

DoveTale



WINTER 2016



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News from across Uniting AgeWell communities



Uniting AgeWell



Executive Director & CEO Message

We all know Australia's population is ageing. By 2055 it is estimated there will be some 40,000 people over the age of 100 – an eightfold increase in just 40 years. It's a staggering figure.

It's no surprise that creating sustainable, flexible and responsive services for people as they age has never been more important. Governments play a vital role in ensuring these services are well-funded and able to meet this growing demand.

Disappointingly, the 2016-17 Federal Budget included a number of funding changes that will negatively impact on our sector. In particular, the \$1.2 billion budget cut from residential aged care over the next four years through a "redesign" of the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI).

This reduction is designed to "stabilise higher than expected growth" and mitigate an expected \$3.8 billion blow-out in expenditure over the next four years.

The reason for this unexpected growth is clear – our ageing population and the increasing pressure on providers created by significant government reforms to the industry.

One positive outcome of the budget was increased funding to My Aged Care to make it more efficient and effective. The government will provide \$136.6 million over four years to improve the My Aged Care website and Contact Centre. As this is now the main gateway to aged care funding, it is imperative My Aged Care functions at an optimal level.

But it is not just governments that have responsibility for ensuring Australia is able to meet the growing demands of an ageing population.

At Uniting AgeWell, we have put in place a strong strategic plan to ensure we provide high quality services and facilities for our seniors. Our vision is to be a creative leader enabling communities to age well and individuals to live to their potential. As an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia, the work we do goes to the heart of the Church's mission to support and enable those in need.

In April I announced my resignation as Executive Director and CEO of Uniting AgeWell. It was not an easy decision as this is a wonderful organisation that does such important work supporting so many people in our communities in Victoria and Tasmania.

However I feel it is time for me to pursue other opportunities at a non-executive board level. I am confident the strategic direction we have implemented over the past 18 months has positioned the organisation to be a strong leader in the sector.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Uniting AgeWell and every best wish for the future.

Valerie J Lyons



From the Board Chair

It was with great regret that the Board received the resignation of our Executive Director, Mrs Valerie Lyons, effective 5 July 2016. Valerie has advised that she wishes to pursue other vocational interests.

Valerie has been with Uniting AgeWell since the beginning of 2015, but the eighteen months in which she has been at the helm have seen many new developments.

Among these are the introduction of Consumer Directed Care in our community programs, the appointment of chaplains to all Uniting AgeWell residential aged care sites, improved meals in residential aged care sites, a 33-bed expansion at Manor Lakes and decisions to proceed with major new developments at Hawthorn (on the former Broadmead and Moorfields site) and Preston (on the former Lumeah site).

We also introduced the UA Namaste program for those receiving palliative care in the final stage of life, and received an additional 72 home care packages under the last Aged Care Approvals Round (ACAR) – the best result for many years.

The Board expresses its thanks to Valerie for leading us in these changing and challenging times. We also extend our good wishes to Valerie as her new future unfolds.

The Board has commenced the process of recruiting a new Executive Director who will lead



Uniting AgeWell into the future. A strong field of applicants has already shown interest in the position.

In the meantime the services of Uniting AgeWell will go on through our wonderful staff, who give so much of themselves to help so many older people to age well. A former Finance Director of Uniting Aged Care, Mr Peter Folliot, will return as our Interim Executive Director, and he will be supported by the committed team of senior staff who will continue to lead in creative and faithful ways.

I look forward to introducing you to our next Executive Director in due course.

Rev Allan Thompson

DIY Dementia resource launched

Uniting AgeWell and the Centre for Theology and Ministry (CTM) have developed an education resource aimed at building dementia-friendly congregations.

DIY Dementia and Pastoral Care was launched at Synod 2016 by UA Director of Mission John Clarke, CTM Lay Leadership Educator Rohan Pryor and Joan Waters, whose husband, a former Uniting Church minister, has dementia.

John said the idea for the resource came from a meeting with Joan, where she asked how Uniting AgeWell was equipping congregations for ministry with older people, particularly those with dementia.

He said the organisation drew on its skilled Education team, chaplains and the ListenWell pastoral care training modules to help build the program. It was then piloted by several congregations and a group at the Synod Centre.

Joan encouraged all congregations to take advantage of the two online modules.

“It is a brief guide for congregations seeking to be welcoming, inclusive and nurturing to all who enter, including those with dementia and those who care for them,” she said.

DIY Dementia and pastoral care is available on the CTM website:
<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/lay-ministries/diy/> 



Vicki Pollock, right, receiving The Dorothies award from Working It Out Executive Officer, Susan Ditter

UA receives LGBTI award

Uniting AgeWell has received a prestigious Dorothies Award in recognition of its work in providing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/ Transexual and Intersexed inclusive aged care services.

The annual Tasmanian award was presented to Uniting AgeWell at a ceremony in Launceston on May 17, to coincide with the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO).

Strathdevon Manager Integrated Services, Vicki Pollock, received the '2016 Award acknowledging Inclusive Practice for LGBTI elders in a Faith Based Care Service' on behalf of Uniting AgeWell, from Susan Ditter, the Executive Officer of award organisers Working It Out (WIO).

WIO is Tasmania's gender, sexuality and intersex status support and education service.

UA Director of Mission John Clarke said it was wonderful and worthy recognition of the work UA was doing to incorporate LGBTI inclusive practice into its residential and community services.

"UA has established a senior executive LGBTI Working Group, is developing an LGBTI policy and practice standard and offering LGBTI training to staff," he said.

"The organisation is working towards Rainbow Tick accreditation, which recognises our commitment to safe and inclusive service delivery for LGBTI people in our community.

"This signifies that we have worked to make our services welcoming of the LGBTI community and able to meet their needs."

Part of this has included a survey of staff about their attitudes to LGBTI inclusiveness, with more than two thirds agreeing it was important UA was an LGBTI inclusive service.

Standard administration forms and procedures are being reviewed and updated to ensure they are LGBTI inclusive.

UA is also involved in a number of LGBTI groups and has developed positive connections with the LGBTI community. 



Art brings communities together

Art lovers from across Melbourne poured into the Strathdon Community Art Exhibition to take in the impressive works on show in April.

More than 100 people attended the Opening Night Cocktail Party on April 14, with hundreds more attending the full three days of the Exhibition.

A record 52 artworks were sold, raising more than \$7,000 for Strathdon Community's Lifestyle and Activities Program.

International artist and teacher Susan O'Brien (right) was awarded the Exhibition's Best Work for her colourful oil painting, *Sheep Farming*.

Susan said she was pleasantly surprised to win the top prize.

"I had won smaller prizes in previous years, but I never thought I would end up winning Best Work," she said.

Susan sold two of the three works she entered this year, all featuring sheep and farm life.

"For some reason people are drawn to sheep. I guess people love images of farming and the outback country," she said.



Maria Moorthy, a regular client of Uniting AgeWell Kangerong Club in Box Hill, was encouraged by Lifestyle staff members to enter some of her works, after it was revealed she is an art enthusiast who worked under renowned artist Dudley Drew for 12 years and owned her own art studio.

Her prized piece *Australian Wattle* was sold to one lucky buyer.

Condare Court residents attended the Exhibition as part of their weekly outings calendar.

"It was great being able to visit another site and see the activities they do. It was really well set out, with easy wheelchair accessibility and providing lots of cognitive exercises for everyone," said Leisure and Lifestyle Assistant John Refshauge.

Strathdon and Carnsworth Manager Integrated Services Sue Wood said the Strathdon Community Art Exhibition was a wonderful opportunity to connect with the local community.

"It allows people who don't have anything to do with Uniting AgeWell an opportunity to come in and see what we do," she said.

"It's also an amazing opportunity to support Australian artists."

Uniting AgeWell thanks all the sponsors, supporters and volunteers for making this year's Exhibition a success. 🌸



Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AM Governor of Tasmania, and Mr Warner enjoy morning tea with Cottage Club clients

Cottage Club showcases its talents

Home made rhubarb champagne and relish, raspberry jam and teddy bears were presented to Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania, when she dropped into Uniting AgeWell's Cottage Club in Hobart.

Her Excellency and Mr Warner shared morning tea with clients, followed by a tour of the social support and activity groups it provides to older people in the community.

Uniting AgeWell Tasmania Coordinator Community Services, Lee Marsh, said Her Excellency was impressed with the concept of the Cottage Club and the variety of activities on offer.

"Allan Langley, a regular client at the centre, presented Her Excellency with teddy bears made by clients as part of their activity program," she said.

"Her Excellency said she would pass them on to a children's charity of her choice."

Lee said both clients and staff were honoured to meet Her Excellency and Mr Warner.

"We were all very interested in Her Excellency's opening address, where she relayed to us a week in the life of her and her husband and the many events they attend," she said.

"It was an extremely busy schedule, we all felt exhausted just listening to her itinerary!"

"Her Excellency and Mr Warner also sampled our rhubarb champagne made by our Monday group clients from rhubarb grown in the Cottage Club garden and left with a bottle, plus a jar of our Cottage-made rhubarb relish and raspberry jam."

Cottage Club is funded by the Commonwealth Home Support Program and offers centre-based care to older people to maximise their independence, and respite for carers.

The centre offers a range of programs, including social support groups, guest speakers and outings for its clients, giving seniors an opportunity to exercise, learn about health and socialise. 🕊

Celebrating our volunteers

Over 600 of Uniting AgeWell's dedicated army of volunteers were recognised and celebrated through a series of luncheons, barbeques, dancing and high teas during National Volunteer Week in May.

From assisting with leisure and lifestyle activities to transporting residents, pastoral care, helping in the garden or even administration, volunteers play an integral role at Uniting AgeWell, making a positive difference to the lives of the people it supports.

Aldersgate Kings Meadows Lifestyle Coordinator Karen Robinson says the beauty of volunteering is everyone can bring their personal talent and passion and fit in, regardless of their capacity.

"Volunteers are our unsung heroes. Many go above and beyond the role expectations, contributing to and enhancing the wellbeing of our residents," she said.

John Pittman (right) started volunteering at Aldersgate Kings Meadows in 2002 because he wanted to give back to the community in his retirement.

He now volunteers around 15 hours a week and has committed over 1,500 hours assisting residents and their activity programs in 2015.

John was presented with the City of Launceston Volunteer Recognition Award for Hours of Service – Individual Volunteer at the Launceston Town Hall during National Volunteer Week.

"I really enjoy helping others and knowing the difference I can make in the residents' lives through simple activities such as organising footy tipping, Melbourne Cup sweeps, bingo and lawn bowls," John said.

Honour the spirit within

Help us improve the quality of life for people with end-stage dementia by supporting Uniting AgeWell's Namaste program.

Your support allows us to provide massage, music, aromatherapy, pet therapy and other sensory activities to soothe yet gently stimulate residents who may be agitated due to the effects of end-stage dementia.

Donate online at unitingagewell.org or by phone at 03 9276 5712. 

Cheques payable to Uniting AgeWell can be sent to Uniting AgeWell, Marketing & Community Relations, 10 A'Beckett Street, Kew Vic 3101.



"The residents also really appreciate assistance with everyday tasks such as helping them out with their smartphones, changing their watch batteries and holding simple conversations."

Volunteers across Uniting AgeWell were recognised over the week at their respective communities.

We thank all our volunteers for the valuable roles they play in our communities.

To become a volunteer and make a difference to the lives of Uniting AgeWell seniors, visit unitingagewell.org or email volunteers@unitingagewell.org 





Stan and Peggy Bryar with Stan's story presented in a story book through the My Story project

An incredible life told through My Story

Behind the ever-smiling face of 93-year-old Stan Bryar, lies an amazing story of hardship and love.

The Kingsville resident's life was captured in Uniting AgeWell's My Story project, which celebrates the life stories of clients through interviews and photos.

Born and raised in Bendigo during the Great Depression, Stan, the oldest of five siblings, enlisted in the Australian Defence Force as a teenager during World War II and served three years in Papua New Guinea as a radio signaller.

Upon returning to Australia, Stan worked as a carpenter and in 1948, cupid struck. Stan met his wife, Margaret – who was called 'Peggy' – at a local dance. The pair married two years later.

Stan and Peggy built their dream home in Yarraville where they raised their four children – Margaret, Heather, Graham and Lynette. The couple lived there until Stan moved into the Kingsville Community 15 months ago.

Stan's story was captured by Kingsville volunteer Diana Lay and presented in a story book.

"Stan has an incredible story to tell and I'm truly honoured he and Peggy gave me the opportunity to bring his story to life," she said.

Stan's daughter, Lynette Elg, said the My Story project was an amazing initiative offered by Uniting AgeWell.

"Dad has lived a very full life and has been through many hardships," she said.

"Dad also has dementia so it is lovely to capture his story and have this book about his life. It means a lot to our family."

Stan said he and Peggy had an incredible life.

"We have four children, 11 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, travelled locally and internationally and live a wonderful life blessed with love and laughter."

Uniting AgeWell's My Story project aims to reconnect clients with their life histories and passions, build community between clients and 'story catchers' and foster a sense of wellbeing.

After an initial grant of \$90,000 from the Percy Baxter Charitable Trust and the Diana Browne Trust through Perpetual Trustees to set up the project, My Story is now embedded into Lifestyle programs across Uniting AgeWell. 



Public gets first look at Manor Lakes

The public got its first look at the redeveloped Manor Lakes, including the new 33-bed wing, when the community opened its doors for two Open Days in May.

Uniting AgeWell Admissions Manager, Sharon D'Rozario, said the Open Days drew dozens of people from the local area interested in finding out more about the Manor Lakes Community.

The redevelopment includes fresh new living, dining and activities areas, landscaping, salon and chapel, and a contemporary community café – pictured above.

“Wyndham Vale is a growing area with lots of young families, so it’s an area where seniors can move in and still remain close to their loved ones,” she said.

“The beauty of Manor Lakes is its ‘semi-rural’ feel with lots of open space.

“It’s like living in the country but with all the infrastructure and amenities of the city. It’s also close to major communities such as Werribee and Hoppers Crossing.”

Many visitors commented on the warm, friendly, family atmosphere the Manor Lakes community provides, with residents regularly engaged in activities.

“The guests loved the bright and airy feel of Manor Lakes with beautifully decorated indoor and outdoor spaces,” Sharon said.

“It was a lovely Autumn weekend with many guests sitting in the café’s al fresco area, chatting with staff and enjoying delicious food prepared by the in-house kitchen and barista-made coffee, while being entertained by Dave Hetherington’s Jazzbos.”

For admissions enquiries or to arrange a tour, please call Kris Alexis, Regional Admissions Officer, on T: 9742 7201. 



Residents Leslie Mills and Neville Kendall enjoying the new living area



Martha Stanfield on the banks of the Yarra River with sons Jack (left) and Philip (right)

Uniting AgeWell client Martha Stanfield had two wishes granted at once when her son made a surprise visit to her in Melbourne in May.

'Marty' had made a wish through Uniting AgeWell's Wishing Well program to take a cruise on the Yarra River and see the city's skyline with her Melbourne-based son Philip.

But unknown to her, Wishing Well Coordinator Simone Cosgriff had other plans when she learned Marty had not seen her North Queensland-based son Jack for many years.

She extended the invitation to the younger son and he flew to Melbourne to surprise his mum.

"It was a truly touching moment when Marty saw her two boys walk into the room. She was in disbelief and shed tears of joy," Simone said.

Wishing Well reunites family

Marty said the experience was incredible and she loved every minute of it with her sons.

"I loved the cruise and the seafood lunch and to be able to share it with my boys was priceless," she said.

"Thank you so much to the Wishing Well program for organising this incredible experience for me."

Marty's wish is just one of many dreams Uniting AgeWell's Wishing Well has made come true this year.

If you would like to help make someone's dream come true, visit unitingagewell.org 



Carnsworth-based physiotherapists, Amy Hinton-Kench, Michael Richardson, and Jess Bouwman

Uniting AgeWell physiotherapy services have undergone a transformation, with the one group now providing all services across the organisation.

Transform Physiotherapy took over services in March.

Aged Care Funding Instrument Manager, Claire Fry, said having a single supplier would ensure a consistent approach to all physiotherapy services, including mobility, pain management, exercise and function.

Transforming physiotherapy services

"Consolidating all physiotherapy services with one provider is not only more cost effective, demonstrating UA's value of 'stewardship', it also results in a more holistic service for our clients," she said.

Aside from the normal services, Transform Physio will offer projects such as falls prevention, manual handling training and an innovative approach to therapy. 



Lifestyle Advisor for South East Region, Matt Daley, demonstrates virtual reality glasses on Noble Park Lifestyle Activities Officer, Mary Sincock

Creating a better Lifestyle

The creative minds of Uniting AgeWell's Leisure and Lifestyle teams held an inaugural Lifestyle Forum to help develop and improve programs across the organisation.

Acting General Manager Tasmania, Jane Johnston, said the Forum enabled teams to highlight their programs and achievements, and share ideas.

"Leisure and Lifestyle is a big part of our services," she said.

"It plays a significant part in our client's wellbeing, so it's important we continually develop and improve our delivery."

Jane said the presentations were a great learning experience.

"It allowed people to take ideas and implement them back at their own facilities. It also highlighted the great initiatives provided across the organisation," she said.

Attendees also tested out new virtual reality headsets, commonly used to bring relief to residents with low level dementia.

Lifestyle Advisor for South East Region, Matt Daley, said the virtual reality devices were aimed at addressing disengagement, a key issue of dementia.

"Not only can these devices provide a fun experience by allowing users to see a show by Cirque Du Soliel or world landmarks in the comfort of their armchairs, it uses technology in a serene, yet interactive environment, to engage people in the middle and later stages of dementia with such scenes as the beach or under the ocean," he said.

"We're currently trialling these virtual reality glasses at two sites, with more sites potentially coming on board soon."

Jane said they aimed to hold an annual Lifestyle Forum with workshops and guest speakers. 🐦



Stars dazzle at Amarco

Much loved Australian icons Jane Edmanson and Denis Walter featured in a huge line-up of entertainment at Uniting AgeWell's Amarco Apartments over the last few months.

The stars entertained and informed residents and community guests at a number of public events at the independent retirement living complex in Kingsville.

At an Open Day in April, Gardening Australia's Jane Edmanson hosted an information session, providing handy tips on creating the perfect garden in limited spaces, such as balconies and courtyards.

West Footscray Bunnings also assisted with the demonstrations, planting terrariums and creating vertical gardens as well as giving away prizes.

In the lead up to Mother's Day, renowned singer and media personality Denis Walter OAM had guests and residents gushing and singing along at a special morning tea event.

The singer performed a medley of hits and had the audience in stitches by sharing personal stories. The performance was followed by a delicious high tea and an opportunity for guests to tour the apartment complex.

With winter well upon us, Uniting AgeWell's Hotel Services Manager Victoria, Carlo Napoli, hosted a Winter Warmer Masterclass on June 3, giving great advice about low-cost and healthy cooking over the colder months.

Amarco Sales and Marketing Coordinator, Anita Ukalovic, said all three days were a success, with guests and residents loving every minute of the information sessions and entertainment.

More free community events are scheduled for the second half of 2016.

Funny lady Denise Drysdale will entertain guests at a special morning tea on July 8.

Bookings to the morning tea with Denise are essential. To secure your place, find out more or to book a personal tour, contact Anita on 9314 0193 or visit amarcoapartments.com.au 



Front cover: Resident Glenys Crain enjoys the new café at Condare Court

We appreciate your feedback and welcome any story ideas.

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

Uniting AgeWell is an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia