

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER



2020 Year in Review

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Thank you to all of the people who appear in this 2020 Year in Review and for sharing your stories.

Front cover photograph features

Gippsland Home Care clients

Helen and Pete Bowman and on this page,
Melbourne North West Metro Home Care
client Joyce Galea.



Uniting AgeWell supports thousands of older people to live well across Victoria and Tasmania in their own homes, in residential care and in retirement living communities.

An organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia, Uniting AgeWell takes a holistic approach to care and service delivery, mindful of not only a person's physical health needs but also their social, emotional, spiritual and religious needs.

Understanding that irrespective of age, people want to live satisfying and fulfilled lives of their own choosing, where they can be active and connected members of their community and live well with dignity and respect, is the foundation for the way we deliver services.

We have experienced the most extraordinary of years; one dominated by the events of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

This Year in Review reflects Uniting AgeWell's response to the unfolding challenges we faced, and highlights and celebrates the growth, improvements and initiatives we implemented.

We give thanks for the compassion and commitment of our staff to ensure the highest standard of care and service continued to be delivered to our customers each and every day.

Note: This Year in Review spans the period July 2019 to October 2020.



BOARD CHAIR AND CEO REPORT

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

How our world has changed!

A Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, nationwide bushfires that blackened so much of our great nation, and a global pandemic of a scale not seen for more than 100 years.

The past year has been a once in a lifetime test of resilience, leadership and governance, culture, quality and safety, and financial strength. The Uniting AgeWell family has come through this test extremely well, and we are enormously proud of our Board, our Executive Team, our managers and our wonderful staff who have given so much.

Our mission is to provide high quality and safe care to the most vulnerable people in our communities. Fundamental to this mission is our ability to protect our residents and clients.

We acknowledge with pride, the efforts of our Home Care team to protect clients when bushfires ravaged Gippsland heading into late December 2019 and into 2020. And significantly, the collective efforts of the entire Uniting AgeWell community to keep residents and clients and each other safe from the perils of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Uniting AgeWell has proven to be strong and resilient in the face of these enormous challenges, and despite ongoing challenges for the aged care sector, we are well positioned to grow and to become stronger.

The pandemic

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global community has been profound, and for aged care providers, extreme; particularly in Melbourne as the virus took hold from July to September 2020.

As you will read in this Year in Review, Uniting AgeWell's response to COVID-19 has been extremely effective; a reflection of well-embedded infection control protocols and guidelines, strong governance (particularly clinical governance), exceptional leadership at all levels, resilient and professional staff, and a culture of quality and safety above all else.

Decisions to invest in stockpiling Personal Protective Equipment, additional care and hospitality staff, and technology to support

connectivity between residents, clients and families, were all critical in helping Uniting AgeWell navigate an incredibly difficult period.

Quality and safety

At the time of writing this report, the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has concluded after two years of public hearings, countless submissions, and the telling of stories that in many instances have been very difficult to hear. It is these stories that will result in the enormous change that our elders so rightly deserve.

Uniting AgeWell has played its part in helping to inform the Commissioners by actively engaging with them through submissions, hearings and forums, and we will continue to actively engage with Government via UnitingCare Australia to ensure that the key recommendations handed down by the Commissioners are respected and acted upon, particularly with regard to the dire need for additional resourcing for the aged care sector.

Uniting AgeWell continues to strengthen Board and clinical governance and quality and safety systems and processes, including the continued commitment to 24/7 Registered Nurse coverage and additional care staff for all Uniting AgeWell aged care facilities; and investment in incident reporting, risk management, education and enhanced protocols enabling all of our facilities and services to remain fully compliant. We did this not because it was necessarily affordable, but because it was the right thing to do.

Governance, leadership and strategy

Uniting AgeWell became an incorporated entity from 1 July 2019. Incorporation was a very significant body of work, and thanks go to all staff that contributed to this process, and to the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania for the confidence shown in the Uniting AgeWell Board and Executive to take this important step.

The development of the next generation of Uniting AgeWell's Strategic Plan is under way. Many of the strategies outlined in the 2017-20 Strategic Plan have been implemented and provide a strong foundation for our strategic footprint moving forward.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Rev Dr Mark Lawrence and Ms Jill Linklater for their significant contributions to the Uniting AgeWell Board over many years. Jill and Mark both retired from the Board during 2019. In their time on the Board, both were central to enhancing governance within our organisation. We also welcomed Rev Colin Gurteen to the Board in July 2019 and we look forward to working closely with Colin in the years ahead.

Rev John Broughton resigned from the Director of Mission role in January 2020, and we thank John for his contribution. We were also thrilled to appoint Rev Clare Brockett to the role in June 2020.

A focus on the future

Uniting AgeWell continues to grow its services, particularly in home and community care. In 2016, Uniting AgeWell managed 500 Home Care Packages. Today, that number is 2000, with most of that achieved through organic growth built on high quality services and a strong reputation.

We also significantly increased the number of Commonwealth Home Support Programme clients we support as a result of strategic partnerships with a number of metropolitan city councils, which have chosen Uniting AgeWell as the preferred partner to transition these services to.

It has also been an important period with regard to capital development, with our Preston and Hawthorn projects completed in November 2019 and February 2020 respectively. The Hawthorn project also included the Manningtree independent living complex, with all 49 apartments fully sold prior to the project being completed. The successful sale of these apartments meant that approximately eight per cent of the entire Hawthorn project has been recouped, with significant additional cash flow to come as the aged care facility attracts new admissions.

Financial strength and challenge

The aged care sector has faced widespread financial challenges over the past two years, and Uniting AgeWell has not been immune. As clearly articulated throughout the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, funding for aged

care has not kept pace with cost increases across the sector. The funding shortfalls have been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, whereby costs have grown exponentially and revenue has taken a substantial hit through reduced occupancy of aged care facilities.

Despite these challenges, Uniting AgeWell is extremely well placed in terms of financial strength. Unlike many of our peers, Uniting AgeWell has a very strong balance sheet, we have no borrowings and hold cash and investments to the value of \$221M. And while the pandemic has resulted in additional expenses of some \$10M, we will confidently navigate the current challenges and be well placed to assess acquisition opportunities as they present, and grow our services to meet the needs of our communities across Victoria and Tasmania.

We are extremely grateful for the ongoing trust, support and feedback of our residents, clients and their families, and for the dedication and commitment of our amazing staff and volunteers. Through our shared experiences, we will strive to shape a brighter future for older Australians as we deliver quality care with compassion, dignity and respect.

Raelene Thompson
Board Chair

Andrew Kinnersly
Chief Executive Officer

OUR VISION

Uniting AgeWell: The Church at Work. A creative leader enabling communities to age well and individuals to live to their potential.

OUR MISSION

To provide specialised services enabling older people to maximise their wellbeing and access care when required.

OUR VALUES

As part of the Uniting Church we live out the practical expression of Christian faith and values. Our behaviours and choices are guided by:

- Respect
- Partnership
- Wisdom
- Fairness
- Stewardship



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

“Everything that happened should have left us reeling, but instead it’s made us stronger. I am continually amazed at our people’s ability to adapt and meet the challenges.”

Andrew Kinnersly, CEO

Our teams are carers, nurses, cooks, cleaners and chaplains. They work in lifestyle, allied health, administration, maintenance and corporate services.

They work in our residences, in people's homes, and remotely, creating a tightly woven network of professional care and support.

Connection looked different in 2020 with Zooms and teleconferencing the norm.

One of the many innovations was the love window where residents, like David Hamilton, 87, chatted to their loved ones via mobile phone as they stood on the other side of the glass. His wife, Marion, says this worked well during periods of restricted visiting to sites.

In 2020, rapidly changing events created a landscape of continual change, sometimes requiring daily adaptations.

While the Uniting AgeWell Board and Senior Executive Team made numerous difficult and pre-emptive decisions to protect clients, residents and staff, operationalising our response required every single member of our organisation to step forward and transform the way we work.

Uniting AgeWell engaged the broader community of residents, clients, families and corporate partners and contractors to meet every challenge.

It took a village and a shared commitment to successfully ensure:

- 0 workplace transmission of COVID-19
- 0 residents test positive for COVID-19

Drawing on deep experience and guided by our mission and values, the decision to draw on funds from our reserves was made without hesitation to ensure the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all those in our care. We did this not because it was affordable, but because it was the right thing to do.



Significant investment in stockpiling Personal Protective Equipment



Additional care and hotel services staff appointed



Technology investment to support connectivity between residents, clients and families

OUR VILLAGE

Pivoting in 2020 meant doing what needed to be done to ensure residents, clients and staff not only felt safe, but were safe. By continuing to be true to our mission and placing our clients and residents' quality of life, safety and wellbeing at the heart of everything we do, meant that how we responded to COVID-19 was always focussed on achieving the most appropriate outcome for each person, within the context of pandemic restrictions.



2016 residents in 20 residential aged care communities

543 residents in 22 independent living communities



7,546 clients living in their own homes received 375,575 hours of service including:

- 2,177 people accessing services through Home Care Packages
- 4,916 people supported by Commonwealth Home Support Programme services
- 70,459 hours of in-home respite
- +2,000 clients from Maribyrnong and Hobsons Bay City Councils and +700 clients from Brimbank Council



1708 clients of AgeWell Centres received 29,972 hours of service in their homes during lockdown



2,913 staff including **1,000** home care services staff working mobile and remotely



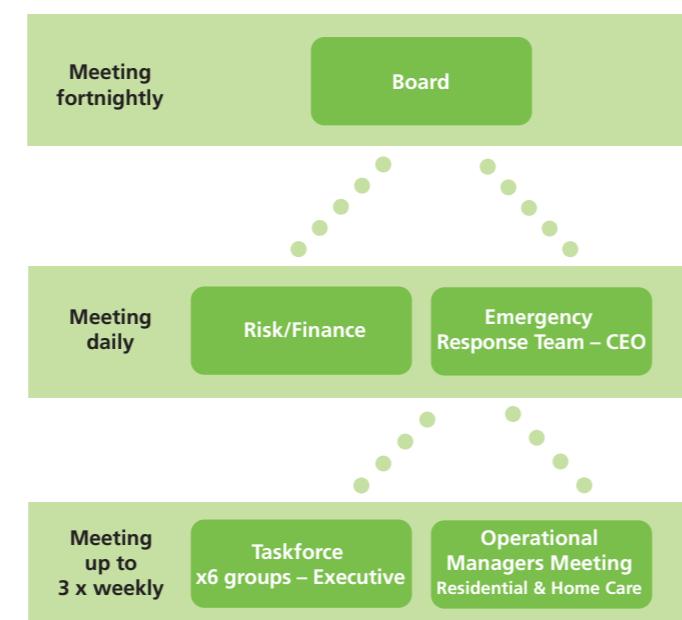
1,547,235 meals provided in residential care and **157,209** Meals on Wheels supplied to Tasmanians an increase of 11,365 on previous year

SWIFT, CONSIDERED LEADERSHIP

Using Uniting AgeWell's established organisational governance systems, the Board and Executive developed a risk profile to assess the emerging threat of the COVID-19 pandemic and consider the enterprise-wide treatments required to manage the identified risks.

- Uniting AgeWell's COVID-19 Emergency Response team was formed and chaired by the CEO. This multidisciplinary team included executive and senior managers and specialists from across the organisation. They, in tandem with all staff, were steadfast and worked tirelessly to keep our residents, clients, staff and community safe.
- Established six taskforces with key roles and responsibilities for:
 - Infection prevention and control
 - Workforce
 - Personal protective equipment
 - Communications
 - Home care
 - IT/Corporate mobility

COVID-19 governance structure



Workforce planning focus



OPERATIONALISING OUR WORKFORCE RESPONSE

Alert level = pandemic

January – CEO advised staff cannot work after returning from China until a 14 day isolation is undertaken. Paid leave to isolate.



February – all staff returning from overseas required to isolate for 14 days or until negative COVID-19 result. Paid leave.



March – visitor restrictions introduced at all Uniting Agewell facilities and one site staff restriction introduced.

Uniting AgeWell met these significant challenges head on implementing:

- Single site allocation of staff
- Cohorting of staff at sites
- Screening and follow up of staff
- Additional cleaning
- Communication to staff around outbreak management
- Enhanced education around infection control
- Extra resources to assist with lifestyle, screening and scouting for infection control practices
- Support to manage mental health impacts from COVID-19

PLENTIFUL PROTECTION

Uniting AgeWell responded proactively to create our own centrally co-ordinated stockpile of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which enabled Uniting AgeWell to respond quickly and not rely on access to government provisions.

- \$3.5 million spent on PPE
- community buses were commandeered for distribution reducing reliance on external distribution systems
- staff were re-deployed to control distribution of PPE



910,130 masks



1,425,350 gloves

164,875 gowns

10,400 face shields

83,600 aprons



2,753 goggles

MAINTAINING VIGILANCE

Ensuring our staff were thoroughly trained and felt confident and prepared for all elements of their roles in a COVID-safe work environment was of paramount importance.

100% of staff:

- ✓ undertook hand hygiene and infection control training
- ✓ completed COVID-19 online training provided by Uniting AgeWell and the Department of Health and Human Services
- ✓ trained and mentored each other in person, online and virtually
- ✓ had the flu vaccination

3,352 completed training sessions via online portal

4,855 views of training programs via mobile phone link

"A collective effort from the organisation provided our residents, clients and staff with a safe place to live and work. Strong business continuity planning and infection control management played a part in our success, but this is largely due to our staff who implemented the many and varied requirements of these plans each and every day."

Kristy Rebecca
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Director

GETTING AND STAYING CONNECTED

Uniting AgeWell quickly changed gears, and put plans into action to ensure continuity of services throughout this unprecedented period of change.

Working hard to maintain connection meant a rapid transformation to multi-platform digital communication across the organisation:

- corporate staff shifted to working from home
- residents and clients were connected with family, friends, services and health and social supports

More than just physically providing devices, staff, residents and clients needed to rapidly learn new technology, new applications and new ways of doing things.

Keeping people well informed and connected to each other was a priority. Staff were upskilled and many residents and clients reported feeling more connected to family and friends than ever before.



500 Tablets purchased and loaned to home care clients to enable connections to services and family.

100 Tablets and 50 Smartphones rolled out to 20 residential homes



123,900 people visited the Uniting AgeWell website including **850,677** page views of our dedicated COVID-19 section



304,182 SMS texts sent to staff with safety messages and filling shifts



169 newsletter-style updates sent to residents' families



Uniting AgeWell stories provided to 27 different daily and weekly newspapers across Victoria and Tasmania across print, digital and shared via social media to keep people informed



Answered 15,100 calls to our 1300 number



100+ CEO Updates and messages to staff, residents, clients and families

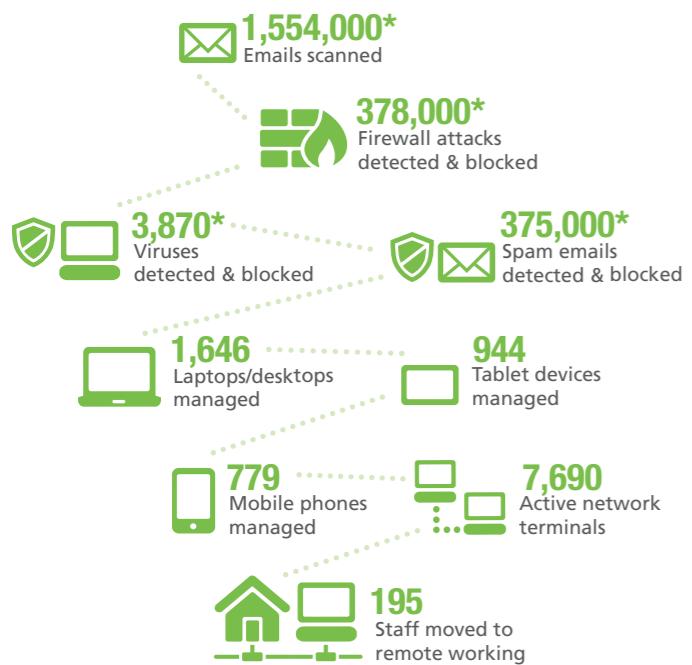


229 Facebook posts reached 1,502,624 people

TRANSFORMING OUR VIRTUAL VILLAGE

Technology underpinned the transformation of the way we delivered services in 2020.

- Establishment of a Board Digital Governance Advisory Committee to develop a Digital Governance Framework and oversee IT Initiatives and strategy.
- Implementation of the AlayaCare clinical system to facilitate optimal resident care and improve efficiency of documentation, clinical alerts and workflows, wound management and electronic medication management.
- Implementation of the Equifax HR solution to improve recruitment, on-boarding, credentialing and employee management.
- Implementation of contract management software to improve compliance, alerting and management.
- Implementation of the Nutanix platform and other network changes to enhance our cybersecurity infrastructure.



*Average per month for the period June 2019 – October 2020

MOBILISING AGEING WELL

With restrictions on movement a constant thread, finding new ways of supporting people to age well in their communities, meant sending our normally centre-based teams mobile and carving out innovative ways to keep people active, engaged and connected.

- Home visits enabled allied health services to be taken on the road, exercise programs to be converted to home-based programs, while activity bags were tailored to each client and delivered full of arts, crafts, word games, puzzles and more.
- Home care services were augmented to enable Uniting AgeWell to provide Essential Shopping and Escorted Transport services and meals delivered to people isolating at home.
- Clients living independently in the community were kept socially connected via Zoom and a collegiate sense of community encouraged through shared exercise and chat sessions.
- Uniting AgeWell's People and Culture team moved to a hub-and-spoke model to provide optimal support to our sites and services.
- Smart Home alert systems were installed for many clients to give them and their families greater peace of mind.

- 750** Home exercise programs, planned and sent to clients
- 800** Zoom exercise sessions delivered
- 1,280** Home visits for podiatry, physio and occupational therapy
- 480** Home visits for 1:1 social support including shopping and transport to medical appointments
- 800** Welfare calls to clients made each week

FINDING JOY IN VIBRANT LIVES

Knowing that community life is a complex web of engagement and activity, our residential and community teams worked hard to find ways to continue to support the activities in which people find joy.

In our residential settings, lifestyle staffing was increased to enable 1:1 sessions and multiple small-group sessions of the same activity to comply with density ratios, while multiple digital platforms were employed each day to reduce the risk of social isolation during periods of restricted visiting.



April Activities

1,462 facilitated Zoom/FaceTime/Skype calls
503 group brain training programs held over 18,830 minutes
38 virtual church services held
630 letters and emails read out to residents
960 window or fence visits with families



August Connections

1023 facilitated Zoom, Facetime or Skype calls over 367 hours of call time



Creative September

500 hours of creative programs and projects (art, craft, painting, knitting, leatherwork, woodwork, gardening, mandala colouring, poster making)



Move-ember

970 walks
576,400 metres walked
40,525 minutes of physical programs (675 hours)

"In one-to-one conversations with residents, families, and staff, chaplains hear how people make meaning, find their purpose in the world, feel connected (or not), and find a sense of belonging. These are key concepts of spirituality in aged care."

Rev Clare Brockett, Director of Mission

RESPONDING WITH COMPASSION

Spiritual care and the work of our dedicated chaplains, was central to Uniting AgeWell's COVID-19 response.

Our chaplains listened deeply and reached out to connect with residents across our sites in Victoria and Tasmania in a variety of ways, enabling elders to face their anxiety, loss, or distress, and discover options for exploring meaning in their lives.

Chaplains were quick to do things differently during the pandemic – including delivering services via Zoom, standing on a garden path in the middle of winter boozing a service through a microphone to residents inside, and singing through two layers of plastic.

Through it all they continued to make a difference, with many poignant accounts of how they touched lives as they helped residents and their families come to terms with what was happening.

Rev Clare Brockett, Uniting AgeWell's Director of Mission, says chaplains and the wider Uniting AgeWell staff are continuing to live out the Synod's Mission Principle, 'respond in compassion to human need,' in abundance!

And they're doing this with flexibility and creativity, sometimes with humour, and always deeply moved by the trust shown in them.

The uncertainty and fear around the pandemic meant our residents – and staff – relied on and needed the guidance of our chaplains more than ever.

Despite all the obstacles that isolation, social distancing and PPE created, our chaplains found a way to connect on a deep and meaningful level to meet these needs. Little things meant a lot - like fridge magnets of hope, creating quiet reflective space, cards, phone calls, and personal emails.

There were many incredibly special moments during this time, with very strong bonds forged. Our chaplains certainly showed that where there's a will, there's a way.

A SINGULAR FOCUS



"We have taken an uncompromising approach to resident and client health, safety and wellbeing and have invested well over and above the funding received from the Government to ensure this outcome."

Raelene Thompson, Board Chair

During the pandemic, staff found themselves looking rather confronting dressed from head to toe in full PPE. Masks and face shields could have presented a challenge for residents and staff to recognise their regular carers. Then Uniting AgeWell social worker Sheena Appleyard (pictured here with Strathdon Community resident Margaret) came up with the idea to wear a tee-shirt with her photo printed on it. There were chuckles of recognition every time she entered a room.

"They're dressed from head to toe in plastic to protect me, but I'd recognise them anywhere by the smile in their eyes and the kindness in their voices" says Beryl Hair, who has a home care package with Uniting AgeWell and gets help with domestic duties as well as meals delivered to her home.

According to General Manager Quality and Risk, Sue Gervasoni, Uniting AgeWell swiftly identified the risks to all of our residential and home-based customers and staff and put strategies in place for protection against COVID-19.

"The very positive result that Uniting AgeWell experienced was a credit to the coordinated, organisation-wide response along with the strong clinical governance systems which were already in place."

By placing our customers at the heart of everything we do, their safety and the provision of the highest quality, person-centred care drives every action of every day, across every service and site.

Uniting AgeWell was well positioned to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of its prior attention and action to strengthen clinical governance systems and practice across the organisation.

- As a result of a small number of staff contracting COVID-19 via community transmission or nominated as a close contact, Uniting AgeWell responded to seven lockdowns of residential facilities.
- Emergency response plans were rapidly implemented on every occasion resulting in zero transmission of COVID-19.

88% of customers reported they felt well supported during COVID-19

(*2020 Residential Care Postcard Survey)

AN UNCOMPROMISING COMMITMENT TO QUALITY CARE

Uniting AgeWell continued to focus on strengthening clinical governance systems with the aim of achieving the best possible customer outcomes at the point of care and service delivery.

Our Clinical Governance Framework takes a system-wide approach to meet and overcome significant challenges, navigate the complexity of our environment and support our staff to deliver the best quality care we can provide to our customers.



Our Clinical Governance Framework and Quality Improvement Plan 2018-2020 has provided the high level strategies to guide our actions and the Key Result Areas relating to this plan have been regularly measured and reported to the Clinical Governance Committee of the Board with the vast majority of actions completed across the course of 2020.

Leadership and Culture

A strong focus on clinical governance is a priority of the Board and all leaders at Uniting AgeWell. This is evidenced through committee structures and reporting lines ensuring clear line of sight, accountability, clear escalation procedures and rigorous monitoring.

- **100%** compliance with the Standards set by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
- Staff report a significantly higher Customer Safety Culture in **92%** of indicators measured than peer organisations

Organisational Systems

We are committed to improving the safety of our customers. When unplanned events occur, an incident report is submitted into RiskMan, our electronic incident reporting system. This allows the opportunity to review what happened and to take action for improvement. Many of these incidents are the high impact, high prevalence clinical risks for our customers such as falls, pressure injuries, restraint, weight loss, and infection prevention and control. A Serious Incident Review Committee was established to review incidents, analyse data and help drive continuous improvement.

- **24%** reduction in monthly average of falls with harm over last 12 months
- **24%** reduction in adverse events causing harm to customers
- **15%** reduction in Uniting AgeWell acquired pressure injuries
- **NO** cases of residents contracting COVID-19 in Uniting AgeWell facilities

Customer Partnerships

Understanding how our customers experience their care and taking action to improve their experience is a critical component of our clinical governance system. We encourage our customers, families, carers and community to provide us with feedback through surveys, point of care postcards to enable real-time feedback and improvement, customer stories, complaints and compliments.

A simple postcard survey was used to better understand our residents' experience with COVID-19 restrictions. It asked **"How are you coping with COVID-19?"**

726 postcards returned

67% I feel safe and calm

31% I feel ok and understand what we have to do

2% I feel scared, worried or unsafe

A range of postcard surveys were conducted throughout the year to enhance the customer experience and improve service delivery.

We asked

How well was your room cleaned this week?

How punctual were your medications/meals etc. this week?

How was your communication with your carer today?

How was your shower today?
Were you rushed today?

How was your evening meal today?

Do the staff knock before entering your room?

Were you happy with your care today?

Was your privacy respected today?

Are you happy with the resident/relative meeting time and style?

Were you able to do what you wanted today?

Were you asked what you wanted to wear today?

Were you happy with your dining experience today?

How was the temperature of your hot drinks today?

We acted

Cleaning spot audit

Regular case conferencing to be implemented

Individual feedback actioned on the spot

Staff received email of postcard survey results with areas for improvement highlighted

Chef to meet residents weekly to monitor evening meal satisfaction

Awareness campaign on knocking on doors

Individual feedback actioned on the spot

Do not disturb signs implemented for privacy during care

Bi-monthly meetings to be held at different times to offer more flexibility to families wishing to attend

Individual feedback actioned on the spot

Individual feedback actioned on the spot

Weekly random postcard surveys to assess meal satisfaction and dining experience

Thermal mugs investigated to improve temperature of hot drinks

Customer Partnerships (continued)

While 2020 saw an increase in complaints resulting from COVID-19 restrictions and distance between families, we also received an incredible increase in compliments and positive feedback.

- › **12.6%** increase in complaints
- › **41.7%** increase in compliments
- › **100%** of complaints acknowledged, investigated and followed up



Our Customer Experience Strategy was expanded to include regular customer stories which are presented at a range of committees and forums to provide opportunities for learning and service improvement.

Monitoring and Reporting

Performance reporting relating to the effectiveness of care and the quality and safety outcomes for our customers is monitored at all levels of the organisation and corrective action taken when required.

- › **100%** of Board meetings provided with a scorecard relating to clinical and quality outcome data
- › **100%** of Clinical Governance Committee meetings provided with a full suite of Quality and Safety Indicators analysed with actions for improvement
- › **100%** of Uniting AgeWell's residential care facilities participated in the National Aged Care Quality Indicator Program

Effective Workforce

Uniting AgeWell's organisational culture and systems are designed to facilitate the pursuit of safe, person-centred care delivery and empower our staff to deliver their best.

- › **100%** of eligible staff members were immunised for Influenza
- › **100%** of staff completed Hand Hygiene competency assessment
- › Roster reviews conducted and clinical resources increased
- › Learning and Development Strategy developed and endorsed by the Senior Executive Team

Communication and Relationships

We strive to build relationships through open and transparent communication, respectful relationships and informed decision making where customers are fully engaged in decisions relating to their care.

- › **75%** of all incidents reported have Open Disclosure undertaken
- › Investment in new technology enables person-centred and goal-directed care planning to be undertaken
- › Clinical documentation and electronic medication management system reduces risk of medication-related errors, supports wound management and provides improved reporting and ease of clinical oversight

A FOCUS ON DEMENTIA CARE, COMFORT CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH



Dementia Australia was engaged to conduct dementia audits of all memory support units across Uniting AgeWell's residential care facilities to ensure supportive environments that encourage independence and improve quality of life for those residents living with dementia.

- › Where possible, audit recommendations were implemented during COVID-19. Discussions were also held with Dementia Australia to discuss ways to further improve staff culture and customer outcomes.



Palliative and end-of-life care continues to strengthen across Uniting AgeWell's residential and home care programs, with Comfort Care Working Groups established with the support of Uniting AgeWell's Palliative Care Specialist. Some achievements over the year include:

- › An End of Life Direction for Aged Care (ELDAC) collaboration with both the Residential and Home Care programs in Tasmania strengthening knowledge, practice and local network partnerships.
- › Uniting AgeWell Aldersgate Kings Meadows is Runner Up for the Outstanding Palliative Care Organisation award in the 2020 Tasmanian Palliative Care Awards.
- › Significant involvement in the Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration (PCOC) program aims to improve palliative care outcomes for residents and their families and align with national palliative care benchmarking and practice with five sites participating in the program.



Uniting AgeWell continues to examine ways to enable the mental health and wellbeing of people in our care.

- › In 2019, Dr Alan Woodward was commissioned to work with Uniting AgeWell to develop a Framework on Mental Health and Wellbeing, which was endorsed by the Senior Executive Team in November 2019. The Framework brings together five principles required to advance wellbeing for our clients, residents and our staff: Integrated Mental Health Paradigm; Transitions and Stresses; Spectrum of Care; Advocacy; Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing. An implementation plan is being developed which will prioritise key actions.
- › Uniting AgeWell Social Workers are now in place in Victoria and Northern and Southern Tasmania to provide support to residents and their families and advice to our residential care facilities. Scoping is currently underway to introduce a Transition into Care Program in Hobart. This will provide support for families when their loved one enters one of our aged care facilities.
- › The mental health of residents has been critical during the COVID-19 lockdown and a group consisting of Uniting AgeWell social workers, lifestyle team members, chaplains and representatives from People and Culture and the Admissions team introduced a number of initiatives to encourage activity, engagement and enjoyment.



A DESIRE TO DELIVER OUR BEST

“Our teams share a passion for making a difference in people’s lives.”

Gen Toop, General Manager – People and Culture

On Aged Care Employee Day held in August 2020, 1,810 people visited the “Thanks for Caring” page on the Uniting AgeWell website, with many leaving heartfelt messages of appreciation. Residents, clients and their families also sent hundreds of messages of thanks during the height of the COVID-19 lockdown. Like this message from Giancarla:

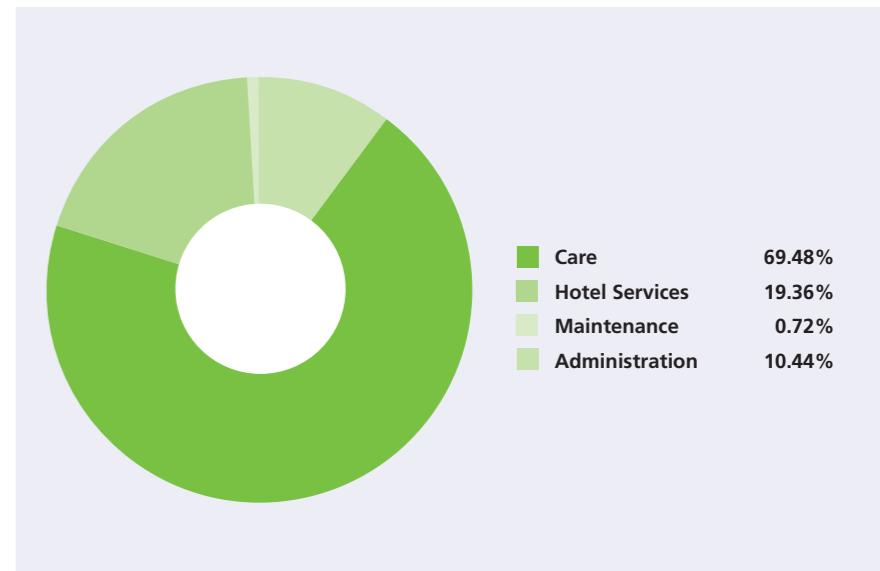
“I'm so grateful for all the staff, clinical and non-clinical teams, at Uniting AgeWell for their dedication, compassion, and excellence in providing care. Your commitment, resilience, and contribution to caring for the customers to ensure they continue to be connected to their families and loved ones, truly are exceptional. From receiving care packages from families, regular virtual catch-ups via videoconferencing, to providing high-quality care and service, well done, and all the best!”

Perhaps the most heart-warming affirmation and something we have all learned afresh, is just how much Uniting AgeWell staff are appreciated.

At Uniting AgeWell we care about our people. We know that to deliver excellent, customer-centred care requires skilled, passionate and engaged staff who want to deliver their best every day. Providing staff with the best possible employee experience and providing them with the resources, training and support they need, is vital. Becoming a progressive, employer of choice is a key priority for Uniting AgeWell.

WE ARE

Uniting AgeWell’s workforce is its greatest asset, with **89%** of its **2,913** staff directly supporting clients in care and service roles.



STAFF CULTURE DRIVING PRIORITIES

An independent Staff Culture and Experience Survey revealed that Uniting AgeWell has a:

“Culture of Ambition”

= Our people are innovative and ambitious for new and better ways of moving forward.

This has informed the priorities of the People and Culture Team:

- Review workloads and resources
- Develop an Employee Experience that brings our values and our Customer Charter to life
- Enhance learning and development opportunities
- Review and enhance systems of work

THE BEST EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE LAUNCHED

In 2020 Uniting AgeWell developed its Employee Experience Framework, building on the feedback and learnings generated from the 2018 Staff Culture and Experience Survey, a number of workshops held with staff from across the organisation and our desire to support our staff to deliver their best, each and every day.

The Framework guides our behaviours and interactions, bringing together our Vision, Mission and Values, our Customer Promise and Charter and our Clinical Governance Framework based on the Aged Care Quality Standards.

The employee experience vision is “Supporting our people to be their BEST, give their BEST and help our community to live their BEST.”



BEST is an acronym for the Employee Experience Framework pillars: Believe, Excel, Support and Trust, which have the following goals and objectives:

Believe we can make a difference every day

Respecting customer choice and being part of a team committed to making a difference to the people we support and ensuring they live life to their potential.

Excel by improving the way we work and partner with others to share and gain wisdom

Building robust frameworks that embed quality, safe and sustainable systems of work today, tomorrow and in the future. Fostering innovation through collaboration and strong partnership approach to share and gain wisdom.

Supporting our people and valuing their contributions, experiences and differences

An employee experience that supports diversity, new ideas, stewardship of resources and values everyone's contributions.

Trusting in our relationships to build strong and collaborative partnerships

Trusting in our partnerships and enhancing relationships with the Uniting Church and our community by being kind, inclusive and fair.

DELIVERING THE BEST EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Enhanced service models

Following a review of workloads, resources, skill mix and rosters, our residential services model was enhanced to embed best practice person-centred care, communications and teamwork.

A new flexible and agile rostering model in Victoria is being piloted at three sites (Preston, Hawthorn and Condare Court). The model is designed to meet the changing needs of residents and provide staff with the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with residents and their co-workers, enhance communication and understanding of care plans and personal preferences, in turn improving care, service delivery and quality outcomes for both residents and staff.

In Tasmania, the roster was also reviewed to enable enhanced communication and continuity of care for residents and enable increased flexibility for part-time staff to undertake additional shifts.

Competency and capability framework

The capability of our employees is critical to enabling Uniting AgeWell to place the quality of life and experience of our customers at the heart of everything we do.

To support the organisation and our people, to enhance expertise and improve job satisfaction now and into the future, 2020 saw the Competency and Capability Framework developed.

Roles have been placed into 'family' groups (e.g. Corporate, Direct Care, Management, Specialist/Professional Services and Spirituality). Capability is then further defined across:

- Capabilities for all staff
- Capabilities for leaders
- Capabilities for senior leaders

Transforming learning

To create an effective framework to engage our staff and provide them with the supports and tools they need to succeed in their role, a new Learning and Development Strategy was developed. The strategy defines our learning model, approach and pathways, and the framework embeds into all training our BEST principles, our Vision, Mission and Values and our Customer Promise and Charter.

From 2021, learning will be delivered using a blended approach with programs tailored to suit different staff cohorts across three pathways of:

- Orientation and Induction
- Refresher/Annual Training
- Goal Directed Training

Scoping commenced for a new Learning Management System (LMS) with the goal of creating an accessible, interactive, agile and tailored learning platform capable of providing a suite of comprehensive reports to guide staff development. The LMS will house online learning, learning passports, education tools for Managers and allow for accurate record keeping of online and face-to-face training.

2020 mandatory training

An important part of keeping our staff, residents, clients and the wider Uniting AgeWell community safe, is the completion of mandatory training. Given the challenges of COVID-19 and social distancing restrictions, a number of mandatory training programs went online to enable all staff to access and complete essential training and updates, ensuring they were equipped with the knowledge needed to safely carry out their roles. These training modules were complemented by competency assessments and video-based learning opportunities.

95.3%

average completion rate

- Manual Handling
- Fire Safety
- Bullying and Harassment
- Infection Control
- Medication Theory
- COVID-19

A new on-boarding experience recruitment system

A major upgrade of the recruitment system and underpinning documentation and processes went live in September 2020. The new electronic cloud-based system and processes:

- enhance both the employee lifecycle and the applicant, employee and manager experience,
- provide significant operational benefits
- standardise process workflows
- capture data digitally providing accessible and auditable records

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Uniting AgeWell Diversity and Inclusiveness Framework, Strategy and Action Plan was further developed in 2020.

The framework is:

- designed to embed inclusive service standards
- supports our customers, employees and our volunteers to recognise their choices and enhance their experiences throughout their time with Uniting AgeWell.

In line with the Australian Aged Care Diversity Framework that complements the Aged Care Quality Standards (ACQS), there is a specific focus on people who identify as:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander;
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse; and
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex (LGBTQIA+).

Our approach is:

- based on the BEST framework
- underpinned by a human rights-based approach
- aligned with the World Health Organisation principles of non-discrimination, availability, accessibility, acceptability, quality, accountability and universality
- built on earlier work undertaken in the 'Uniting AgeWell – Engaging with Our Customers and Community – 2018–2020' research and our Strategic Plan 2017–2020

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

It is testament to the commitment and dedication of our staff, that 308 employees were recognised in 2020 for length of service awards between five and an amazing 40 years of service.



271

Staff recognised for 5, 10, and 15 years of service milestones



37

Staff achieved 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years of service

Heartfelt thanks and recognition to the following staff for their extraordinary length of service:



Merris Elphinstone

Enrolled Nurse

Rosetta Community – Strathaven



Lou Phan

Personal Care Worker

Strathdon Community



Karina Gaffney

Personal Care Worker

Susan Short

Enrolled Nurse

Strathdon Community

Viviana Valdes

Rostering Planning Officer

Corporate Office

TENDING TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

To support all members of our large and complex organisation, who in turn were working to ensure the ongoing safety of our residents, clients and staff, Uniting AgeWell implemented very tangible tools and campaigns focused on health, safety and wellbeing.

Launch of Wellbeing portal on the Intranet

The Staff Support and Wellbeing portal on the Uniting AgeWell Intranet offers a one stop collation of accessible resources and supports available to all staff.

#thanksforcaring

On Aged Care Employee Day in August 2020, the #thanksforcaring multi-platform digital advertising campaign aimed to let our staff know how much they were valued, both within the organisation, and by the broader community. People were invited to express their gratitude and the response was overwhelming, with many messages of thanks received and shared.

Safe at Work, Safe at Home

It became apparent staff were receiving mixed messages about the risks to health care and aged care workers of contracting COVID-19 and introducing the virus into their workplace or household.

Uniting AgeWell developed the 'Safe at Work, Safe at Home' campaign to allay concerns and strengthen hygiene knowledge and practice.

A video featuring staff providing messages in many of the commonly spoken languages of our staff as they demonstrated donning and doffing of PPE and safe hygiene practices, was delivered to all staff members with great effect, creating a sense of 'We've got this, and we're in this together.'

R U OK?

R U OK? Day offered an opportunity for colleagues to not only check-in with each other, but to also check-in with residents and clients across our services to ask and to listen to how people were feeling and whether they needed additional support.

- Residential sites enjoyed special morning and afternoon teas, opening conversations with R U OK?
- A whole staff, 'Zoom' afternoon tea hosted by CEO Andrew Kinnersly
- Wellness portal hosting videos on improving overall wellbeing and self-care
- SMS sharing of a video showcasing the things our staff had been doing to keep themselves well

Mind, Body and Soul

During Safe Work month in October 2020, Uniting AgeWell put the spotlight on self-care, recognising that holistic wellbeing considers the mind, body and soul. Staff were provided opportunities to consider each aspect through information provided on the Staff Support and Wellbeing portal and an opportunity to participate in activities via Zoom.



ENABLING OLDER AUSTRALIANS TO LIVE THEIR BEST LIVES POSSIBLE

“I participated in the research to help others, and it ended up helping me too.”

Helen Malins

Helen Malins is a feisty 80-year-old, who normally exercises three times a week at the Hawthorn AgeWell Centre's seniors gym. She took part in the Your Muscles Matter study, conducted by Professor Alan Hayes with Victoria University researchers, and supported by Uniting AgeWell.

The retired teacher, along with the other participants, had bone density scans and assessments and followed a regimen of resistance and other exercises, as well as adhering to a protein-rich diet.

And she believes all of this meant that when she had a tumble at Christmas, she was in the best shape possible not to injure her hips.

“I know if I hadn't been as strong as I was through taking part in the research, I would have broken my hip for sure!” she says.

A steadfast commitment to providing a full service continuum of support and care options for people as they age, enabled growth, development, innovation and leadership to thrive, despite the unfolding pandemic.

Embracing a nimble mindset allowed our staff to think creatively and find ways to maintain project pathways and support research activities.

And our commitment to advocacy and policy influence continued as we strive to enable older Australians to live and age well.

SUPPORTING MORE PEOPLE CHOOSING TO STAY AT HOME

Over 8,000 clients across Victoria and Tasmania now choose to receive home care services through Uniting AgeWell, including those who receive services through a Home Care Package, the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) or privately funded services.

This equates to 30 per cent growth in just 12 months, with some of the most significant growth in home care services occurring in the Loddon Mallee region of Victoria and covering a large geographic area.

2,000 active Home Care Packages

30% growth in Home Care Packages every year for the last three years

18 new Short Term Restorative Care places activated

While some of this growth is attributable to strategic acquisitions, most is organic growth built on high quality services and a strong reputation.

We also significantly increased the number of CHSP clients we support through strategic partnerships with a number of metropolitan city councils (Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay and Brimbank) who chose Uniting AgeWell as their preferred partner to transition these services to, noting that Brimbank clients joined Uniting AgeWell in October 2020.

3 councils transition services to Uniting AgeWell in 2020

2,700 additional clients supported

89% client satisfaction with support provided

Foreseeing the deep need for connection through periods of isolation, Uniting AgeWell secured \$500K in government grants to support deployment of technology in the home to keep people connected, safe and able to undertake essential activities such as shopping, bill paying and telehealth.

BUILDING BEAUTIFUL ENVIRONMENTS

Uniting AgeWell methodically navigated the logistical and restriction challenges over the past year to continue its multi-million dollar program of infrastructure development and improvement.

In order to meet community expectations, organisational standards and financial sustainability requirements, the 72 year-old Carnsworth residential care facility in Kew was permanently closed in November 2019. All residents were supported to relocate to facilities of their choice, with many residents transitioning to other Uniting AgeWell facilities including the new 104-bed Preston Community which also opened in November.

Residents of the Manningtree Hawthorn retirement living complex moved into their completed apartments in February 2020 on the cusp of Melbourne's first wave lockdown. With all 49 apartments sold off the plan, residents were excited and relieved to be moving into their new homes.

The scheduled March opening of the adjacent 120-bed Hawthorn Community residential care facility was deferred until 1 June, opening to new residents during the brief hiatus between Victoria's lockdowns. The pandemic presented challenges for new admissions, which were amplified during periods of sustained community lockdown and particularly pronounced for our newest sites, Hawthorn and Preston Communities.

Occupancy across all sites was impacted by restrictions on touring sites and family visitation; the residual anxiety associated with the aged care sector bearing the brunt of tragic loss of life due to COVID-19; and negative media coverage of the sector during the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Notwithstanding, Uniting AgeWell continued to maintain its higher than industry average occupancy at 94 per cent.

In the picturesque Tamar Valley in Tasmania, the vision for the contemporary new wing at Newnham Community, Aldersgate Village came to life. The new 30-bed wing in the \$10.9 million revamp will fill both local demand and provide improved amenities for residential care and independent living unit residents.



+104 Preston Community

Total Cost \$29M
Completion: October 2019



+120 Hawthorn Community

Residential care

&



+49 Manningtree Hawthorn

Independent retirement living apartments
Combined Project Cost \$68M
Completion: February 2020



+30 + Redevelopment

Newnham Community, Aldersgate Village

Estimated Project Cost \$10.9M
Completion: February 2021

LEADING THINKING INTO ACTION

Embedding a dedication to client-led research and using human-centred design principles to develop novel solutions to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for older Australians, has positioned Uniting AgeWell to respond quickly to emerging challenges, and this was certainly brought to the fore in 2020.

We continued to actively engage in research and innovation opportunities throughout the year, as a result of a number of strategic university and corporate partnerships. And we explored ways to further develop our services to enhance the customer experience.

Research

Having a leadership role with national and international universities and a range of stakeholders.

➤ Resident at the Centre of Care

Cluster-randomized controlled trial to facilitate transition to Consumer Directed Care practice within a residential facility.

➤ Digital Enhanced Living Hub (DELH)

Evolve new applications for existing solutions and develop new solutions with a focus on testing new products and emerging technologies to improve practice in home and residential environments.

➤ DELH 1: Digital Living Assistant

Trial of augmented smart home technology to support Uniting AgeWell customers in everyday activities and evaluate human computer interaction.

➤ A Good Life: Outcome measures for older people

To create a new quality of life instrument with wide applicability in quality assessment and aged care system decision making.

➤ Your Muscles Matter

Evaluate sarcopenia (or muscle loss) risk factors and quality of life over time while undertaking exercise training.

➤ Dementia Australia, Avatar Project

Creating avatars to assist staff and families to understand and develop empathy with people living with dementia.

Innovation

Actively engaging with clients using Human Centred Design principles to develop novel solutions.

➤ End of Life Directions for Aged Care (ELDAC)

A nationally funded initiative to improve and enhance palliative care practice.

➤ Do Be Feel Cards

A partnership with Swinburne University Masters students to co-design a unique set of cards customers develop to express their feelings, wishes, goals and directions.

➤ Loop Learn

Trial of a contactless screening process for use by staff and visitors to residential care.

➤ Video conferencing connect projects

A range of video conferencing options for older people living at home and in residential services:

- one touch video conferencing capability to connect with family, friends and Uniting AgeWell
- running of Zoom virtual exercise programs and group social support programs.

➤ UMPS smart home technology

Passive artificial technology sensors in the home that identify changes to regular routines and alert family members of potential risk.

➤ Divy Pay

A virtual, stored-value card system to support clients isolating at home with the purchase of essential goods and bill paying.

DIGITAL LIVING

The full potential of the Digital Living Assistant (DLA) gained greater visibility in 2020 as the Smart Home Trial was put to a very real world test. The 31-week study investigated the effect of the voice-activated device in the homes of Uniting AgeWell clients and staff.

- The research is a collaborative study between Uniting AgeWell, the Australian Research Council Industrial Transformation Hub for Digital Enhanced Living and Deakin University's Applied Artificial Intelligence Institute. The trial explored the feasibility of low-cost off-the-shelf smart devices for supporting the practical and emotional needs of independent older Australians who want to live at home.
- At the height of a pandemic when families were kept at distance, reliance on technology amplified. The study found the top five uses for the DLA were to ask for the news, weather, music, specific information and social interaction.
- The research found it was easy to use, fun, and in time, participants got used to having it as part of their daily lifestyles.

A GOOD LIFE

Ground-breaking research by Flinders University in partnership with Uniting AgeWell is on track to be completed in late 2021 and is set to shape the future of aged care in Australia.

- Looks at what determines quality of life for older people living at home and in aged care facilities, as well as developing quantitative tools to measure an individual's wellbeing levels.
- Will be used to improve the quality of life of older people with the potential of being adopted as best practice across Australia.
- This research will enable us to quantify the key drivers that contribute to an individual's wellbeing. Knowing this will enable Uniting AgeWell to work in partnership with residents and clients to improve their quality of life, and be able to measure exactly how much their life has improved through the supports and services put in place.

INFLUENCING AND ADVOCATING FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

From the outset, Uniting AgeWell put itself forward to support the work of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, seeing it as the most significant opportunity we would have to help bring about lasting reform in aged care. Throughout the past year Uniting AgeWell has continued to contribute our expertise to the Royal Commission:

- interviewed by researchers regarding integration and innovation in Australia, and subsequently featured in the RAC publication in August 2020.
- contributed to the broader UnitingCare Australia (UCA) submission on their overall vision for the future which led to representing UCA on the expert panel at the Hearing on the Future Design of Home Care in September 2020.
- participated in Royal Commission hearings in Mildura and Sydney, and workshops focused on home care.
- we welcomed the visit of the late Commissioner Richard Tracey and Counsel Assisting Peter Gray, to our Strathdon Community in Forest Hill in March 2019 where they had the opportunity to view our service model first hand and speak with residents, clients and staff.
- CEO Andrew Kinnersly has chaired the UCA Aged Care Network over the past two years, and this group has met regularly over this period to provide input and support with regard to the submission process.

Service Development

Learning from and with our customers to develop and enhance services to better meet their needs and expectations.

Key service initiatives:

- Development of a Mental Health Strategy and Framework
- Customer journey and empathy mapping for people accessing home care services
- Customer journey mapping to improve the first six weeks of someone entering our residential services

"Enabling our clients and residents to live their best life possible underpins everything we do at Uniting AgeWell and this research is key to understanding the science of ageing well."

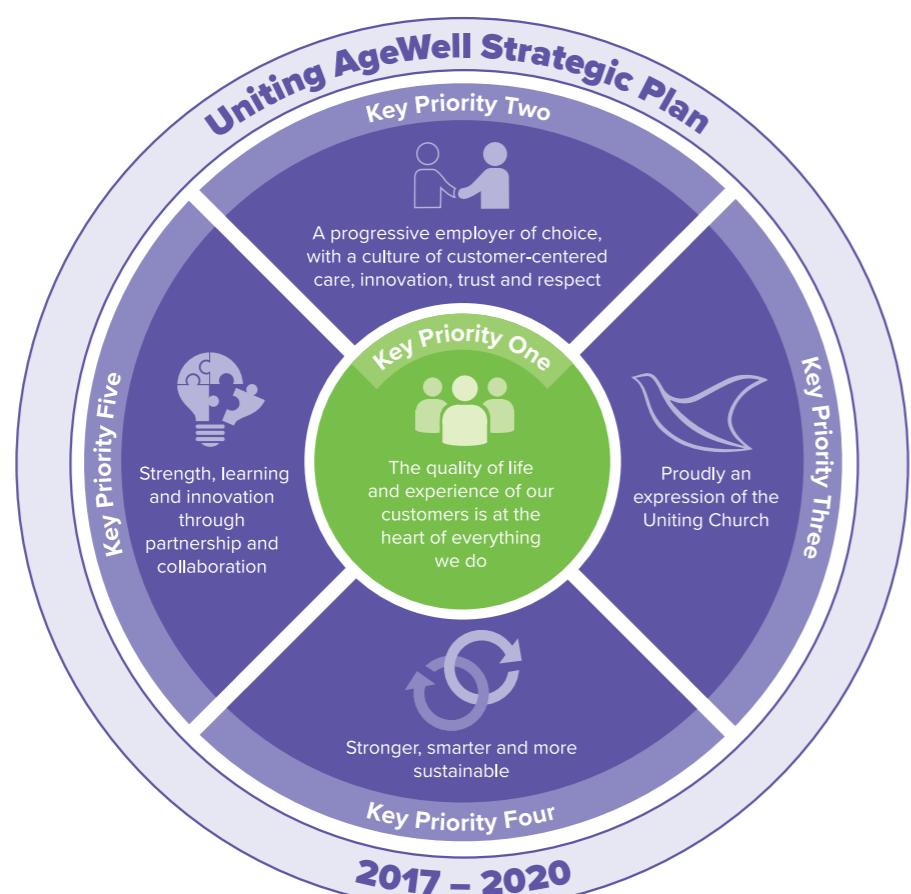
Fonda Voukelatos, General Manager Strategy and Business Development

DELIVERING ON THE 2017 – 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

Sustained commitment and an ambitious program of action towards achievement of outcomes laid out in the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan provided a firm footing not only for Uniting AgeWell's COVID-19 response, but also to ensure that the organisation continued to pursue core business initiatives necessary to meet future needs, such as the expansion of services and building projects.

The plan provided a blueprint for how Uniting AgeWell was to grow, develop and strengthen its services to meet the needs of older Australians.

The result of an ambitious program of work, many of the strategic plan outcomes were achieved in the first three years of the cycle, providing time for those programs, processes and practises to embed prior to the test COVID-19 was to deliver.



5 key priority areas

106 strategic initiatives

93% successful completion

Achievements

Key Priority 1 – The quality of life and experience of our customers is at the heart of everything we do

Customer	Workforce	Systems, Compliance, Regulation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Customer Charter › Clinical Governance Framework › Consumer Engagement Policy and Action Plan › Consumer Directed Care: goal directed care planning framework and case conferencing › Upgrade of complaints process › Implementation of single standards › Regular customer satisfaction surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › BEST Principles › Credentialing policies developed › Training programs and reporting › Whistle blower policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Single Standard Framework › Clinical Governance Framework › Legislative Compliance Framework › Risk Management and Reporting Framework › Quality Indicator Framework › Investment in systems – RiskMan – PROMPT – Procura Clinical and MediMap

Key Priority 2 – A progressive employer of choice, with a culture of customer centred care, innovation, trust and respect

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › A responsive People and Culture function, alignment to Uniting AgeWell's strategy › Workforce Development Plan › Diversity Committee › Employee Experience Framework › Enterprise-wide Occupational Health and Safety Committee › Mandatory training multi-modal program implemented › External cultural surveying undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Staff engagement › A culture of ambition › 100% flu vaccination compliance
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Key Priority 3 – Proudly an expression of the Uniting Church

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Pastoral care coverage across Uniting AgeWell facilities › Incorporation of Uniting AgeWell › Participation in key Uniting Church initiatives › Identity Statement developed › Uniting AgeWell CEO chairs UnitingCare Australia's (UCA) Aged Care Network › Appointment of a new Director of Mission › Collaboration with Uniting Vic.Tas. › Regular meetings with Synod key personnel and attendance at Synod forums › Regular meetings between respective Chairs and CEOs of Uniting AgeWell and Uniting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Strong relationship with the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania › Alignment of Mission with operations › Strong roles during crises
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Key Priority 4 – Stronger, smarter and more sustainable

Strategic Business	Brownfield Development	Corporate Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Strategic Service Plan › Home Care Growth Strategy › Implementation of differentiated and targeted marketing campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Redevelop four key sites › Close two sites › Create pipeline of future developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Move into new corporate office at Wesley Place

Key Priority 5 – Strength, Learning and Innovation through Partnership and Collaboration

Research and Innovation	Advocacy	UnitingCare Relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Research Governance Framework › Invested in research › Established key partnerships with Deakin, Melbourne, Swinburne and Flinders Universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Collaboration with UCA › Chair the UCA Aged Care Network › Participation in aged care networks › Respond to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Vibrant research program › Strong advocacy for aged care reforms › Positive relationship with the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety



■ PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

"I injured my left arm, and I'm left-handed. How can I possibly look after myself as well as my husband now?"

Helen Courtney

Helen Courtney cares for her 88-year-old husband, John, who suffered a severe stroke a year ago. They live in an apartment at Manningtree Hawthorn – an Independent Retirement Living complex which abuts the Hawthorn Community aged care residence – and are each on a Home Care Package through Uniting AgeWell.

In June 2020, in the midst of isolation during the pandemic, Helen had a fall and broke her arm.

They decided that John would go to Hawthorn Community for three weeks respite care, so Helen could concentrate on getting better, much to the relief of their five very concerned children – one who lives in Victoria, one in Canada and three in New South Wales.

Respite care proved to be the tonic that was needed. There's a gate between Manningtree and the community, so visiting John was simple, and Helen could rest up at home as much as she wanted.

Cognisant of the complex environment in which Uniting AgeWell operates, the likelihood of significant and much-needed change across the industry, and the increasing demand for services from a rapidly ageing population, Uniting AgeWell is preparing for the future with care models that are innovative, flexible, customer-centric and importantly, financially sustainable.

LOOKING AHEAD

Following on from successfully securing 128 bed licenses in the 2018-19 Aged Care Approvals Round, capital development planning is now well under way. This will translate to contemporary additions to Sorell Community, Ningana in Tasmania and Strath-Haven in Bendigo in Victoria. Capital development planning is also under way for Lillian Martin and Strathaven communities in Tasmania.

The 2018-19 Aged Care Approvals Round, Uniting AgeWell secured 128 bed licences:

- including 98 out of an available 171 places in Tasmania – 60% of the pool
- 30 places in Bendigo, Victoria

A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH

Unlike a large proportion of the aged care sector, Uniting AgeWell is extremely well placed with a very strong balance sheet, no borrowings, and cash and investments holdings that will enable us to navigate the current challenges, and assess acquisition opportunities as they present.

Uniting AgeWell continued to grow services throughout 2019/2020, with operating revenue increasing by 12 per cent, compared with the prior year.

Residential aged care revenue increased six per cent and occupancy remained above industry averages at 94 per cent. Community services continued to grow with a 66 per cent increase in operating revenue due to additional Home Care Packages and the acquisition of Guardian Network Pty Ltd in October 2018.

A net deficit of \$18.1M was incurred for the year due to COVID-19 costs, accrual of casual staff leave entitlements and reduced investment earnings. COVID-19 adversely impacted occupancy and required additional staffing, cleaning and protective equipment expenditure to maintain the safety of residents, clients, staff and visitors.

A net cashflow surplus of \$21.8M was recognised after capital expenditure of \$40.2M, accommodation bond inflows of \$51.1M and operating cash inflow of \$9.4M.

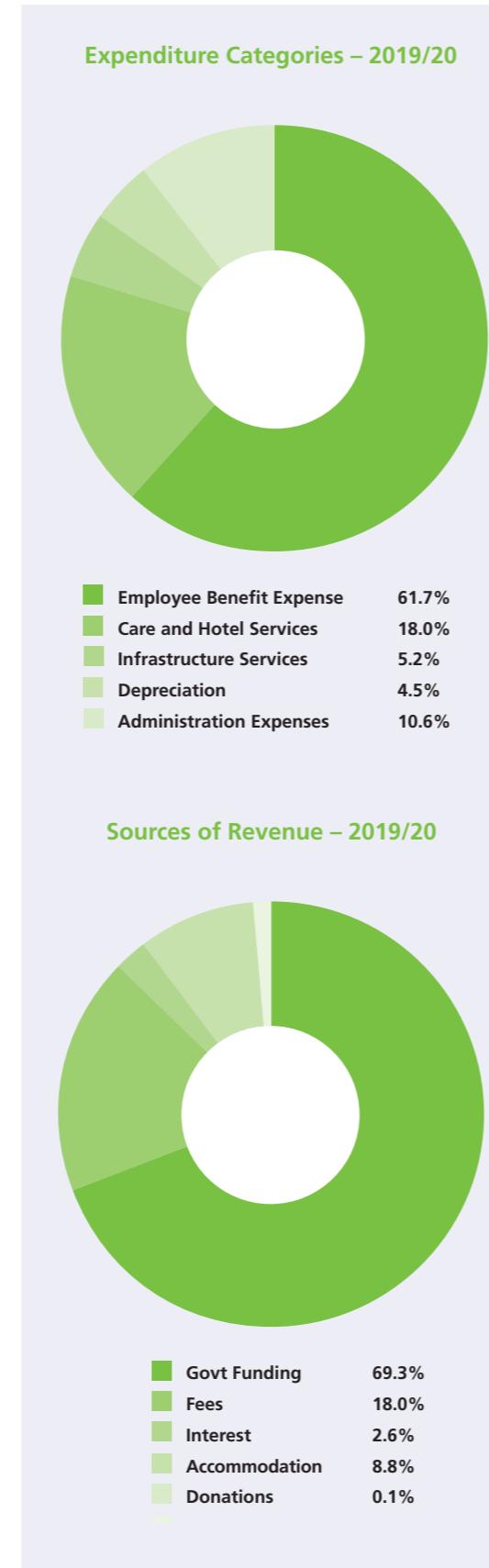
Uniting AgeWell's liquidity position is strong with cash and investments totalling \$221M.

\$233.4M total revenue
12% increase in operating revenue
6% increase in residential aged care revenue
\$251.5M total expenses

! **\$18.1M** net deficit
 ➤ COVID-19 costs
 ➤ Accrual of staff leave entitlements
 ➤ Reduced investment earnings
 ➤ Decline in occupancy during lockdowns
 ➤ Additional staffing costs particularly in clinical care, cleaning and lifestyle
 ➤ Significant expenditure on PPE

\$21.8M
 Net cashflow surplus
-\$40.2K capital expenditure
+\$51.1M accommodation bond inflows
+\$9.4M operating cash inflow

\$221M
 In cash and investments enabling Uniting AgeWell to maintain a strong liquidity position



EYES ON THE FUTURE

The needs of an ageing population, together with ever-changing government regulations and requirements, systemic underfunding, and the much-anticipated recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, makes the aged care sector a particularly dynamic and challenging environment in which to operate.

Uniting AgeWell will continue to actively respond to the demands of change, and importantly, seek to create the aged care services of the future.

Our next generation strategic plan is currently in development and builds on the strong foundations of the work already undertaken over the past three years to enable communities to age well and individuals to live to their potential.

Working in partnership with our residents, clients and staff, and with a firm focus on customer outcomes, we will continue to co-design and create vibrant aged care services that make a positive difference to people's lives.

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Uniting AgeWell is an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia

