

> DoveTale

SUMMER, 2018



News from across Uniting AgeWell communities





➤ CEO's message

It has been a difficult time for the aged care industry with an impending Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and recent media reports documenting some confronting and unacceptable failures in the care of older Australians.

Uniting AgeWell welcomes the Royal Commission as an opportunity to review the strengths and areas for improvement in our vital sector, and make changes that will ensure the wellbeing and quality of life for older people is protected.

Uniting AgeWell is dedicated to providing our customers with the quality of care they rightly expect and deserve. I regularly visit our residences, AgeWell Centres and community offices and witness first-hand the high-quality care our dedicated and passionate staff deliver each and every day.

In meeting and talking with our customers about their experiences, I have found the overwhelming majority of people are really happy with the care and support they receive.

At times like this, it is disappointing the positive stories of aged care – the strong bonds formed between staff, residents and their families, the compassion shown by the vast majority of people working in the industry, and the person-centred care many providers strive to deliver – are not always shared.

Throughout the months ahead, we will be working hard to share with the community some of these positive aged care stories and I encourage you all to share your own. And if you ever have any concerns about our care and services, please don't hesitate to bring them to our attention. We remain focussed

on the quality of life and experience of our customers to ensure they continue to receive the highest standard of care and support possible.

I am proud to share in this edition of DoveTale, our new Customer Promise, Customer Charter, which demonstrates how our services, our staff and our way of working will help older people to live well with choice and peace of mind.

The Charter sits alongside our Community Engagement and Participation Framework and Plan developed by the AgeWell Community Advisory Committee, which outlines how we will partner with customers, families, carers and the community in decision-making at all levels of the organisation and the actions we will take to make this happen. You can find out more about the Plan on our website.

And I am very pleased to advise that highly regarded home care services provider Guardian Network became part of Uniting AgeWell in October. With a shared commitment to providing quality, person-centred home care and support services, the acquisition of Guardian Network will strengthen our presence in aged care and enable us to provide services to a new group of clients as we work to meet the demand of an expanding home care market.

As 2018 draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a joyous and peaceful Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Andrew Kinnersly
CEO



Uniting AgeWell has launched its new Customer Promise, Customer Charter.

Developed in consultation with customers and staff, it illustrates what's important to our customers and how our staff and services support them.

The Customer Promise, Customer Charter underpins our commitment to service excellence and sums up what customers can expect from Uniting AgeWell.

It focuses the organisation on what we should be doing best – helping older people to live well with choice and peace of mind.

The charter sets out five key undertakings that will be embedded into staff practice and accountabilities.

Live well with choice and peace of mind

1. You're at the heart of everything we do

We will always treat you with respect and dignity and ensure you feel valued and supported. You're in control and we're here to provide the services you require to continue living well and doing what's important to you.

2. We will support you every step of the way

Your goals and needs are our priority. We will listen, support, advise and work with you to connect you to the right services – now and into the future. We are responsive and flexible, and will be a trusted partner in your care.

3. We will provide high quality, safe services

We never compromise on keeping you safe and giving you the best of care. You can have peace of mind that our services demonstrate best practice, are safe, effective and appropriate. Your wellbeing is always our primary concern.

4. Our staff are friendly, skilled and reliable

We're here to help you get the most out of life. You can expect prompt, enthusiastic and professional support from our qualified and welcoming staff who share our commitment to care. When we promise to do something, we'll do it.

5. We will listen and learn

Your voice and ideas are important to us. We're constantly striving to find new and better ways of doing things. We welcome and seek your feedback, listen to your stories and concerns, keep you informed and take action when and where it is needed.



➤ Proud to belong

I have been fortunate over the past few weeks to visit several of our residential sites and meet the residents, community clients, families, volunteers and staff who contribute to building our strong communities.

Our Celebration of Ageing Well events, coinciding with Seniors Week in October, were a wonderful opportunity for the members of the Board and Executive team to connect with the residents, clients, families, staff and volunteers across all services, to acknowledge the many achievements of the past 12 months, to celebrate milestone birthdays, and to say a very big 'thank you' to all staff and volunteers for providing services with care, empathy and love.

With many events featuring fun themes from Mad Hatter's tea parties to resident art exhibitions, there were high levels of participation and I was able to witness the benefits of social interaction and the sense of accomplishment among the residents and staff.

I met many people who encapsulated the 'living well' philosophy and met families who were proud to share their own positive experiences of Uniting AgeWell. In reflecting on the Celebration of Ageing Well, I felt an enormous sense of pride regarding the quality of services we provide, the professionalism of our staff, and our very clear focus on becoming better at what we do.

The quality of food is one of the biggest areas of complaint across the entire aged care sector and it's something the Board, together with Uniting AgeWell staff, are very well aware of. We know good nutrition leads to better health outcomes for residents, so we have adopted several new initiatives to boost our staff knowledge and improve the overall dining experience for our residents.

I had the great pleasure of participating in one of those initiatives when I attended Masterclass 2018 in Hobart in October and was extremely impressed by the talents of our chefs. As a judge of the team cooking competition, I tasted and scored fresh, immaculately presented and delicious main meals and desserts prepared by our chefs, along with their creative table settings, which added to the excitement of the day.

This initiative enables us to encourage team work, communication and innovation, which leads to service improvements and better resident outcomes. I was really impressed to witness the camaraderie among our chefs and their passion for providing excellent food, as were our other judges, including three lovely ladies from one of our Hobart residences.

Raelene Thompson
Board Chair



› Celebrating our community

Wacky hats and high tea; Country 'n' Western music and cowboy hats; tropical punch and Hawaiian leis; art exhibitions and choirs – the Celebration of Ageing Well brought out some fun ideas and great entertainment combinations.

The Celebration of Ageing Well is a two-week festival in October, coinciding with Seniors Week in Victoria and Tasmania, that recognises the many wonderful people who make up Uniting AgeWell.

Residences marked the celebration with historic displays, choir performances, art shows, dress-up parties and catered events encouraging families, residents, clients, staff and Board members to join in the festivities.

Uniting AgeWell CEO Andrew Kinnersly, who attended 15 of the Celebration of Ageing Well events, said he enjoyed each of the unique occasions.

“It was a joy to visit so many of our residences and meet the residents, clients, families, staff and volunteers that contribute to making Uniting AgeWell the great organisation that it is.”

Camberwell Community, Condare Court celebrated with an art exhibition and choir performance, while quirky hats and dramatic dress-ups were featured at Strath-Haven Community's Mad Hatters' Tea Party in Bendigo.

In northern Tasmania, Latrobe Community, Strathdevon celebrated the history of its hometown with a display of old photos, newspapers, household items and war memorabilia.

Rosetta Community, Strathaven in Hobart, pictured, was transformed into an American diner for its *Grease* party, based on the movie. A three-piece band and local dance group performed 1950s rock 'n' roll dancing, and a photo booth was set up for residents, families, volunteers and staff to enjoy.

Across Uniting AgeWell services and sites, twenty awards were presented to clients who turned 100 this year, and to 160 clients who turned 90.

Several Uniting AgeWell sites also presented staff with awards for years of service to the organisation during the Celebration of Ageing Well, including Kings Meadows Community, Aldersgate's Gaylene Morris who was recognised for an outstanding 40 years of service. 🕊



➤ Helping more people at home

Living on the land means everything to Echuca's Fred Bridgewater. He was born on a farm in western Victoria and spent his life in shearing sheds, driving across the countryside as a seed grader and representing his rural council.

But a severe stroke seven years ago almost stripped him of the rural life he loved. Fred and his wife Shirley would have left their property by now, if not for the ongoing support Uniting AgeWell has provided.

Fred and Shirley are among almost 1,400 people Uniting AgeWell supports through Home Care Packages. In the 2017-18 financial year, Uniting AgeWell delivered 266,092 hours of care, 18,950 hours of respite and enabled clients to attend 78,926 outings.

General Manager Strategy and Business Development Fonda Voukelatos said Uniting AgeWell experienced 23 per cent growth in the number of home care packages it delivered between December 2017 and July 2018 and a massive 81 per cent increase since June 2016.

"The 2017 Federal Government reforms to home care funding have placed immense pressure on all aged care providers and created intense market competition," he said.

"We have seen a 70 per cent increase in approved aged care providers Australia-wide since December

2016 and the Government's release of packages has fallen well below its own estimates.

"Uniting AgeWell has continued to expand in this competitive market which is a positive endorsement of the quality of tailored care and support we are able to provide people in their own homes."

Fred and Shirley have received a range of supports to enable them to live well with choice and peace of mind. Uniting AgeWell has arranged a bathroom renovation, provides domestic cleaning and personal care for Fred and supported the couple to remain active members of their community.

"Every week they provide respite so I can have a night out, and they help with Fred's social group and exercise classes," Shirley said.

That support means Fred, now aged 81, is able to continue enjoying "the freedom of the country" in the home he bought more than 40 years ago.

"Fred is fantastic," Shirley said. "He has always had a veggie garden and he still loves it. He hops across on his wheelchair and sees the neighbour with the horses and cattle, he watches television and reads the newspaper." 🐦



For more information on Uniting AgeWell's tailored home care packages, call T: 1300 783 435.

Share your feedback

Receiving feedback from customers can lead to great enhancements to services that benefit everyone Uniting AgeWell supports.

Feedback from the family of a resident recently led to a significant improvement in the way the organisation manages end-of-life care.

Client Services Coordinator Nickie Arthur said the daughter of a resident contacted Uniting AgeWell months after her mother passed away to praise staff for their care delivery and also suggest improvements to the palliative care process.

The ideas included improvements to the lighting, noise levels and ambiance of rooms where palliative care takes place.

“Our Palliative Care Specialist reviewed the situation in response to that particular feedback and found a lack of consistency regarding end-of-life and palliative care across our residences,” said Nickie.

“To address this, we introduced boxes or trolleys containing items appropriate for end-of-life care – like a CD player and CDs, lamps, diffusers and essential oils – along with a checklist for staff.”

The palliative care boxes and trolleys, pictured, ensure all staff have direct access to resources they need when the time comes, so families experience a thoughtful and considered process for end-of-life care.

Uniting AgeWell values and responds to all types of customer feedback.



“We are constantly looking at ways we can improve and enhance our standards of care and service delivery,” Nickie said.

“It also allows us to build and maintain open communication with customers, staff and other stakeholders.”

Customers and their families can provide feedback via paper Feedback Forms, face to face, email, phone, the Uniting AgeWell website and review platforms. They also have the opportunity to give feedback at family conferences, resident meetings, through surveys and customer experience interviews. 



If you would like to provide feedback, visit the website (unitingagewell.org/feedback) or call T: 1300 783 435.

You said

We did

Temperature of food was variable at point of service

Introduced bain-maries at all of our residences

More access to a variety of drinks, particularly in the hot weather

Introduced hydration stations, enabling residents and visitors to serve their own drinks

Confusion about Commonwealth Government funding changes

Hosted financial education sessions for families and residents

Staff wanted quick access to policy and clinical documents

Implemented a new online policy system, PROMPT



➤ Chefs create ultimate dining experience

Uniting AgeWell turned the heat up on its chefs, testing their skills with a unique *MasterChef*-style cook-off as part of a broad range of tactics designed to boost the overall dining experience for residents in aged care.

Masterclass 2018 saw 24 chefs from across Victoria and Tasmania working in four teams of six to create the ultimate aged care dining experience at the PFD Food Services Tasmania Trade Show in Hobart in October.

The teams had just 90 minutes to create a main course and dessert dish that adhered to the aged care dietary guidelines as well as a table setting for the judging panel that included three Uniting AgeWell residents.

Doris Thackery, from Uniting AgeWell's Mornington Community, Lillian Martin, said judging Masterclass 2018 was a "wonderful experience" and each dish was delicately presented.

"The meals were delicious and they weren't just thrown on a plate, they were presented really well," she said.

Blue team, which presented a pan fried salmon dish with roasted vegetables, beetroot and roasted capsicum sauce and lemon basil pesto, topped with crunchy sweet potato chips, followed by a raspberry and orange flan, was declared Masterclass 2018 winner.

Uniting AgeWell CEO Andrew Kinnersly said Masterclass was among a range of initiatives the organisation introduced to enhance the quality of food at its residences and the overall dining experience for residents.



"This event is a great way to support our chefs to create tasty and nicely presented dishes that adhere to the aged care dietary guidelines, and take what they learned back to their kitchens for the benefit of residents," he said.

The organisation has held training days with top international and national chefs – including George Calombaris and Mark Baylis – and with food suppliers and manufacturers to keep chefs up-to-date with the best food available.

Masterclass 2017 earned Uniting AgeWell an ACSA Victoria Aged Care Award for Innovation in Service or Design, which recognises a program, project or initiative that shows originality to improve the lives of older Australians.

Uniting AgeWell would like to acknowledge the sponsors who made Masterclass 2018 possible: PFD Food Services, Tasmanian Hotel and Catering Supplies, Nestle, Rubbermaid, Fresh Cut, Map Coffee and Kraft Heinz. 🐦



› Upskilling staff for better outcomes

Sixteen years into her career in aged care, Care Worker Clare Alford took the opportunity to broaden her skills under a new Uniting AgeWell program.

Uniting AgeWell introduced a unique training program to upskill existing care workers with allied health skills.

The organisation introduced Allied Health Assistant positions at Hobart aged care residences and is supporting the staff to complete a Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance.

“I thought it was an opportunity to expand my knowledge and add another feather in my cap, as far as my abilities to work across the broader spectrum of aged care,” Clare said.

The Allied Health Assistants at Mornington Community, Lillian Martin, Queenborough Rise Community and Sorell Community, Ningana, are trained to support residents with pain management through heat pack therapy or gentle massage.

They also coordinate preventative activities like walking and exercise groups that combine social elements and prevention through physical health, and a hydrotherapy program.

“The training has certainly made me more aware of changes in residents’ physical and mental conditions and given me a lot more scope to think outside the box about their needs,” Clare said.

“I think we have improved, as far as meeting residents’ emotional needs, because of the social side of the program, with hydrotherapy classes and the exercise groups.”

A number of care staff were also trained in basic foot care, so they can manage minor issues and free up podiatrists to see residents with more complex needs.

The introduction of the Allied Health Assistant role and upskilling of other care staff has resulted in several positive outcomes for residents. The most significant improvements include a reduction in falls with injuries at the residences and a reduction in referrals to the physiotherapist for pain and mobility assessments.

Following the successful trial, the Allied Health Assistant position is being rolled out at other Uniting AgeWell residences in Tasmania. 



➤ Golf Day proceeds to grant more wishes

More than 80 competitors took to the golf course on November 19 committed to supporting Uniting AgeWell clients to achieve their dreams.

Uniting AgeWell's sixth Annual Charity Golf Day at the spectacular Commonwealth Golf Club in Oakleigh raised much-needed funds towards the organisation's Wishing Well program.

In the past 12 months, the Wishing Well has helped many people realise their dreams. They include Brian, who travelled on the Spirit of Tasmania; Helen, who attended the WWE Super Showdown wrestling event in Melbourne; and John, who travelled by limousine to a special anniversary dinner with his wife.

Uniting AgeWell CEO Andrew Kinnersly said the generous support of sponsors and players at the Annual Charity Golf Day had a direct impact on the lives of older people and their families.

"Since our last golf day, we've been able to fulfil 20 wishes and have another 13 pending. Ninety wishes have been granted since the program began four years ago," he said.

"We could not do this without our generous supporters. Their partnership in our work, financial commitment and time and energy taking part in the Charity Golf Day truly makes a difference."

Perpetual Trophy honours went to Stella Renovations in a very tight contest between first, second and third placegetters.

Visit the Uniting AgeWell website or Facebook page to see more of the players in action. 🏊



The winning team from Stella Renovations

Platinum sponsors



Gold sponsors



Silver sponsors: CH2, Dominant (Australia), Grant Thornton, Laundry Solutions, Procura, Registered Electrical Contractors, Reward Hospitality, Solutions Three, SP&R Air-Conditioning, Stella Renovations, Thomson Adsett

Bronze sponsor: Asaleo Care (Tena)

Hole-in-one sponsor: Maxi-Care Promotions

Drinks cart sponsor: Lion Dairy & Drinks

Major raffle sponsor: VRC Landscapes

› A wish like no other

Uniting AgeWell resident Helen Cherrie doesn't appear to be your stereotypical WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) fan, but a recent Wishing Well experience showed she really is one of the crew.

The Kingsville Community resident is often found watching the spectacle on TV from her room, cheering on the villains and heroes.

"I just started watching it on TV and I thought, 'This is good' and I kept watching it," she said.

"My brothers say it's all an act but I don't care; love it."

When the WWE announced it was coming to Melbourne for the live Super Show-Down in early October, Helen wished to go but never thought it would be possible.

That's when Kingsville Community Leisure and Lifestyle Coordinator Michael Silva stepped in. He contacted the Wishing Well program and set the wheels in motion for Helen's dream night.

"I knew it was an unusual request for a lady in her 60s to go to the wrestling, but Uniting AgeWell didn't make a judgment," Michael said.

"The Wishing Well program moved mountains to get Helen to the Show-Down and I'm really proud to be part of an organisation that makes these things happen for residents."

The wish included a pre-show dinner anywhere of Helen's choosing and, to Michael's surprise, she chose "Maccas".

Helen was "in her element" at the MCG, watching the characters from TV step into the ring and battle it out for Super Show-Down champion status.

"I've never seen such unbridled joy," Michael said. "For the period of time she forgot about the things she was unable to do and was connected with everyone there."

"We were sitting behind a group of bikies and it was amazing because when the bouts started they all started high fiving each other and Helen joined in."

Helen said the atmosphere was "absolutely great" and she was thrilled to take home her program and t-shirt, and display her framed ticket on the wall of her room.

Helen's wish, and so many others like it, are made possible through corporate sponsorships and participating teams at Uniting AgeWell's Annual Charity Golf Day, as well as donors who contribute to the Wishing Well appeal. 🐦



➤ AgeWell on TV



Uniting AgeWell is hosting four episodes of a new exercise series on Channel 31, focussing on how to keep seniors living well at home.

Move It Or Lose It, which aims to help viewers improve their fitness, flexibility and endurance; build strength and balance; and increase circulation and coordination, is one of the most popular series on the community television network.

The program first aired in 2012 and its episodes have been popular among YouTube viewers, with one being viewed 18,161 times. Channel 31 is developing a new series, set to air in December 2018.

Regional Manager, AgeWell Centres Melbourne, Amanda Mehegan, said Uniting AgeWell jumped at the opportunity to be part of the successful program.

"The core demographic that watched the original *Move It Or Lose It* series – women over the age of 55 – is also an important one for us," she said.

"The viewers of *Move It Or Lose It* have been among Channel 31's most engaged viewers so it's an opportunity for us to be exposed to an already engaged audience that we hope will become future clients of ours."

Uniting AgeWell produced four episodes of the new series around strong bones, balance and falls prevention, exercise around the home and Bollywood dancing, as an easy and enjoyable way to keep fit. They were all filmed at Uniting AgeWell Noble Park Community.

Staff were involved in the development of the programs and acted as presenters in front of the camera, while real clients also acted in the exercise classes.

Visit the Channel 31 website (c31.org.au) for updates on the latest series of *Move It Or Lose It*. 🐦



How can we support you to live well with choice and peace of mind? Find out today, by calling our friendly team on 1300 783 435 or visit unitingagewell.org

We appreciate your feedback and welcome any story ideas.

Contact: Communications and Social Media Advisor Caitlin Pearson at cpearson@unitingagewell.org or call T: 9133 5018.



Uniting AgeWell

*Front Cover:
Margaret Allum and Evelyn Carroll were cooking up a storm at Newnham Community, Aldersgate Village as part of Uniting AgeWell's leisure and lifestyle program.*

Uniting AgeWell is an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia