 40 guided interviews (involving a total of almost 100 residents and their representatives) were also conducted during August and September to determine whether our consumers believed they were safe and whether they received enough communication.

Eldercare's biennial staff survey was also conducted in September and included a section focused on how staff were managing, and how they felt Eldercare had managed, during COVID-19.

Feedback received by Eldercare's engagement with residents, families and staff during COVID-19, as well as the findings of the special report from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, was used to determine key areas of concern for consumers. The following pages of Eldercare Matters report on Eldercare's activities that address these areas during 2020. Key Eldercare and industry activities are summarised on a timeline over the page.

Eldercare's Consumer Engagement Coordinator Chris Morris conducting a focus group with residents of Eldercare Trowbridge House at Payneham. L – R: Site Operations Manager Jo Wagner, resident Kevin Shimleck, Chris Morris, resident Norma Garrity (back to camera), Social Work student (interpreting for Sau) Siok Wei Lim and residents Sau Wong and Suresh Aggarwal.



Eldercare Allambi residents Nancy Baker and Evelyn 'Joyce' Richards (centre) enjoy chatting and knitting as a part of the 'Nitter Natter' group which knitted eight blankets for Ronald McDonald House during the time Allambi was closed to visitors due to COVID-19. They are assisted by Lifestyle Assistant CuiLian Deng.

# TIMELINE OF EVENTS 2020

Our Yorke Peninsula community begins recovery efforts from the major bushfires which swept through in late December.

In late January Eldercare forms the COVID-19 Action Group which has met regularly ever since.



## FEBRUARY



Hearings and workshops are held in Adelaide as a part of the Royal Commission into Aged Care in February and March; the last sessions held before COVID-19 restrictions force all further Commission hearings to be postponed then held virtually.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) 'outbreak kits' are checked at all Eldercare sites.

The State Government introduces the first gathering restrictions and travel bans are introduced in South Australia.

Regular COVID-19 updates are sent from Eldercare Chief Executive Jane Pickering to all staff, residents and their representatives and GPs.

On 24 March, Eldercare facilities are closed to all visitors and resident activities are modified.



## MARCH

## APRIL



An Eldercare hotline is set up for Eldercare residents, their representatives and staff to ask questions and voice concerns.

Temperature checking and COVID-19 screening of all staff begins.

Eldercare head office staff begin working from home with the support of software to facilitate virtual meetings.

The State Government mandates that no-one is allowed to enter an aged care facility without having had the seasonal flu shot.

Visitors are once again allowed at Eldercare facilities from 4 May at specified times. All visitors must be temperature screened, provide evidence of having had the flu shot and sign a declaration form.



## MAY

## JANUARY

# JUNE



Eldercare closes its Elanora care facility in Stansbury.

Some lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in South Australia apply to aged care.

A video promoting the COVIDSafe App is sent to all staff.

Head office staff cease working remotely and return to the Eastwood site.

Eldercare invites volunteers to return to our care facilities.

Lifestyle activities with social distancing resume.

Student placements resume at sites.



# JULY

# AUGUST



Royal Commission hearings resume to identify lessons that can be learnt from the aged care sector's response to COVID-19.

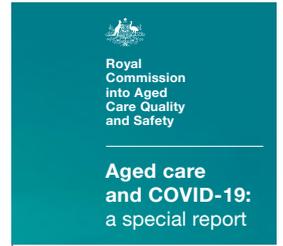
The State Government mandates training, that personal carers cannot work at more than one site, and that all personal carers, nurses, allied health staff and doctors are to wear a face mask when providing care to residents.

Resident and representative focus group discussions and guided interviews are conducted over August and September to gauge our customer satisfaction with Eldercare's COVID-19 response.



# SEPTEMBER

# OCTOBER



The Royal Commission publishes a special report on the experience of the aged care sector's response to COVID-19 on 1 October.

# KEEPING RESIDENTS SAFE FROM INFECTION

Eldercare has a Clinical Governance Framework which governs all aspects of our clinical and care practice. This includes high level decisions and review, as well as the implementation and compliance of all clinical care activities. We have a strong clinical model of care which allocates a dedicated clinical leader to a group of residents. This enables residents and their families to form relationships with their clinical leader, paving the way for clear and consistent two-way communication.

An Infection Control Policy outlines the measures Eldercare staff must follow to minimise the risk of all infections. At Eldercare facilities precautions are implemented as required at the direction of the clinical nurse, in conjunction with the clinical care manager and site operations manager.

All residents are monitored for signs and symptoms of any infectious conditions, as a part of their routine care. If any infection is identified, it is recorded in their clinical file. Residents with identified infections are managed in accordance with state and national infection control guidelines. All employees adhere to Eldercare's Infection Control Program, work practices, policies and guidelines and receive ongoing education in infection control.

Environmental controls are in place that minimise the risk of infection transmission e.g. regular cleaning, laundry services, pest control, provision of hand hygiene facilities and personal protective equipment (PPE) as required.

During the rapidly evolving COVID-19 outbreak in Australia it was vital that all Eldercare sites were provided with clear direction about actions to take in response to the virus. These are based on best practice evidence and guidance from Commonwealth and State governments.

A COVID-19 Action Group was formed in late January and regular updates were given to site, clinical and other nominated managers with responsibility to communicate with their teams.

SA Health has a sound process for dealing with a positive COVID-19 case in a care facility. When a positive test is confirmed, the pathology service will inform the Communicable Disease Control Branch (CDCB), which will trigger an immediate CDCB response with a 'rapid response forward command team' sent to the site. A positive COVID-19 resident will be immediately transferred to a specialist care unit in hospital.



Eldercare Chief Executive Jane Pickering receives her seasonal flu injection.



Wellness Assistant Caterina Muscara checks the temperature of visitors at Eldercare Oxford in Hove.

In focus group discussions and guided interviews conducted by Eldercare in August and September to receive feedback on how our residents and families were coping with COVID-19, they had the following responses to questions about their safety:

### Are you aware of the measures that Eldercare put in place to keep you safe?

Measures that residents said Eldercare had put in place included:

- Visitor restrictions
- Daily visitor and staff screening and temperature checking
- Flu injections
- Changed activities and no bus trips.

### Have you felt safe at Eldercare during the pandemic?

Every resident interviewed said they felt safe and every family member felt their loved one was safe. Some of the comments made included:

- *“Absolutely safe”*
- *“This is the safest place in Australia”*
- *“Eldercare have handled it wonderfully well”*
- *“I can’t thank Eldercare enough”*
- *“I feel safer now with the visitor screenings, there are enough people checking visitors to ensure everyone feels safe”.*

# HOW WE KEEP YOU INFORMED

There has been an exhaustive amount of negative press about the aged care sector throughout 2020 relating to COVID-19 and disturbing findings of the Royal Commission. While it is extremely important that our consumers be fully informed, there has been a great deal of unfounded and inflammatory news coverage mixed in with communication of the facts. There has also been little room for all the happy and positive stories that happen in our care facilities every day.

Eldercare is committed to open disclosure and to being accountable.

Our clinical model of care allows for more direct communication between residents, their families and our clinical leaders. This is supported by regular resident and family meetings (when visiting is permitted) and updates from our Chief Executive Jane Pickering. Eldercare also produces numerous publications, both printed and online, and has many feedback options available.

Eldercare sites also provide lifestyle calendars to remind residents of recreational options for the month ahead.

Brochures, on topics including resident rights and how we can receive feedback, are available in all site foyers and online.

Our biennial Staff Engagement Survey recently conducted in September is a key tool for gaining open and honest communication from our staff. It is also supported by regular newsletters to all staff from our Executive team.

To ensure that the relevant people receive the latest and most important information about COVID-19, the decision was made in January that two key people would be responsible to communicate the directives from Eldercare's COVID-19 Action Group. These are Chief Executive Jane Pickering and Risk, Quality and Compliance Manager Christine Hunt.

Updates have been sent to staff, residents and their representatives regularly since February. In some communications there has been an embedded link to a video from Jane Pickering providing the latest information about COVID-19. Jane has also been sending periodic updates to residents and their representatives about the Royal Commission and its findings, and other topical issues, since late 2018.



Chief Executive Jane Pickering periodically updates all staff about the latest COVID-19 information via a video sent to their smart phones.



Stephen Halliday, son of Eldercare resident Vilma, reading a COVID-19 update email from Eldercare Chief Executive Jane Pickering while at home.

*“COVID-19 has made us all concerned about our loved ones. I have to say I’ve found Eldercare’s communication to be very good. The response to developments or problems has been proactive and always aimed at the priority of keeping mum safe. There are regular updates and calls and questions are answered promptly,” says Stephen. “I’m glad mum’s in Allambi and when I speak to her she tells me she’s not worried and she feels safe”.*

# ENSURING QUALITY OF LIFE

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has shone a light on aged care services in Australia and revealed some very concerning areas of practice.

However, we are confident that our residents are safe and well cared for, and often enjoy an improved quality of life when they move into an Eldercare facility.

Good health has physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual components. Our clinical leaders coordinate the physical care for each resident and are supported by our hospitality services as well as chaplaincy, lifestyle, allied health and volunteer programs.

Purpose means something different for everyone so Eldercare staff support residents to maintain a sense of purpose by engaging in roles of value and achieving personal goals.

Residents contribute to their care planning by sharing their specific needs and interests, and staff then work with them so that those needs and interests can be met wherever possible.

It is critical to understand why a chosen outcome is meaningful for a resident and, wherever possible, not allow risk to impede on the resident's right to live the life they choose.

If an outcome is likely to involve a high level of risk, or if there is disagreement between a resident and their family about a chosen outcome, Eldercare staff will work with those involved to support the resident to make an informed choice. We do this in accordance with Eldercare's duty of care, the Aged Care Quality Standards and appropriate risk management principles.

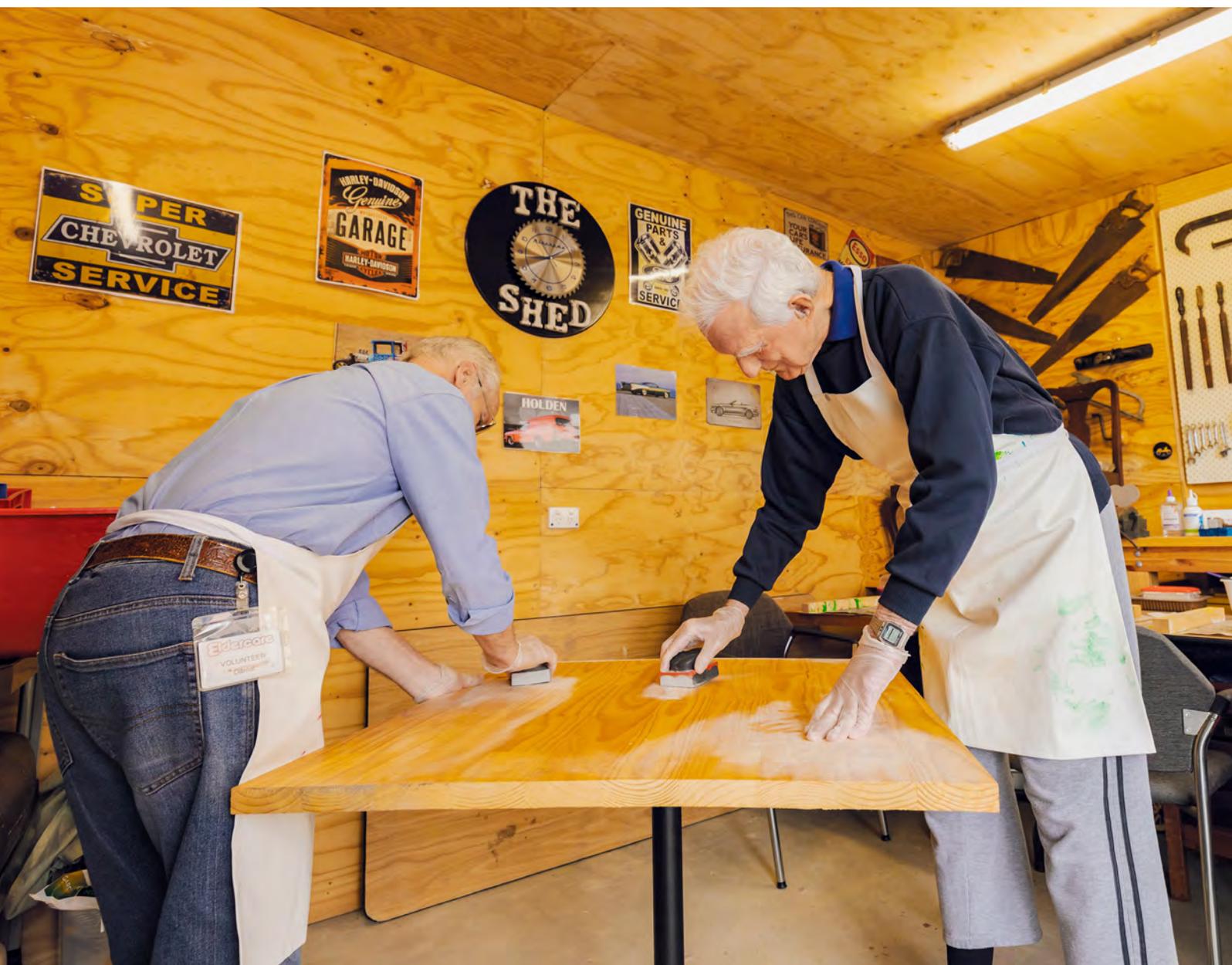


Eldercare Oxford resident Peg Gibbs enjoys a visit from Bentley the golden retriever puppy. Many of our residential care facilities enjoy regular visits from pet therapy animals.

Eldercare's model of activity planning for residents has evolved alongside our wellbeing approach with experiences focusing on physical activity, learning, connections and the expression of creativity. Lifestyle teams organise social events and programs that respond to the needs and interests of residents and build connections between residents, their families, staff, volunteers and the local community.

Eldercare has an inclusive culture in which everyone is respected and enabled to contribute. The identity, culture, sexual orientation and spirituality of every staff member, resident and their families and friends are respected, and they are supported to make choices free from judgement.

Eldercare Allambi resident John Davis (R) is assisted with a carpentry project by volunteer Daniel Husser in The Shed.



# AVOIDING LONELINESS AND ISOLATION

As soon as Eldercare facilities were closed to visitors for the health and safety of residents during COVID-19, our lifestyle program was adjusted to comply with restrictions to gatherings and physical distancing whilst still minimising the risk of loneliness and isolation for residents. As for all Australians, maintaining connection whilst adhering to the government's physical distancing directives has been a challenge for people living in residential aged care.

Some of the initiatives used to maintain relationships while our sites were closed to visitors included:

- Each resident was assured access to an iPad to facilitate Skype or FaceTime 'visits' with family and friends.
- 'Windows of love' were created at our sites so that family and friends could book visits and maintain a visual connection through a large window with their loved one. Often residents and visitors would talk on the phone at the same time so they could hear each other as well.
- Our volunteers got creative. At Eldercare Cottage Grove they crafted homemade cards for each of the residents and at Eldercare Sash Ferguson volunteers continued their regular resident coffee club by setting up a stove and billy on the verandah visible to residents enjoying scones and coffee inside.
- At several sites, local school children sent letters, jokes, messages of support and crafts to the residents.

These measures helped to combat loneliness but didn't replace actual physical visits which residents missed dearly. As soon as it was safe to do so we opened our sites again to visitors, adhering to the South Australian Emergency Directions for Residential Aged Care.

Visitors are a key factor of wellbeing for residents and the first recommendation in the special report on the impact of COVID-19 on aged care, released by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality on 1 October, is that:

"The Australian Government should immediately fund providers to ensure there are adequate staff available to allow continued visits to people living in residential aged care by their families and friends. Visits from family and friends are critical to the physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing of people living in residential aged care and also their friends and families. The benefit of such visits cannot be wholly replaced by technology."



Eldercare Trowbridge House resident June Davies enjoys a visit from her son Glen Davies and daughter Wendy Aldridge through the 'window of love'. "Being able to book 'window visits' was excellent because at least we got to see mum. It helped her through it and lifted her spirits," said Wendy.



Eldercare Sash Ferguson residents Maggie and John Carey enjoy FaceTime with their grandchildren.

# WE CARE FOR STAFF, SO THEY CAN CARE FOR YOU

Eldercare staff, volunteers and students are vital in delivering peace of mind to residents and their families. Therefore, investment in training and the development of an innovative and engaged culture is a pillar of our strategic plan.

Eldercare has a multi-faceted Employee Engagement Strategy with the aim to:

- embed a culture based on our values
- keep our people safe and support their wellbeing
- develop leaders who inspire, motivate and support their teams
- streamline communication so that the right messages are communicated to the right people
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our workforce.

We gauge the satisfaction of our workforce by asking for feedback through our biennial staff survey and other site-based methods.

The Eldercare 2020 Employee Engagement Survey was conducted by Best Practice Australia (BPA), for the third time, in September 2020. More than 60% of staff responded to the survey. When asked if Eldercare is a 'Truly Great Place to Work', 77% of respondents said "yes". This response provided a measure of morale that was key to Eldercare being classified as having a culture of 'success', the highest category for organisational culture in the BPA model of measurement. This is achieved when 60% or more of staff are engaged and they are "close-knit, cohesive and focused".



Discussing resident care plans in a nurses' station at Eldercare Allambi are (L – R) Nurse Practitioner Mark Rogers and Clinical Leaders Kathryn Graziano and Bronte Henderson.



Regional Manual Handling Trainer Jane Roylance showing new employees Simran Acharya (back to camera) and Meseret Howitt-Smith how to use a chair-lifter.

Eldercare's results are benchmarked against the BPA database which includes more than 1,000 Australian organisations and 474,000 respondents from the health and community services sector. In 73 out of the 79 questions asked (92%), staff rated Eldercare's performance 'above the norm'.

Eldercare has recently been used by Director of BPA Analytics Jacqui Parle as an aged care case study to demonstrate a positive upward shift in staff culture and employee engagement over three survey cycles. After a presentation by Jacqui to the Aged Care Industry Workforce Council, the Chief Executive Officer Louise O'Neill said,

*"Eldercare's case study is fantastic ... showcasing progressive improvement and what great leadership looks like."*

The performance of Eldercare's employees is developed through an extensive program of both mandatory and additional training to ensure continuous learning. Additionally, through formal partnerships with South Australian universities and major Registered Training Organisations (RTO), Eldercare contributes to the training of its future workforce by providing student placement opportunities in caring, nursing and allied health and is proud to facilitate more than 200 placements each year.

# SUPPORTING STAFF DURING 2020

To ensure that our staff have been following the latest directives from the State Government, Eldercare's Risk, Quality and Compliance Manager (and COVID-19 Action Group Coordinator) Christine Hunt has sent information and instructions to key staff at least weekly, and often daily. This has required diligence from our managers, agility from clinical leaders and carers in our facilities and efficient communication systems.

Eldercare has been monitoring how staff are managing during COVID-19.

In the Eldercare 2020 Employee Engagement Survey, 91% of staff said they "were confident in their ability to respond well to this environment of turbulent change" and 87% felt that "during the pandemic the organisation had done well in communicating" with them.

Recognising that COVID-19 has been stressful for our staff, Eldercare took part in a 'Workplace Recovery Tool for COVID-19' research collaboration with The University of South Australia (UniSA) to assess worker wellbeing and workplace conditions relevant to COVID-19.



Regional Manual Handling Trainer Terri Wait instructs new employee Sonu Pariyar how to correctly wear personal protective equipment (PPE) during manual handling training.

Whilst many of the 51 respondents reported having some added mental, physical or emotional fatigue, the results revealed that 86% of respondents were within the 'low risk' range for poor psychological health and wellbeing outcomes.

Whilst these results compare favourably to the Australian Workplace Barometer (AWB) for workers in the health and community services sector, they still indicate that staff experience fatigue and some staff are at risk. Eldercare has used strategies to combat stress this year, including:

- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** – Eldercare's EAP counselling services are available to assist employees, volunteers and their eligible dependents.
- **Training** – Eldercare's carers and nurses are provided access to, and paid to complete, the Australian Government COVID-19 infection control training.
- **Hotline support** – Eldercare's COVID-19 hotline is available to all staff as well as to residents and their representatives.
- **Bonus payments** – the government paid two once-off retention payments to encourage our clinical, personal care and allied health workers to remain employed in residential aged care during the pandemic.
- **IT support** – Eldercare's IT team quickly organised for laptops, software and training to be available to all staff that were required to work from home.
- **Thank you treats** – the Executive team organised for morning and afternoon teas to be delivered to the staff at all care facilities on several occasions as a thank you for the extra support they have given to our residents, their families and each other.



The support of colleagues has been particularly important during 2020. Staff at Sash Ferguson enjoy afternoon tea together.

# RETIREMENT LIVING

Eldercare's retirement living villages offer residents the support they need to 'age in place' by remaining independent and connected even as their care needs increase.

Eight of Eldercare's 12 retirement villages are co-located alongside our residential care facilities across Greater Adelaide and the Yorke Peninsula. In non-COVID-19 times many residents visit the adjoining residential care facility to share a meal in the dining area, receive services from the on-site hairdresser or take part in activities.

Couples also find this living arrangement convenient in the event that one of them transitions into residential care as the site is easily accessible, removing the need to drive or negotiate public transport.

Regular resident meetings are held in all villages to ensure open communication between residents and management.

Social functions in the common areas of selected villages also provide the opportunity for community interaction.

Residents can enjoy living independently for longer with in-home services such as meal preparation, nursing, cleaning, shopping, physiotherapy and podiatry, available through Eldercare Service Assist in partnership with Your Nursing Agency (YNA).

Our 24-hour property maintenance service means residents can always speak with a staff member regarding maintenance, including any urgent matters that arise after hours or on weekends.

Eldercare retirement villages offer a supportive community where residents can enjoy peace of mind knowing they will be supported to live better and longer in their own home.



June and Neville Clancey moved into their Eldercare retirement living unit at Exhibition Court in Mt Barker six months ago.

*"The country house we lived in was too far away from medical services and too big for us to look after," said June. "Now, if we have a problem we only have to ask and someone from Eldercare's property team will come and sort it out for us."*

# ELDERCARE SERVICES



Eldercare's Day Therapy Centre at Acacia Court in Hendon offers tailored support to help older people achieve optimal function, wellbeing and independence. An individualised treatment plan is developed for all clients and may include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, podiatry and/or speech pathology. Pictured (L – R) Betty Gelvizis and Elizabeth Scherwitzel exercising at the Day Therapy Centre.

## Eldercare's operations include:

- Over 900 residents living in 11 residential care facilities across the Greater Adelaide and Yorke Peninsula regions
- Over 200 residents living in 12 retirement villages
- Over 300 clients receiving services at the Eldercare Day Therapy Centre in Hendon
- Over 1,500 staff
- Over 300 volunteers

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# Eldercare

peace of mind

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