

DoveTale

SUMMER 2016



- Foundation Day celebrations
- More options to benefit community clients
- Finalist in Tasmanian Community Awards
- Recycling materials for asylum seekers



News from across Uniting AgeWell communities





Message from the CEO

As providers of care to seniors in Victoria and Tasmania, it is our responsibility to ensure their rights are met and maintained. December 10 is International Human Rights Day, and it's an opportunity to reflect on the role we play in providing high quality care and services to our clients, delivered with dignity and compassion.

We have a shared responsibility to look after our seniors. Many of our clients do not have the ability to speak for themselves, so it is inherent on us to advocate on their behalf and to create communities that enable everyone to live and age well, no matter where they are on their ageing journey.

The Uniting AgeWell Board and Executive are in the process of developing the 2017 – 2020 Strategic Plan that will ensure we can do just that, delivering on our vision to enable communities to age well and individuals to live to their potential.

The Board and Executive participated in a strategic planning day in October to discuss ideas and set priorities. The ideas will be consolidated at a follow-up session in January, with the Strategic Plan presented to the Board in February. This is a very important process that will determine a way forward for Uniting AgeWell and an implementation framework for the coming three to four year period.

Plans are now in place for the the transition of 273 Home Care Packages from Swan Hill Rural City Council to Uniting AgeWell on 15 December. The Department of Health approved the transfer of these packages in November – an important milestone. We are delighted to be able to provide ongoing care and support to seniors in the Loddon Mallee, and grow our existing services in the region.

I was thrilled to be invited to attend the Tasmanian Community Achievement Awards with senior Tasmanian staff and Board members in early November. Uniting AgeWell was a finalist in the Aged Care Award category, which is well-deserved recognition of the high quality work of our Tasmanian team. While we did not win the award, it was a great opportunity to again meet with our staff and mingle with other leading aged care organisations.

December is a time for giving and receiving, for celebrations and fun. As families gather for Christmas, we think of those who don't have the opportunity to share with friends and family, and thank our staff working across the holidays for bringing joy to our clients.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Uniting AgeWell Board members, volunteers and staff for their contributions over the past 12 months, and their commitment to improving the services we provide to seniors.

Wishing you and your families a safe and happy Christmas and best wishes for a wonderful 2017.

Andrew Kinnersly
CEO



From the Board Chair

With increasing competition and deregulation of aged care services, community engagement and promotion has never been more important for Uniting AgeWell.

We are regularly in the public eye through such things as our distinctive signage outside each of our properties, advertising or stories in the media, newsletters such as DoveTale, and public events.

These approaches are not designed to “blow our own trumpet”, but to make our current and prospective clients aware of the wide range of opportunities Uniting AgeWell provides for older people in Victoria and Tasmania to live to their potential.

Public events are particularly important to give people a full understanding of how we are enabling seniors to age well by living creatively and with fulfilment.

Many of our aged care residences hold open days, or invite visitors to functions such as Foundation Day celebrations each October. We also welcome school groups, choirs and local churches to our sites to provide special programs for the enjoyment of our clients.

The well established Annual Strathdon Community Art Exhibition attracts hundreds of visitors to our Forest Hill site during the four day event. Not only does it demonstrate to the public that aged care

residences are dynamic places to live, but events such as these help our residents to feel connected to their wider community and enhance their sense of wellbeing.

Our Annual Charity Golf Day at the Commonwealth Golf Club is another occasion when friends, suppliers and supporters can learn more about Uniting AgeWell in the context of an enjoyable afternoon of golf, while raising funds for our Wishing Well program.

While extreme weather forced the event to be rescheduled from November 21 to December 12, this last-minute change did not deter our sponsors, with all confirming their commitment to the new date – wonderful recognition of the quality of this great event and the loyalty of our supporters.

Throughout 2017, Uniting AgeWell will continue to seek opportunities to engage with the wider community and strengthen community connections.

I thank you all for your ongoing support and interest in the work of Uniting AgeWell.

With seasonal greetings

Rev Allan Thompson
Board Chair

Foundation Day celebrations across UA

From Mary Poppins and choir performances in Bendigo to a Country and Western-themed day in Launceston, Foundation Day celebrations across the organisation were as diverse as the communities they represented.

Foundation Day, a two-week festival in October coinciding with Seniors Weeks in Victoria and Tasmania, recognises the beginning of Uniting AgeWell, when aged care services of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania came together under one umbrella – then known as Uniting Aged Care.

Celebrations began with a culturally diverse lunch at Strathdon Community, Forest Hill, on October 3 and finished with an art exhibition at Strathaven and Strathglen, Hobart, showcasing the wonderful talents of residents.

Strathaven Leisure and Lifestyle Coordinator Lina Sierra said Foundation Day was an opportunity for the community to get together and celebrate the valuable contribution of seniors.

“All activities and works on display at our exhibition represented a labour of love and supported our aim of engaging residents through a variety of lifestyle and activity programs,” she said.

A key part of the celebrations is the announcement of the organisation’s Employee of the Year awards.

This year’s awards were expanded to 10 categories, acknowledging the outstanding efforts of staff who had gone beyond their duties to improve the quality of our services, programs and systems.

The most prestigious award is the Employee of the Year, which this year went to Box Hill Community Administration Officer, Jenny Loong.

“It’s indescribable to be awarded for something I enjoy doing every day,” says Jenny. “It’s very rewarding to work closely with our clients and families and make their day-to-day lives better.”

UA Director of Mission John Clarke said Jenny was an outstanding role model and team member of the Box Hill Community, who selflessly extended herself to help others.



UA Employee of the Year, Box Hill Community Administration Officer Jenny Loong

“Jenny demonstrates excellent customer service, a genuine compassion for people and a willingness to meet each person’s needs,” he said.

Regional Employee of the Year winners:

Victoria South East – Girrawheen Administration Officer, Annie van de Beek

Victoria North West – Kalkee Nangatta Care Manager, Glenda Harvey

Tasmania – Aldersgate Village Diversional Therapist, Karen Robinson

Other award winners:

AgeWell Award – Strathdon Lifestyle Coordinator, Matt Daley

Safety Award – Ningana Domestic Services Assistant, Shan Hippman

Scholarship Award – Girrawheen Personal Care Assistant, Lisa Hall

Team Innovation – the Quality and Risk team

Customer Service Award – Strathdevon Administration Officer, Elle Baldock

Embracing Diversity Award – Community Programs Coordinator, Michelle Thompson

Residents and clients who turned 90 or 100 this year were also celebrated at the sites with the Emerald and Blackman awards respectively.

Service awards were presented to all employees celebrating their five, 10, 15 and 20 years of service at UA. One dedicated staff member, Personal Care Worker, Mira Prentic, from the Carnsworth Community, was recognised for an outstanding 40 years of service. 🐦



Enhancing Community Services

Hundreds of people have visited Uniting AgeWell's first Community Hub since it opened in September, signing up for Home Care Packages, attending information sessions and enquiring about other UA services.

Acting General Manager Tasmania Jane Johnston said the Hub, in Moonah in Hobart's northern suburbs, had been extremely well received by the community.

"It's improved the public perception of aged care with many people dropping in to see the range of services we offer," she said.

Tasmanian Coordinator of Community Services Lee Marsh said the Hub, pictured above, had hosted a number of information sessions, including updates and changes to government support and how to maximise Home Care Packages (HCPs) when Federal Government reforms come into effect.

"The information sessions have been very popular, averaging 12 to 15 people each session," she said.

"We've received really good feedback from attendees, especially for sessions around advocacy, equipment in the home and nutrition for older people.

"We've received over 100 enquiries about UA services resulting in the delivery of Level 2 and Level 4 packages as well as clients for Cottage Club respite."

The expansion of Community Services continues in Victoria where UA is finalising the transfer of 273

Home Care Packages (HCPs) in the Loddon Mallee region.

From mid-December the transfer of HCPs from Swan Hill Rural City Council to UA will be complete. A number of new and co-located offices are currently being planned in regional towns including Echuca, Mildura, Swan Hill, Kerang, Bendigo and Serpentine.

To support the expansion of HCPs, and in preparation for the Federal Government reforms, Community Services staff have been promoting UA services at expos and conferences, speaking to community members and referrers and undertaking further training to help clients better utilise their packages.

From February 27, clients will have greater choice in choosing their HCP provider. In addition, when they leave their home care program, unused package funds will be returned to the Department of Health.

Project Manager Service Development Cate Keane said UA staff played an important role in advising clients how to make the most of their package.

"It's about helping clients identify areas they can access extra assistance, making full use of their funding and ensuring they continue to remain independent and doing things important to them," she said.

For information about Community Services, including Home Care Packages, contact the Uniting AgeWell team on 1300 783 435. 



2002 Fashions on the Field winner Arabella Forge, three-time Melbourne Cup winning jockey Jim Johnson, Uniting AgeWell CEO Andrew Kinnersly and Victoria Racing Club Manager Racing Engagement and Cup Tour Joe McGrath

Emirates Melbourne Cup stops by Kingsville

There were feathers and flowers, horses and heroes, delectable delicacies and engaging entertainers.

After weeks of preparation and anticipation, Uniting AgeWell welcomed the Emirates Melbourne Cup Tour to its Kingsville Community for a morning of reminiscence and celebration on October 21.

The site was fortunate to be selected as one of only 34 destinations for the Cup's Australasian Tour, as it made its way to Flemington for the "race that stops the nation" on November 1.

Clients had spent weeks preparing for the event in the Amarco Apartments lounge.

The aged care residents created hundreds of paper flowers to decorate a rose arbour, with assistance from volunteers from Victoria University as part of their V4U volunteer day.

Community clients created miniature wooden racing horses that decorated the lounge, and the ladies of Kingsville finalised their outfits by making hats and fascinators in a special workshop with milliner Diane Kilduff of Hatiness.

Uniting AgeWell CEO Andrew Kinnersly said the event illustrated the organisation's commitment to community connection and encouraging older people to live and age well.

"Many of our clients have lived most of their lives in the Kingsville and Footscray areas and have

memories about local sporting events including the Melbourne Cup and Spring Racing Carnival in nearby Flemington," he said.

"Capturing that tradition in hosting the Emirates Melbourne Cup is a powerful way of evoking some of those memories and emotions in older people."

Three-time Melbourne Cup winning jockey and Australian Racing Hall of Fame inductee Jim Johnson, and 2002 Fashions on the Field Winner Arabella Forge, were the guests of honour.

Jim told stories about his historic wins, while Arabella shared her experience of taking out Fashions on the Field as a young university student.

"It's a great feeling that you don't realise at the time but stands by you later in life," Jim said of his wins.

For Amarco resident John Stainsby, who won the door prize of a lunch for two at The Langham hotel, the event brought back fond memories of seeing horse training near his family home in Maribyrnong.

"Being so close to the tracks, I used to see them train all the time," he said.

The event also included a delectable morning tea, photographic displays of Flemington and the local area by the Footscray Historical Society, photo opportunities with the Cup and entertainment from jazz quartet, the Jazzbos. 🐾



L-R: Senior Hotel Services Manager, Melissa Nicholson; MIS Rosetta, Denise Hallam; Lillian Martin Acting Care Manager, Frances Schroeter; CEO, Andrew Kinnersly; Acting General Manager Tasmania, Jane Johnston; MIS Lillian Martin, Vicki Mills; UA Deputy Board Chair, Wendy Quinn; MIS Ningana, Melitta Baker, UA Board Chair Rev Allan Thompson

UA acknowledged at Tasmanian Awards

Uniting AgeWell's commitment to seniors was recognised at the 2016 Tasmanian Community Achievement Awards.

UA was a finalist in the Employer Excellence in Aged Care category along with organisations including The Salvation Army Barrington Lodge, Mt St Vincent Nursing Home and KinCare Tasmania.

Uniting AgeWell Acting General Manager Tasmania Jane Johnston said they were humbled to be in such company.

"Congratulations to The Salvation Army Barrington Lodge on taking the top prize and the other amazing finalists in the category," Jane said.

The awards, presented at the Grand Chancellor Hobart on November 5, were attended by UA Board Chair Rev Allan Thompson, Deputy Board Chair Wendy Quinn, CEO Andrew Kinnersly, a number of senior staff and Manager Integrated Services (MIS) from across Hobart.

Jane said it was an incredible night and meeting the other finalists and winners left her truly inspired.

"Thank you to the organisers of the Gala Presentation Dinner," she said. "It was a great

opportunity to be in the same room with so many different organisations and individuals all contributing to our community."

The Awards recognise and acknowledge aged care facilities, individuals, organisations, not-for-profits and businesses making a positive difference in the community.

The aged care category is awarded to an organisation with a strong focus on staff engagement, safety and wellbeing, training and providing staff with learning and development opportunities. It also recognises the provision of quality services for clients and residents.

Jane said being a finalist was testimony to the great work of Uniting AgeWell's staff and how they made a positive difference to the lives of Tasmanian seniors every day.

"Aged care can be a demanding but also rewarding area to work," she said.

Uniting AgeWell has more than 760 employees across Tasmania and is the leading not-for-profit provider in aged care services in the state, providing residential and community services to more than 1,000 people. 



Alan Wheatley, Men's Shed Project Officer Ian Fenton, Robert Rapoport and Mark Stevens

Materials from Moorfields put to good use

Hardwood that once made up built-in shelves and wardrobes at Uniting AgeWell's disused Hawthorn site is being recycled and made into coffee tables for asylum seekers settling in Victoria.

As the old buildings are prepared for demolition to make way for a major new residential facility and retirement living complex, UA is eagerly finding new ways to recycle and reuse materials from old furniture items.

UA Facility Services Project Administration Officer Rebekah Lamb said in recent years the former Moorfields and Broadmead buildings in Hawthorn had been home to the Facilities team and they had also accumulated many unwanted furniture items in good working condition from other UA sites.

"We don't want these items to go to waste and are looking for new ways to recycle and reuse," she said.

"Operating sustainably and doing the right thing for our community is very important for the organisation."

Hawthorn Centre Men's Shed Project Officer, Ian Fenton, agrees and has taken the opportunity to recycle the furniture to build coffee tables for West Welcome Wagon, a not-for-profit organisation that helps settle asylum seekers.

"The timbers used in wardrobes are Tasmanian Oak, which is extremely high quality and can be easily recycled," he said.

"Local carpenter, Mark Stevens, one of our volunteers, and I are disassembling the wardrobes and taking the materials back to the Shed, where we're running community workshops, with the assistance of local carpenters, to teach men how to make coffee tables.

"We're aiming to make 15 coffee tables over the next few weeks to donate to West Welcome Wagon to pass on to asylum seekers settling in our communities."

Ian said once the Men's Shed had met the quota, participants could choose to keep their work for a small fee, with all proceeds going back into Men's Shed programs.

The redevelopment of UA's Manningtree Road site in Hawthorn also coincides with the redevelopment of Lumeah in Bruce Street, West Preston.

Construction is scheduled to begin at both sites in early 2017, with practical completion expected in late 2018.

Anyone with information about not-for-profit organisations who could benefit from the furniture recycling program, please contact Rebekah Lamb on 9815 6900. 

Front cover: Client Fay Collins with her hand made bag from the Cottage Club

We appreciate your feedback and welcome any story ideas.

Contact: Communications and Social Media Advisor, John Le at JLe@unitingagewell.org or call 03 9276 5718.

Uniting AgeWell is an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia