

hello leaders

The leading source of information
for decision makers in the aged care industry

WINTER 2023



Inside this issue: *Interview with COTA Chief Executive Pat Sparrow*



Leadership • Education & Training • Women in Business
Technology • Hospitality • Design & Equipment • Legal & Compliance

Business iQ: an engagement tool for aged care operators

With Foxtel Business iQ, you can tailor the platform to meet the entertainment and information needs of your residents and facility.

- ✓ Add your own branding, up to 10 external channels and activities at your facility residents can enjoy
- ✓ Communicate directly with residents by sharing personalised or group messages on the TV screen
- ✓ Plus, an enormous entertainment library with fresh content and classics added every month.



Availability of particular titles may vary. Requires internet connection. Some channels not available in public viewing areas. Business subscribers only. Requires purchase of 10 screens or 10% of screens within the facility (as relevant). BUS03575

Book a demo today
Call 1300 659 466
or visit foxtel.com.au/biqh

FOXTEL
Business



In this edition

Welcome to Hello Leaders	2
<i>Message from the CEO</i>	
Spotlight on the sector	5
<i>Aged care news, research and developments</i>	
Publication partners	6
Feature article	7-9
<i>Interview with COTA Chief Executive Pat Sparrow</i>	
Upcoming events	10
Leadership	13
<i>Building a strong and cohesive team</i>	13
<i>Leaders vs managers</i>	14
<i>What's your leadership style?</i>	15
<i>6 steps to become a more effective listener</i>	17
Education & Training	18
<i>Investing in the future of your business</i>	18
<i>How to create a 'learning culture'</i>	19
<i>Professional development for culturally appropriate care</i>	21
<i>Mental health training: an essential skill</i>	23
Women in Business	25
<i>Equality at the top – supporting women in leadership</i>	25
<i>'Breaking the class ceiling takes courage'</i>	26
<i>Turning a passion for aged care into a business</i>	28
<i>Paving her own path with care and passion</i>	30
<i>The benefit of women in leadership roles</i>	31
Technology	32
<i>Why invest in technology in aged care?</i>	32
<i>Robots in aged care - the future is now</i>	34
<i>Incorporating more technology into your service</i>	37
<i>Cyber hack wake-up call</i>	41
Hospitality	45
<i>The role of hospitality in aged care</i>	45
<i>Eating with your senses – rethinking texture modified foods</i>	46
<i>Improving food delivery in aged care</i>	49
<i>Food, nutrition and the Quality Standards</i>	52
Design & Equipment	53
<i>Why good design and equipment matters</i>	53
<i>Designing for joy</i>	55
<i>Creating an accessible and usable garden space</i>	58
Legal & Compliance	60
<i>The key to best practice in aged care delivery</i>	60
<i>Managing workplace disputes</i>	63



CEO MESSAGE

Welcome to the very First Edition of the Hello Leaders Publication.



I am very excited to present this magazine to you, and very proud of the team that put this together. Will, Steve, Margot, Andrew, David, Bianca and Alex, thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

I really hope you, as the reader, find the value in the pieces provided.

For over 20 years, the team have been creating guides such as the Aged Care Guide, which has provided seniors and their families with essential information about aged care in Australia. However, when we sat down to evaluate the next steps for us, one question stood out: we provide guides to the consumers, but who is helping the providers?

From previously working in the aged care and disability support services sectors I saw first hand how time-stretched managers, team leaders and even CEOs are when it comes to finding time to upskill or focus on development for themselves and their teams.

This is one of the main reasons we created Hello Leaders - to give back to the providers of this amazing community. To hold out a hand to you, help you out, even if only one article resonates with you or you can use only one paragraph, we just want to provide you with that guidance and reassurance that we are here to help you make a difference in the aged care community.

Hello Leader is for managers and leaders in the aged care industry, looking to gain knowledge and finding resources that guide and inform business decisions. The day to day demands of delivering service to consumers can be at the expense of time spent building strategic plans and implementing innovation and progress within your organisation. Hello Leaders bridges the gap between business aspiration and meaningful change, and serves as an unparalleled resource for business advice and best practice.

In this edition we have chosen to cover the topics Leadership, Education & Training, Women in Business, Technology, Hospitality, Design & Equipment and Legal & Compliance. You will find the articles talk you through

building a strong and cohesive team, leadership styles, effective listening, investing in staff, mental health training, supporting women in leadership roles and new technology to invest in for aged care. There's also tips and tricks in highlighted sections along the way so look out for them!

You will also be able to read throughout the magazine interviews with leaders in the aged care industry, telling you about their journey, challenges and achievements and even some tips they have provided if you are looking to take that next step in your career. We've even been lucky enough in this first edition to speak with Pat Sparrow, newly made Chief Executive of COTA Australia about her journey in Aged Care and leadership.

Our website HelloLeaders.com.au gives you a full range of articles, posted daily, in all different resource sections across the aged care industry and business. At any time you can scan the QR codes at the bottom of the articles in the magazine which will take you to the related section on the website. On the website you will find greater detail on articles and other sections for your perusal.

Hello Leaders is at the forefront of innovation and best practice within the aged care industry, so you can be assured that the information we publish is relevant and reliable. Empower your team and transform your organisation with the knowledge, experience and expertise that only Hello Leaders offers.

We welcome any suggestions on information you would like to see included in the Spring edition of this publication or on helloleaders.com.au to further assist your development. Simply email editor@dps.com.au.

As the CEO of the company bringing you Hello Leaders, I can say this is one magazine I take time out of my day to read to see what tips are inside to help me to run my business. This is one magazine you want to have in your lunch rooms for managers to discuss, staff to read and on the desks of your CEO to have access to the content that is going to help grow their business.

I look forward to meeting you all in the coming years and hearing your stories - who knows maybe one day it will be you on the cover of the next Hello Leaders print magazine! I can't wait to see it.

**Regards,
Michelle Beech - CEO**

WE TAKE THE HASSLE OUT OF PURCHASING AGED CARE CONSUMABLES.

In an industry built on improving quality of life for others, we are here to help you for a change. Our One-Stop Shop allows you to purchase all your consumables from one place. It's the hassle-free way to source your cleaning supplies, PPE, chemical systems and kitchen consumables.

We don't just offer products, our service is tailored specifically to helping the Aged Care industry, including:

- After hours facility fit-out with onsite staff training
- Closed loop chemical systems with a free dispenser program for controlled cleaning and safety
- Prompt response times to dispenser breakdowns (within 12 hours). And much more!

Visit restock.com.au to learn more about us and our services.

Scan to see if
you qualify for a
FREE sample pack.



RESTOCK
responsive + reliable

Australia's foremost
assistive technology event

**OFFERING DAILY
LIVING SOLUTIONS
FOR OLDER
AUSTRALIANS**

MELBOURNE

24-25 MAY 2023

MELBOURNE SHOWGROUNDS
Ascot Vale VIC 3032

PERTH

31 MAY - 1 JUN 2023

CLAREMONT SHOWGROUND
Claremont WA 6010

CANBERRA

7-8 NOV 2023

EXHIBITION PARK (EPIC)
Mitchell ACT 2911



**REGISTER
NOW**

atsa
independent living
expo

1300 789 845

www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au

Organised by

Media Partners





Spotlight on the sector

✳️ NEW ALZHEIMER'S DRUG PROVES EFFECTIVE DESPITE INITIAL FAILURES

American pharmaceuticals Eli Lilly and Company have announced a new drug that has significantly slowed down cognitive decline in people with early symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Participants in the trial were administered with 'Donanemab' and 40 percent of them showed less decline in ability to perform activities of daily living at 18 months and a further 39 percent lower risk of progressing to the next stage of disease.

As part of the trial process, three people died due to brain swelling at a later stage which turned out to be an adverse side-effect from the drug during treatment.

However, considering only 1.6 percent of the 1,734 trial participants experienced severe swelling, Lilly's group Vice President says the company is encouraged by their major breakthrough in tackling Alzheimer's and is unlikely to face any hurdles. According to Director of the Australia Dementia Network at the University of Melbourne, Professor Christopher Rowe, the risks are to be expected given the nature of the treatment. He says the drug has the added benefit of less frequent dosing and seems to be more effective in removing amyloid - which progressively builds up and is responsible for cognitive decline in Alzheimer's disease.

✳️ ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USED TO DIAGNOSE PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Scientists from across the world have successfully been able to use artificial intelligence (AI) to predict the onset of Parkinson's disease almost 15 years before symptoms appear. Research scientists from University of New South Wales and Boston University have collaborated to develop a machine-learning program that can analyse biomarkers in blood samples for metabolites typically found in people with Parkinson's. Currently, people must rely on diagnosis once physical symptoms such as a resting hand tremor appear, but the disease could soon be diagnosed far earlier through a successful blood test. It could be a major breakthrough for people with Parkinson's as no blood or laboratory test is available to diagnose non-genetic cases.

✳️ NEW RESEARCH IDENTIFIES LINK BETWEEN DEMENTIA AND SELF-HARM

A ground-breaking Australian study has established a link between dementia and self-harm within the

first six to 12 months after diagnosis. Researchers from University of New South Wales analysed data from over 180,000 people admitted to hospital between 2001-15, split into two cohorts: patients diagnosed with dementia and those admitted for self-harm injuries. From the first group, almost 700 were readmitted for self-harm. The majority of those instances occurred within the first year of being diagnosed with dementia. Due to the prevalence of self-harm after early dementia diagnosis, UNSW Scientia Associate Professor Simone Reppermund said health services and practitioners should place more significance on mental health support. The research also shows that men were more likely to self-harm after a dementia diagnosis than women and people diagnosed at an early age recorded more instances of self-harm.

✳️ ROBOTIC PETS HELP ELDERLY RESIDENTS COMBAT LONELINESS

Loneliness among elderly residents has been a rising concern across the world. Social isolation can lead to depression, self-harm and cause severe mental illnesses. Recent trials conducted using robotic pets to combat loneliness among the elderly have proven to be highly effective in reducing social isolation.

University of South Australia researcher and project lead, Doctor Janette Young, says the health benefits of human-animal relations cannot be underestimated, particularly for senior citizens and aged care residents. In April 2023, aged care provider, Carinity, introduced robotic pets into all 12 of its homes across Queensland, with residents at Cedarbrook precinct being the latest to benefit from their new furry friends. These robotic pets offer life-like companionship, just like real cats and dogs, without the daily care needs that can be challenging for older people. Research shows that companion pets can help to improve people's moods, communication, interaction with others and can be a comforting presence.



SCAN FOR MORE
INDUSTRY UPDATES ON
[HELLOLEADERS.COM.AU](https://www.helloleaders.com.au)



Thank you to the partners for this edition



Hello Leaders Winter 2023

A HelloCare quarterly publication
Printed May 2023



HelloCare Pty Ltd • 1300 186 688 • PO Box 1026 Pasadena SA 5042
contact@helloleaders.com.au • HelloLeaders.com.au • ABN 21 619 600 029

Advertising
sales@hellocare.com.au
1300 186 688

Distribution
distribution@dps.com.au
1300 186 688

**Proudly produced
and printed
in Australia**

Managing Editor

Margot White
margot.white@dps.com.au

Chief Executive Officer

Michelle Beech

The factual material contained in this publication has been obtained from information supplied by government departments, industry and organisations, by personal interview and by telephone and correspondence. At the time of going to press the publisher believed that all information submitted for publication was accurate and complete. However, the publisher can take no responsibility for inaccuracies or incomplete information that may have been supplied to them in the course of their enquiries detailed above. The facts published indicate the result of those enquiries and no warranty as to their accuracy can be given. The information in this publication is general in nature and does not constitute financial, legal or other professional advice. Readers should consider whether the information is appropriate to their needs and seek professional advice tailored to their personal circumstances. Images within this publication may have been altered from their original format.

© Copyright. No part of this publication can be used or reproduced in any format without express permission in writing from The Publisher.



FEATURE

Pat Sparrow: a woman on a mission to amplify the voices of older Australians

It's been six months since she stepped into the role of Chief Executive at COTA Australia, representing the voices of older Australians. Pat Sparrow has been around the block and brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience in a role that brings her full circle in her career.

By Margot White

Having worked as an aged care adviser for the federal Government, with providers at ACSA, and now with consumers at COTA Australia – she has seen many different angles of aged care.

Hello Leaders sat down with Pat Sparrow and spoke with her about her journey so far, how she sees the role of COTA in the current aged care landscape, her approach to leadership and the hurdles of women in the sector.

Looking at the different roles you've worked in, what are the similarities and differences?

"For me, it's always been about the older person at the core and making sure that older people are getting the best services. That goes way back to, I think it was a Four Corners program in the 1980s, that was about the Home and Community Care program, which was a brand new program at the time.

That really spoke to me, about what's actually important and what the community should be doing, and that sort of got me hooked in the whole space.

There's more in common than not across the roles that I've had. It's been about how do you improve services and support and life for older people. It's about how you support the individual person.

Whether that's through improving service delivery and working with providers to support them and the important work that they're doing, or like now advocating directly and working with older people to advocate on their behalf and make sure that government is hearing their voice.

So perhaps [this role at COTA] brings everything I've done together. My understanding of service delivery, understanding of policy and bringing those things together to make sure that older people's voices are heard."

With more than 20 years experience in aged care you have seen a lot of changes impacting older Australians. In your view, what has changed for the better in aged care over that time and where are we still falling short?

"Aged care has seen a series of incremental improvements. One for me that was really important was the 2017 change for packages to be assigned to an older person and for them to have more say over how they were delivered and which provider they used.

There were lots of implementation issues with that but I think that was really important in terms of how aged care needs to grow into the future. The other thing that change did was it exposed the waiting list and how many people were not able to get services and that had been hidden in the past. So I think that's really an important shift.

More recently, the star ratings system is representative of a greater transparency in the system. I know it has been much talked about, some people are fans and some people think we should walk away from it.

But people are entitled to having information, whether that's the older person themselves because they're making a decision about the service that they want or whether you're a carer or family member who wants to find out about the service that the important person in your life is receiving.

A lot of money has been put into the system, which has been terrific and governments of both persuasions have done that, but we know the system is still not right. And what we saw through the Royal Commission is there's still so much work to do in this space.



COTA Australia Chief Executive Pat Sparrow
(Source: COTA)

One of the biggest things that came out of it for me, that's a foundational thing for aged care is the [need to] move to an act based on human rights. We've seen that work well in disability services where there's a focus on rights and the structure is quite different in recognition of that. So I think if we can get that underpinning right; from the assessment and how that's undertaken and the outcomes, and how the complaints and quality system work. For me that's the real challenge."

How do you see COTA's role in the aged care landscape and what is your vision for the organisation?

"One of the things people think about with COTA is aged care. But we work across all of the areas that impact on an older person. We're really active in the retirement income space, in health, cost of living, housing, mature age employment. All of those things that impact on an older person is what we are working across. And for me, as a long time advocate for a better life for older people, it's kind of the ideal job for me.

The thing that I really want to do is build, obviously COTA, but also a great reputation that is listened to in government. I want to make sure that what we do really well is engage with older people. And that we're amplifying their voices in all of the areas that we're working in, so that people are hearing directly, what older Australians are thinking.

Another aspect I really want to focus on is ageism and age discrimination. We see it everywhere, in all sorts of different policy areas and portfolio areas.

Whether it's somebody who can't get employed because they're "too experienced" or "overqualified", or there's a medical treatment or procedure that's denied them because they're too old. Ageism impacts everybody all the time and so it's really important that we address that.

It's not the last big 'ism' and I wouldn't say for a minute that other 'isms' are fully addressed. Racism and sexism are still rife. But we need ageism to be considered in the same way and have the same focus to address it."

At the start of your career did you ever imagine that you would be in a leadership role?

"I wanted to be a journalist when I first went to university. Then I got into the public service in South Australia and I found that policy was my thing. I thought I'd probably be in a back room doing policy for the rest of my life. But then opportunities transpired and I wanted to keep learning more and doing more, and doing better. I took opportunities as they came up and here I am, Chief Executive of an amazing organisation.

Some leaders will tell you they really planned everything out, but I didn't. I took advantage of opportunities when they came and it was always based on what I was interested in doing. It wasn't so much that I thought I wanted to be a CE one day, it was 'I can do more.'"

How has your leadership changed over the years with age and experience?

"When you first become a leader, it's about yourself as much as anything. And you tend to talk about yourself more and use the phrases 'I' and 'my'. As my leadership skills grew I became much more focused on how I foster and build talent in a team. How do I let other people shine. That has come with maturity and a security about who I am and what I can bring to an organisation."

What do you believe to be the most important qualities or traits of a great leader?

"I'm a collaborative person, so I really want to work with the team and learn from them. Everybody in the organisation makes a valuable contribution, whatever their job is, so hearing from people about what's important and what they think about things is really important and using that to make decisions.

For me another part of leadership is to be authentic. I'm not saying I was ever unauthentic, but I only wanted people to see what I wanted to present. Now I approach it much more as 'this is who I am' and we all have good days and bad days."

What has been your biggest challenge as a leader?

"Being a female I would say balance. I'm not saying that's only a female issue, but as a female leader with a child, balancing being a mum and partner, balance is important.

Being a leader is challenging and as I've gotten older I'm more likely to prioritise things that I need to do for myself than I used to. Because I realised that if I don't look after myself and I'm unwell or I become stressed and things in the other part of my life aren't running, then that really impacts on being a leader."

How have you dealt with the perception of being a woman in a leadership role?

"I definitely know about the frustrations that women will talk about. Like being in a meeting and making a comment that nobody reacts to and then 10 or 15 minutes later a male colleague will say the same thing and it's the best thing anyone's ever heard. Those kinds of things are true.

I didn't feel like I got judged as a female until I was a CEO. I actually went to a women in leadership event early in my career, and the person who was running it said something that I have adopted ever since: you are who you are and people know who you are. So don't try and be something you're not.

That really helped me at the time in my career, when I learned that because I think we were at a stage where a lot of people felt that female leaders had to imitate men.

I'm a female later and I bring the same amount of qualities and that's a good thing, not a bad thing. I think we need to be looking at what is good about any leader."

What do you think are the benefits of having women in leadership?

"It's really about having good people and leadership isn't it? So having a different perspective is really important and women do bring different perspectives. So it is important that those perspectives are brought and valuing what's good about anyone's leadership.

You can have women who aren't good leaders just like you can have men who aren't good leaders. So it is about the individual. But I do think that women bring different perspectives because we have different life experience. So bringing that rounded view to leadership from a female perspective is really important."

Who has inspired you as a leader?

"My mother, who passed recently, always told me to tell the truth and do my best. I remember her giving me that advice before my first Royal Commission appearance, which I was very nervous about. She's always been inspirational.

I'm also inspired by people like Nelson Mandela who again focused on people and what they would bring and not passing on prejudices. And another person who I think is quite remarkable is Julia Gillard. She's a very inspirational modern leader who put up with more than anyone should have to. Watching her lead with great dignity and her resilience was quite extraordinary."

hello leaders

Find articles on a wide range of topics and business areas, from HR and technology to marketing and design, online at

www.helloleaders.com.au

The leading source of information for decision makers in the aged care industry.





Upcoming events

JUNE

ACCPA VIC State Conference 2023

Melbourne 13 – 15 June 2023

The 2023 ACCPA State Conferences, entitled 'Driving Quality Care,' have been designed to equip leaders with the skills and insights necessary to navigate new regulations and expectations, embrace the 'new normal,' and not only survive, but thrive.

These conferences will provide attendees with a current understanding of the situation and insight into the impact of new reforms.

National Retirement Living Summit

Gold Coast 21 – 23 June 2023

The Retirement Living Council has sought and curated some of the most relevant, thoughtful and inspiring speakers to identify the value chain the retirement living industry offers Australia, as well as the value proposition age-friendly communities will offer older Australians today and tomorrow.

Aged Care Week

Sydney 21 – 23 June 2023

As the aged care sector faces another challenging year consisting of new compliance requirements, increased costs, staff shortages and more, the need to implement new frameworks and models in order to survive is crucial.

The 4th Aged Care Week enables attendees to come together and hear firsthand from the government on the latest regulatory updates and gain access to best-practice case studies to overcome current challenges, including new regulatory requirements and workforce challenges.

14th Annual National Dementia Conference

Melbourne 21 – 22 June 2023

Returning for 2023, the 14th Annual National Dementia will bring together a host of leading experts to discuss best-practice strategies and initiatives for improving quality person-centered care across multiple settings, and will also detail the latest research, therapies, and treatments, innovation, and technologies from around the world.

The event presents a unique opportunity to explore what's possible and embrace change within this critical and growing sector.

ACCPA WA State Conference 2023

Perth 28 – 30 June 2023

The aged care industry has been grappling with change for quite some time now. However, it's crucial to ask ourselves if we truly understand how to adjust to remain competitive and financially sustainable, and if we're adequately positioned to deliver quality care.

The key to staying afloat is comprehending how to adapt effectively to the new environment. To this end, the 2023 ACCPA State Conferences, themed 'Driving Quality Care,' have been curated to furnish leaders with the requisite skills and knowledge to navigate new regulations and expectations, embrace the new normal, and not just survive but thrive.

JULY

Aged & Community Care Reform Hybrid Summit

Hybrid Sydney & Online 19 – 20 July 2023

A number of significant reforms have been rolled out over the last 2 years since the final report of the Royal Commission into aged care quality and safety, with providers embracing changes as guided by the reforms to enable a substantial overhaul of the aged care system.

With further reforms underway in 2023, the Aged & Community Care Summit developed in partnership with COTA Australia will be an opportunity to gain different perspectives on the progress of the reforms till date, the challenges, opportunities and priorities for the rest of the year.

Discount Code: 'HELLO' (Save \$100 off current ticket rates)

AUGUST

Care Expo Melbourne

Melbourne 11 – 12 August, 2023

The Care Expo in Melbourne brings together a diverse range of community services, businesses and organisations from the support, health and care industries and will also feature a range of inspirational and educational speakers.

For more information on any of these events or to register visit HelloLeaders.com.au/events

Aged & Community Care Reform

Hybrid Summit

19-20 July 2023 | Sydney & Online

Stocktake on the Aged Care reform agenda - progress and future priorities.

Learn from senior leaders and key stakeholders across the sector to help you prepare for change, gain clarity and begin developing strategies to help you navigate complexity.

Find out more: <https://bit.ly/reform-summit>

Or scan the QR code to visit the website



This is Claire

Nurse

Generation Thrive Graduate

Future Industry Leader



generation
thrive

“ We jumped at the chance to put our staff through the program and provide them with the skills to grow both personally and professionally.

Thrive@Work is the best money we've ever invested in our people, and our business. ”

- Generation Thrive Client | 2022

WHO IS GENERATION THRIVE?

Training and development specialists who support organisations to attract, develop and retain their staff.

Our evidence based Thrive@Work Personal Leadership Program focuses on building the essential soft skills (beyond the technical) of your employees, including [self-leadership](#), [problem solving](#), [time management](#), [communication](#) and [social and emotional intelligence](#) – all while providing prevention strategies to support their mental wellbeing.

HOW LONG IS THE PROGRAM AND HOW IS IT DELIVERED?

- 12 weeks of self-directed online learning
- One-on-one coaching plus facilitated group sessions

WHAT MAKES THE PROGRAM UNIQUE?

We don't do long lectures, instead, the program is designed to fit your workforce needs. Our training is immersive and engaging for your staff, who get the added benefit of their own coach to facilitate development and achieve their goals.

DOES IT WORK?

OUR OUTCOMES CERTAINLY SAY SO!

99% of participants report now being confident they can achieve their goals

96% have improved their time management, organisation and negotiation skills

100% have improved their positive and assertive communication skills

With over 25 years' experience delivering personal leadership programs that consistently achieve outstanding results, we are confident that we can help you maximise productivity, engagement and retention, while building the wellbeing of your staff. Creating a team of thriving, self-driven and resilient individuals.

To explore how Thrive@Work can benefit your business, call the team on (08) 8104 6440 or visit generationthrive.com.au

100% OF GENERATION THRIVE PROFITS SUPPORT YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES AUSTRALIA



Building a strong and cohesive team: Strategies for Success

In today's fiercely competitive business environment, it's imperative for organisations to build a robust team.

by Andrew Barbara

The primary objective of creating a team is to deliver superior client service and achieve improved outcomes.

When a team communicates efficiently and collaborates effectively, they can achieve more than individuals working independently. That's why leaders need to focus on building and sustaining high-performance teams that are motivated and dedicated to attaining the organisation's objectives.

Merely recruiting a talented group of individuals isn't sufficient; leaders must proactively establish and sustain high-performance teams that are enthusiastic and devoted to the organisation's goals.

The role of a leader in this process cannot be understated. A leader plays a crucial role in creating and maintaining a strong team. They set the vision, goals, and objectives for the team, while also ensuring that everyone is working towards the same goal.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

One of the most important elements of creating a strong team is communication. Good communication is essential for a team to function effectively. A team that communicates effectively is able to work together seamlessly, share ideas, solve problems together, and achieve their goals. Leaders must ensure that their teams have open lines of communication and that team members feel comfortable expressing their ideas and concerns.

To optimise communication within a team, leaders can employ various strategies. For example, regular team meetings are an excellent way to keep team members informed about what's happening within the organisation and to discuss progress, challenges, and next steps. Leaders can also use technology

such as instant messaging platforms or project management tools to facilitate communication among team members. Such platforms can help team members stay connected and informed, regardless of their location.

LEADERSHIP STYLE

In addition to communication, another important element of creating a strong team is leadership style.

Different leadership styles work best for different teams, so it's important for leaders to be adaptable and able to adjust their leadership style to suit the team's needs.

Some teams may work well under a democratic leadership style where everyone has an equal say in decision-making, while others may prefer a more autocratic leadership style where the leader makes most of the decisions. Leaders must also be able to provide constructive feedback to their team members, recognizing their strengths and areas for improvement.

BUILDING A TEAM

Creating a strong team also involves hiring the right people. Leaders must be able to identify the right skills and qualities for the team's roles and recruit the best candidates for the job. They must also ensure that the team is diverse, with people from different backgrounds and skill sets, as this can bring fresh ideas and perspectives to the team. Additionally, a diverse team is more likely to understand and respond to the needs of a diverse customer base.



**SCAN FOR MORE
LEADERSHIP ARTICLES ON
HELLOLEADERS.COM.AU**



Leaders vs managers, are you doing the right thing or doing things right?

By Ben Taylor

Leadership and management are often referred to as a similar skillset, but they are as different as night and day. While both are important in any organisation, understanding the difference between them can help you understand where you might have gaps and opportunities for growth.

Let's look at the difference between the two:

- Management is about control, systems, and processes. Managers are the people who keep things running smoothly, ensuring that deadlines are met, budgets are adhered to, and employees are held accountable. In short, managers are the ones who make sure that the bus runs on time.
- Leadership is all about vision, inspiration, and motivation. Leaders are the ones who inspire others to follow them, who are willing to take risks and think outside the square. They change systems and processes to make it better for customers and their people as it aligns with their vision, and they have a clear view of where they want to go. They provide inspiration for others to follow them on the journey.

So, in essence management is about doing things right, while leadership is about doing the right things.

Imagine you are lost on a walk in the outback, and you come across two people: a manager and a leader. To help you find your way the manager will give you a map, a compass, and a set of instructions to follow. They will tell you to walk 5 kilometres to the north, turn left at the billabong, walk another 5 kilometres west, and you will get back to the carpark where you left your car. The leader, on the other hand, will give you hope. They will tell you that they have been lost in the outback before, and they know the way out so follow them. They will inspire you to keep going, even when things get tough, and they will lead you to the safety of your car.

Now, I know what you're thinking. "Surely a manager can also be a leader?" and I absolutely agree they can. I have been privileged to work alongside many great managers who are also great leaders.

But remember, management and leadership are two different skill sets, and just because someone is a great manager, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are a great leader.

I've experienced firsthand a manager who was a terrible leader. They were great at keeping things organised, processes followed and making sure that deadlines were met, but they had no vision or inspiration. They would never think outside the box or take risks and used language like "but that's not how we do things here" when presented with an idea or opportunity. Their team felt like a cog in the machine, and ideas dismissed as the KPI's were being met, even though things could be better.

On the other hand, I experienced a leader who was a terrible manager. They had a clear vision of where they wanted to go, and they inspired their team to follow them, but they were terrible at managing the day-to-day. No-one was clear on their role, nothing really got done, budgets were blown, and chaos reigned although it was "fun" as people were inspired by their vision.

So, in summary, leadership and management are two different skill sets, but both can be developed. It's important to understand the difference between them so you know where to focus the personal development activities for you and your team to fill the gaps. By having a mix of both skills at all levels of your organisation you will have the ability to look at the bigger picture, set and communicate the journey, whilst being able to zoom in and make sure that the work gets done to get you there.

And remember if you're lost in the outback look for someone who has a great mix of both.



Ben's 'why' is helping people realise their full potential and become the best version of themselves. An IECL qualified coach, Ben has over 15 years leadership and coaching experience working in the UK, India and Australia.



What's your leadership style?

Whether you are the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), a General Manager, or a team leader, your role is to inspire, motivate and guide others for the betterment of your organisation.

By Alex Jacobs

Your leadership style will play a key part in that process and understanding the type of leader you are can make sure you're working to your strengths.

Leadership is simply defined as "the action of leading a group of people or an organisation", but in reality there is much more to it.

You can also acknowledge your own leadership methods, behaviours and expectations, to guide and inspire staff while maximising your organisation's potential through high quality management.

You may not be one specific type of leader; your leadership style may be a combination of different types which indicates you can be adaptable and fluid depending on the situation.



An effective leader can create a positive workplace culture for all staff. (Source: iStock)

There are direct outcomes of poor leadership that can impact operations, such as high staff turnover, poor workplace culture or below average delivery of services.

But an effective leader can create a positive workplace culture where staff retention and attraction is high, services are delivered to a high standard, and everyone has a chance to flourish.

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEADERSHIP

Understanding the different leadership styles and identifying which one most describes you as a leader will help you become more self-aware of your strengths and potential weaknesses. It can help you recognise leadership traits in colleagues and staff that could benefit your service delivery.

These are the most common types of leadership styles and their strengths and weaknesses.

DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP

A democratic leader takes on the opinions of others when making decisions or delegating tasks. You are likely to be inclusive with strong communication skills and the belief that shared responsibility is an important aspect of leadership.

Democratic leadership is also referred to as participative leadership, a name reflecting its collaborative nature.

Strengths – You are open to discussion, want to empower others and recognise the importance of teamwork, especially when it comes to problem solving.

Your strengths in leadership also extend to being able to acknowledge the experience and limitations of others. You can recognise learning opportunities and must be able to confidently lead.

What to watch out for – Some democratic leaders may struggle with making the final decision, so be careful that you do not delegate too much responsibility or take the word of others to make every decision. When important decisions require quick thinking, you need to be able to step up.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A transformational leader is focused on growth and evolution. This is the perfect leadership style for a team leader training new staff, or a person in senior management that has just taken on a new challenge.

Your goal is to elevate an organisation and tap into the full potential of staff and resources.

Strengths – A critical mind allows you to assess strengths and weaknesses quickly, while you are never short-sighted when setting out timelines and tasks. You enjoy a hands-on approach that inspires others.

What to watch out for – It is crucial you do not lose sight of the here and now. Some transformational leaders may get caught up in growth and new opportunities that put existing success under pressure.

LAISSEZ-FAIRE LEADERSHIP

Laissez-faire is a French saying that means allow to do or let them do. This is a delegative leadership style where you give more authority to staff and rarely intrude or micromanage.

Strengths – If you have an experienced and highly skilled team, your ability to trust and support them where needed is crucial. You will have a positive attitude and can remain engaged with staff development without having to intrude.

What to watch out for – If you have a more inexperienced team, you are at risk of missing opportunities for support and growth. Staff may feel as though they are not supported enough without regular guidance.

TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Transactional leaders believe in an action and reward, or action and punishment, style of management. You incentivise staff through bonuses and rewards as a way to motivate them to achieve targets.

Strengths – For some, clarity and structure is a highly effective way to work, especially when there are set responsibilities and tasks. You can also identify staff that are committed, hard working and perhaps deserving of more responsibility.

What to watch out for – Not all staff will push for rewards and you may find that transactional leadership causes some people to feel unappreciated. You can also fall into the trap of “punishing” individuals rather than addressing the cause of failure.

COACHING LEADERSHIP

Arguably the most inclusive leadership style, you likely fit the coaching leadership model if you identify and nurture strengths while maximising team performance and success.

It's a type of leadership that requires experience and authority as others will look to your actions as guidance.

Strengths – You are hands-on, strategic and can identify weaknesses and like to support staff through mentoring, problem-solving and encouragement.

What to watch out for – Not everyone can follow in your exact footsteps. It is easy for some leaders to micromanage and indirectly harm the confidence of others by not valuing their contributions or over-coaching.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Strategic leaders are often those in management roles. You understand there is a need to balance expectations, performance, finances and growth. A strategic leader is accountable and collaborative, and able to work with various departments and other leaders to achieve the best possible results.

Strengths – You have the ability to look at the bigger picture, rather than other leadership styles that are more individual focused. You recognise the importance of collaboration and teamwork for mutual benefit.

What to watch out for – You do not want to take on too much responsibility without delegation. Too much responsibility and pressure can lead to burnout, which can impact those around you who are looking for your support.

THE MAKINGS OF A GOOD LEADER

There are common strengths that make a good leader, such as the ability to set a positive standard and support others to learn. And although your attitude towards leadership may suit one style over another, you recognise that there are times when you need to be flexible.

It is also never too early or late to make changes to your leadership style. Taking on feedback means you can show others there is always room to grow and develop. If you are continually improving your own leadership, then others will always look to you for guidance.



6 steps to become a more effective listener

By Ben Taylor

One of the most important skills you can develop as a leader is active listening. Active listening is the act of being present and fully concentrating on, and understanding what the speaker is saying.

It's a crucial skill that helps leaders build trust, respect, and rapport with their team members and stakeholders. In this article, we'll unpack six simple steps you can take to become a more effective listener.

STEP 1: FACE THE SPEAKER AND MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT

The first step in active listening is to ensure you face the speaker and maintain eye contact. This simple act demonstrates your interest and engagement in the conversation and what the person has to say. A good way to do this is note the colour of their eyes when you connect. It's important to be attentive but relaxed and avoid crossing your arms or legs, which can signal defensiveness or disinterest.

STEP 2: KEEP YOUR MIND OPEN

It's essential to keep an open mind when listening to someone. Try to put aside your preconceptions or biases and approach the conversation with curiosity and a willingness to learn. This approach will help you to understand the speaker's perspective and build trust with them.

STEP 3: LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND, NOT RESPOND

Many people listen to respond, meaning they are already formulating their response in their mind while the other person is still speaking. However, this approach can be counterproductive as it can prevent you from fully understanding the speaker's message. Instead, listen to understand their message without bias so you can then form a response.

STEP 4: DON'T INTERRUPT

It's essential to avoid interrupting the speaker. Interrupting can signal that you're not interested in their message, that you don't respect them or that you feel what you have to say is far more important. Instead, wait for the speaker to pause before asking clarifying questions or making comments.



Active listening is an essential skill for leaders
(Source: Shutterstock)

STEP 5: ASK QUESTIONS BUT ONLY TO ENSURE UNDERSTANDING

When you ask questions, make sure they are focused on ensuring you understand the speaker's message, rather than trying to redirect the conversation which can take them off topic or feel they aren't being heard. Open-ended questions that begin with 'what', 'why', or 'how' are very effective in gaining a deeper understanding of the speaker's perspective.

STEP 6: PAY ATTENTION TO NONVERBAL CUES

Nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions and body language, can provide important context to the speaker's message. Pay attention to these cues and use them to guide your understanding of the conversation. For example, if the speaker seems tense or uncomfortable, it may signal that they are discussing a sensitive topic, if they are joyful and expressive, they enjoyed the story they are sharing.

Active listening is an essential skill for leaders. By following these six simple steps, you can become a more effective listener and build trust, respect, and rapport with your team members. It also really works in personal relationships too.

The first time you try it you might find it uncomfortable but with practice, active listening will become second nature, and you'll see the benefits in your relationships with your team members, colleagues and your friends and family too.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Investing in the future of your business

By Margot White

In a world that's forever changing we are constantly learning. The need for ongoing education and training, in both our personal and professional lives, is more important than ever.

Professional development is an important aspect of career growth and has multiple benefits for both employers and employees.

It not only provides an opportunity for staff to learn new skills, it also builds worker confidence, connections and could lead to career advancement.

For employers, investing in a team and offering opportunities for professional development plays a key role in employee satisfaction and staff retention. It's known to increase productivity and create a positive culture.

TRAINING VS DEVELOPMENT

Training and professional development are not the same. Where training fills a gap in knowledge and is often based on the needs of the organisation, professional development focuses on the employee and is an opportunity for growth for both the company and the individual.

Essentially training is a learning process where employees develop certain skills, knowledge or competencies that are needed to perform a specific task or job role. This is usually a short-term process aimed at improving productivity, safety or quality.

Development is a long term educational process that benefits the overall growth of an employee. It is not limited to a specific task, but aims to increase capability and change a mindset for example by developing leadership or relationship building skills.

WHY IS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPORTANT?

Employers that focus on the development of their team will find employees will be more motivated and engaged. Education opportunities will boost morale, create a positive culture and staff tend to be more productive.

Whilst some employers are worried that if they encourage professional development those workers will take their newly gained knowledge and leave, the opposite is actually true.

In fact, having opportunities for education and career advancement is becoming an expectation of many employees and organisations actually run the risk of losing staff if they're not showing a commitment to professional development and career progression.

BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYERS

Professional development will help increase an employee's confidence in their abilities. This can lead to higher job satisfaction and increased performance meaning they're less likely to leave.

By demonstrating a willingness to invest in employees' growth, you're not only investing in an individual but in the whole team which will make you more attractive as a workplace to new hires.

BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES

Having opportunities for ongoing learning and education will ensure that employee knowledge and skills are up to date but it also means staff will be across the latest developments and trends in your industry.

Education and training not only increases your knowledge and skills, but also shows your commitment to self-improve.

Employers will recognise you are motivated to develop your skills and are driven to continue to grow, which will help you stand out when a new opportunity or promotion comes along.

Professional development will expose you to new ideas and help make new connections and grow your network. This could eventually lead to new opportunities or a next step in your career.

With clear benefits for organisations and individuals it's easy to see why training and development in the workplace matters. Investing in staff is investing in the future of your business which will ultimately be a win-win for both.



SCAN FOR MORE
EDUCATION & TRAINING
ARTICLES ON
HELLOLEADERS.COM.AU



How to create a 'learning culture'

Upskilling staff is becoming vital to running a successful business, especially in a sector that is struggling to retain and grow its workforce such as aged care.

Studies show that staff training increases worker productivity and improves employee satisfaction and motivation, which means that they will be more likely to stay in their role.

With a worldwide skill and worker shortage in the aged care sector, many providers are feeling the pain and struggling to find and keep good staff.

Organisations often look to fill specialist roles externally, instead of offering training and career advancement to their existing staff.

Renaë Sullivan, Business Support Specialist and Consultant, has worked in agency recruitment for four years, both with and for aged care providers. Currently, she is a consultant for change

management and growth and can vouch that upskilling your staff is a “no-brainer”.

“Upskilling means you’re not only going to create the talent that you need internally, but it also means you’re more likely to retain your staff because they want career progression,” Ms Sullivan said.

“Staff want to further their career and if their organisation doesn’t offer that then they will look elsewhere.

“So the benefits are to try and increase productivity and a higher standard of care, it’s a no-brainer to invest in your current and future staff because it’s all about the people.”



Advance Care
Planning Australia
BE OPEN | BE READY | BE HEARD

Improve advance care planning in your service

Download Advance Care Planning Improvement Toolkits to strengthen your advance care planning policy, and conduct quality audits. Access our education to help your team start important conversations and support documentation of preferences.

Being able to follow health care preferences every day through to end of life, improves satisfaction and reduces anxiety for individuals, their families and your team.



 1300 208 582

Call the National Advance Care Planning Support Service™ to make a referral or get advice.
For information and resources visit advancecareplanning.org.au

Advance Care Planning Australia™ is funded by the Australian Government and administered by Austin Health.

LEARNING CULTURE

Ms Sullivan said ‘cross-pollinating’ care workers with more administration skills allows a business to work towards its goals while also providing opportunities to staff to upskill.

Enhancing employee capabilities means staff feel more confident in conducting their daily tasks without supervision and may even be able to relieve other staff members of some duties, which will increase the overall efficiency of your team.

“It can be as simple as buddying someone up with a mentor in an internal mentorship program with someone more senior who can pass on that knowledge, or digital courses that can be done online,” Ms Sullivan said.

“Leaders should really encourage self-training in staff, or even offer smaller training options that are embedded in the day-to-day jobs.

“It’s changing that mindset from ‘this is just a job that we do’ to ‘how do we upskill our staff and make it a learning culture?’”

TOP FIVE TIPS FOR UPSKILLING YOUR STAFF

1. Align training to individuals and target it towards closing skill gaps, particularly in those newest to the sector.
2. Managements should look for opportunities to train staff as you go. This allows workers to
3. Allow for mentoring. Capable staff should be encouraged to seek a mentor to develop their skills further. An internal mentor program where senior staff can help teach others can help foster a learning environment as a cohort.
4. Allow breaks between learning modules. For information retention and to avoid burning out your staff, breaking learning up into manageable chunks or sessions are easier to comprehend and can facilitate a higher rate of understanding. This is best achieved through online learning.
5. Ensure online learning will be effective by breaking a learning module into digestible sessions that staff can complete at their own pace.

THE BENEFITS WILL BE TENFOLD

Ms Sullivan said an organisation should be constantly up to date with the full breadth of their staff’s resumes and “looking at a person rather than just a job description”.

“I think it’s important for aged care providers to be aware of that internal skill set because they’re often submitting tenders for services and they need to be able to provide evidence of the skills of their staff,” she said.



Leadership and management are two different skill sets, but both can be developed (Source: iStock)

“Having it as a continual practice that people are upskilling, they’re keeping their resumes up to date, it means it won’t be a panic when you need to know if you’ve got that skill set within your organisation.”

Other benefits include:

- ✳ A higher level of productivity and efficiency in providing services
- ✳ Staff are in the best position to serve customers or the people they care for
- ✳ Upskilled staff can fill gaps in your company
- ✳ Build a competitive advantage above other businesses
- ✳ Money saved on job advertisements, salary and training
- ✳ Staff are more capable of responding to questions, which will lead to a better delivery of customer service

In order to combat the current skills and worker shortage in the aged care sector it is clear upskilling current staff, by encouraging them to “cross-pollinate” between different roles, is not only beneficial but cost-effective to your business.

Being aware of a cohort’s skillset and utilising their strengths in other parts of the business outside of their role can help them feel like their learning and development is valid and also reduces the need to recruit more staff to fill gaps.



Professional development for delivering culturally appropriate care

Aged care is becoming increasingly diverse in Australia, leading to a more critical need for culturally appropriate care services.

By Alex Jacobs

According to the Department of Health, 28% of home care clients and 20% of people in residential aged care were from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background in 2020. Those figures are believed to be an underrepresentation as it only refers to people born in non-English speaking countries – a very specific marker of diversity.

Regardless, there is clear cultural growth in Australia, and our ability to provide appropriate care to the ageing population is more important than ever. Education is a crucial step towards supporting a wide range of people. Here are some of the courses that can help set you and your staff up for success when it comes to delivering culturally appropriate care.

✳️ **THE CENTRE FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN AGEING**

For leading resources in cultural diversity, inclusion and best practices for culturally appropriate aged care, the Centre for Cultural Diversity in Ageing (CCDA) is arguably the leader.

Funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care, and supported by aged care provider Benetas, their online resources are essential for workers of all backgrounds. These resources will play a pivotal role in educating and upskilling all staff, whether they're working directly with residents or providing guidance in a leadership role.

Key learnings:

Not only is the CCDA focused on diversity, but there is a range of diverse topics on offer, providing numerous opportunities for learning and development. Their online Diversity Webinar series offers the best

education resources straight from the minds of industry experts.

These free courses are accessible to all, and topics include culturally diverse perspectives on mental health care, the exploration of links between food, culture and identity, and steps for developing a diversity plan in aged care.

Regardless of the participant's level of knowledge, there is something for everyone.

What sets it apart:

Aged care leaders have a great opportunity to access unique expertise through the CCDA's Diversity Mentoring Program which partners aged care leaders with diversity mentors from the CCDA for six months.

As a result, leaders can pick the brain of experienced mentors while developing and implementing their own culturally appropriate programs within their organisation. The mentorship will benefit organisations through policy and the flow-on effect means staff have more guidance when providing culturally appropriate care for residents or home care clients.

✳️ **OPAN'S PLANNING FOR DIVERSITY**

The Older Person's Network Australia (OPAN) provides free education and information workshops for aged care providers looking to create more inclusive services for residents from diverse or marginalised backgrounds.

OPAN's Planning for Diversity workshop is a critical learning experience for aged care leaders, with OPAN identifying people responsible for quality improvement, service planning and/or compliance as suitable participants.

Key learnings:

As the leading advocacy group for older people, OPAN is providing education that has residents at the forefront. Therefore, participants are able to learn about creating targeted services that engage individuals and families from diverse backgrounds while also pinpointing the existing barriers keeping them from services.

This means organisations have newfound knowledge and perspectives that can be used to unlock new markets or design services that are going to be more attractive to diverse residents.

Planning for Diversity also focuses on Aged Care Quality Standards and the Charter of Aged Care Rights to ensure that culturally diverse care remains at the forefront of all planning.

What sets it apart:

OPAN's commitment to the community puts local residents at the heart of all discussions. Their workshops are held across the country so participants have access to localised information and insights that will truly benefit operations.

It's rare to have access to such specific resources and the ability to connect with your community at a deeper level is always beneficial to ongoing care and support.

*** DIVERSITY IN AGED CARE WITH CRANAPLUS**

Although CRANaplus has educational resources that are impactful for aged care providers in any setting, their focus on regional Australia, particularly remote and isolated locations, is a boost for regional providers looking for tailored information.

Diversity in Aged Care is an essential learning opportunity for providers ready to take the next step in expanding their ability to care for culturally diverse people.

Key learnings:

As part of culturally appropriate care, you need to understand who you're targeting and what they're after. CRANaplus provides clear insights into the community around you, including people from CALD backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Participants can learn how to promote inclusivity to a diverse group of people, while also learning about the most appropriate communication strategies to achieve mutual success. Appropriate communication will help break down barriers preventing older people from accessing your services.



Providing cultural appropriate care to the ageing population is more important than ever (Source: Chung Wah Association)

What sets it apart:

With a focus on rural and remote communities, CRANaplus has also created a resource that could benefit an unheralded part of the aged care workforce – carers and volunteers. Diversity in Aged Care is designed for aged care professionals, but it's accessible to non-health professionals and those caring for older people. It can help create a wider sense of cultural acknowledgment of ageing.

SUPPORTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Aged care leaders and staff have a responsibility to be aware of the people they're caring for, including their diverse backgrounds.

Yes, that often takes time, and so by supporting yourself and your staff with the best tools for success, you can build the foundations for culturally appropriate care. This will help existing residents, new residents and staff.

There's also plenty of room for growth as you can continue to explore diversity in aged care, whether it's through day-to-day care or advanced care planning. Education is just the starting point as you develop and implement culturally appropriate aged care policies that will benefit everyone within the organisation.



Mental health training: an essential skill

By David McManus

Mental health in aged care is not a regular part of aged care training. Staff are taught skills in a range of areas including meeting an older person's personal care needs, dementia support, infection prevention and how to follow safe work practices to name a few.

Tools and strategies for how to support resident's mental health needs or dealing with tense situations are generally not part of the skill set workers enter the industry with. Here's why they should be.

Training that is uniquely catered to care recipients experiencing psychosis, depression and anxiety can equip workers with the ability to de-escalate crises among residents.

NOT JUST A WORK SKILL

Dr Claire Kelly, Director of International Programs for Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA), said that

the better equipped people are to do their jobs, the more likely they are to stay and hone their skills in the role.

"Having mental health first aid skills isn't just a work skill, it's a life skill, so, being able to go home and use those same skills with family, with friends, other people in your community... All of that leads to feeling more in control and feeling able to help the people around them," said Dr Kelly.

"Over the last 20 years, we've talked a lot about early intervention and it's often assumed that early intervention is for young people. If someone is 90 years old and having their first episode of mental illness or perhaps their first episode in a long time, I still want them to get help as soon as possible."

Crises such as suicidal thoughts and behaviours, panic attacks, delirium and problematic confusion

Creating Community

transformative care model
+ **innovative** education

The Eden Alternative® model of care provides a flexible framework to build staff and organisational capacity, deepen relationships and grow community.

This ensures effective change and compliance outcomes across the care continuum enabling people to grow.

Our Education Products

Certified Eden Associate Training
Reframing Dementia
Dementia Beyond Drugs
Intro to the Eden Alternative

Our Services

Eden Registry
Eden Consulting Services

**We offer flexible online
and face to face education**

P: +61 437 739 779

E: training@edeninoznz.com.au

W: www.edeninoznz.com.au



Our education provides synergy with the new Aged Care Quality Standards



Knowing how to support client mental health needs is an essential skill for all aged care staff (Source: Shutterstock)

can often be mitigated through early detection, treatment or referral and ongoing supervision.

"While in the community, we do have an overall improved level of mental health literacy, it's often very limited to perhaps adults of a working age, or young people, where we've got a sense of what we're looking for," Dr Kelly added.

"There is, unfortunately, in the community at large, perhaps a view that getting older is just a depressing part of life or another nihilistic outlook like that. It's just not true. In fact, while mental health problems certainly do occur in older people, the rates are lower than the rest of the population overall. At the same time, are people less likely to ask 'what can we do to improve this person's quality of life?'," according to Dr Kelly.

RECOGNISE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

One example of a course to help staff gain knowledge and skills is through an Older Person's Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course offered online or at different locations across the country. The 12-hour face-to-face course is specifically for staff in the aged care sector, which is usually delivered as either a 2-day training package or as 4 separate modules.

Robyn Miller is instructor of the Older Persons Mental Health First Aid training course MHFA Australia and

has recently delivered this training to aged care staff in both Queensland and Victoria.

Ms Miller explained that mental health training courses enable staff to recognise the common signs and symptoms of mental health problems in older people.

"They would learn about the different 'risk' factors for the onset of mental illness, how to respond and provide support to the older person, and where to go to access professional help if it is needed," she said.

All staff working with older clients should pay particular notice to any changes in behaviour, emotions, or physical problems which may occur in the older person. They should also "have an understanding about the many and complex issues older people are faced with, particularly around grief and loss," she added.

"Connect them with their general practitioner (GP) or a clinical person to access any treatments that may be available for them, make sure they have a good 'support' network, involve any family members or significant carers," said Ms Miller.

"Try to engage them in community activities that they may have found enjoyable in the past or work with them to discover new interests."

EARLY SIGNS OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Some of the signs to look out for in older adults that could signify mental health issues include:

- ✱ Frequent mood changes
- ✱ Change in appetite
- ✱ Trouble concentrating and remembering things
- ✱ Change in personal care and hygiene
- ✱ Withdrawing from social interactions



Equality at the top – supporting women in leadership

By Emily Erickson

Women are progressing into leadership roles at an increasing rate, bringing a different set of skills and perspectives to their workplace.

Across Australia, 22.3% of CEOs are female, however in Residential Care Services 51% of CEOs are female, showing the aged care sector is already achieving gender balance. However, in a sector made up of over 80% women, there is still work to do for this number to reflect the percentage of women in the industry as a whole.

Whilst there are clear benefits women can bring to these roles, they often face unique challenges on their road to success.

SAME OPPORTUNITIES

In 2020, research by Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) and Bankwest Curtin Economic Centre found an increase of over 10% in female representation on the Boards of Australian ASX-listed companies, which led to a 4.9% increase in company market value.

When considering how to get more women in leadership, it's normal to think elements need to be tailored specifically to women. However, providing the same opportunities to all means everyone – males and females – can thrive.

Having a company Board of mixed-gendered leaders can see problems tackled with a broad perspective, allowing for robust conversations and boosting confidence in female leaders who feel listened to.

CLOSING THE PAY GAP

Perhaps a standout hurdle women face professionally is the gender pay gap.

According to WGEA, the gender pay gap between Key Management Personnel in aged care is 24.6%, which has reduced by only 1% in five years.

This could be because, out of the aged care organisations that reported to WGEA in 2021-22, less than 5% had any formal policies or objectives for promotions, recruitment, retention, pay gaps, or harassment and discrimination training for management.

Writing up policies for these areas is a good first step towards supporting women in your organisation, as well as setting gender equity targets for management and Boards.

VALUING FLEXIBILITY

Statistics show that 95.8% of CEOs and 85.3% in senior management working for Healthcare and Social Assistance organisations work full-time.

But over three-quarters of the entire aged care workforce is employed part-time or casually. This affects the number of women who can work their way up from lower level positions to full-time management or CEO positions.

Promoting work flexibility will help attract and retain women in leadership roles, and encourage talent already working in your organisation to strive for higher level positions.

Often leading with an empathetic and compassionate approach, women are increasingly interested in working with organisations that have an accountable, flexible, and positive work culture.

SUPPORTING WOMEN

To support women in business in the aged care sector, organisations should be intentional about creating a culture of inclusivity.

More female leaders means more mentorship opportunities to provide guidance, support, and advocacy to women aspiring to build careers in the industry.

Creating a diverse executive Board, implementing pay and recruitment policy, and allowing flexible work environments for all is key to giving more career opportunities to women.



SCAN FOR MORE
WOMEN IN BUSINESS
ARTICLES ON
[HELLOLEADERS.COM.AU](https://helloleaders.com.au)



'Breaking the glass ceiling takes courage': a woman's journey to pioneering tech solutions

Technology has played a critical part in reforming and streamlining systems and care in the aged care sector, and there have been some key women that have "broken the glass ceiling" to make its importance known.

Restrains of the sector's paper systems historically meant reporting requirements were near impossible, something Caroline Lee, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of software company LeeCare Solutions, wanted to fix.

"In the mid 1990's, whilst I was consulting, I was looking for software for my aged care facility clients and couldn't find anything outside of a good care planning template but even that wasn't a complete care journey system that included functions such as an assessment suite along with relevant notes and reports," she explained.

With a background in physics and aged care consultancy, Ms Lee was in a perfect position to begin developing industry-first software for nurses and aged care workers to use on the job to adequately keep track of several resident reports, observation notes and medication monitoring.

The Platinum6 Software Suite is the fourth generation version of what was born as a result but it wasn't initially welcomed with open arms. Many executives didn't understand the documentation required and it took the backing of the Federal Government to see the software rolled out.

"In the 1990's it was a lot of work to get the sector to understand the nursing process, to work with staff and create a gerontology-focused sector," Ms Lee said.

"You had to adopt change management at a significant level back then, but everyone was thirsty for knowledge."

In 2006, the Federal Government gave a one-time grant to facilities to adopt clinical software and make it accessible to aged care providers – causing Ms Lee's client base to grow over three times in size over the span of a few years.

A WOMAN IN A 'MAN'S WORLD'

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) university degrees and professions were generally seen as a 'man's world' in the 1970s and 80s, but that didn't stop Ms Lee from making her mark.

Undertaking her Bachelor's in physics during this time, Ms Lee was only one of six females in a cohort of 120 males.

"I went to an all-girls college in Adelaide, so I was used to being encouraged and motivated to do whatever I wanted to do as a career and they also really encouraged STEM learning and careers," she said.

"We were lucky, being girls, the lecturers supported and encouraged us to do the best we could."

Coming into the female-dominated aged care sector, Ms Lee became acquainted with female CEOs and Directors of Nursing (DON) who were leading the way.

"They were really pushing the glass ceiling," she explained.

"Breaking a glass ceiling takes courage, and knowledge brings courage.

"They understood the needs of the sector and saw the value in our software but there were a lot of homes that were run by business people instead of nurses. It was a mixture."

When she first ventured into aged care, the sector was certainly dominated by more males in executive roles, but Ms Lee saw that as a result of the family dynamic and the societal perception of what a woman's role was.

"That was a consequence of people needing to fit their shifts around their families and it wasn't until that family got older that women took up more executive positions," she explained.

"Thankfully, society has changed and co-parenting is more prevalent."

“The sector has also changed and become more flexible as a result of that but it is still important to make sure we are maintaining those equities.”

Today, more women have moved into these senior roles but gender has never reflected capability in Ms Lee’s eyes.

Her father was also one of the first male-trained nurses in Australia so from a young age, Ms Lee knew that the sector needed all genders to be included to provide the best care to older people.

FOCUSING ON GERONTOLOGY IS THE FUTURE

The sector struggles to attract and retain aged care workers and part of that comes down to workers’ confidence and training.

Many aged care workers do not feel equipped to deal with the different aspects of their job due to inadequate qualification measures which often are not focused on gerontology, the study of older people.

“Understanding an older person is vital and what we need in the sector is specialty gerontology training availability,” said Ms Lee.

“Understanding how an older person presents, why they may not complain if they are in pain, the questions you have to ask and all the other aspects that are related to their care is so important to be a good aged care provider, nurse or care worker.

“Providers should invest in gerontology training for their staff that isn’t tokenism, to help our workforce have the specialty knowledge they need and give training opportunities to attract all people to the sector.”

Gerontology is an extensive tertiary specialty that should be embedded in the certificate and basic training involved in becoming an aged care worker.

Adding this prerequisite to caring for older people would enable the workforce to feel more confident and understand what they’re doing with an informed opinion.

“I’ve spoken to many DONs who want to pull their hair out because it’s not that the carers weren’t caring and weren’t committed to the sector, they just didn’t have the fundamental knowledge so the DON and the managers have to spend a lot of time embedding that knowledge,” Ms Lee explained.

“That is certainly part of their job, but if that could be part of the basic learning, they’re coming into the sector with a much better foundation.

“It’s not just the provider’s responsibility to do that, it’s our training frameworks, our Government – it’s everyone’s responsibility to help support our gerontology specialty workforce.”

For more information about the Platinum6 Software Suite, visit the LeeCare Solutions website.



Leading Clinical Software Solutions for over 30 years

Leecare’s Platinum6 software has been designed by healthcare professionals, for healthcare professionals to make information sharing easy. With an emphasis on the connection between the care of the resident, staff and the organisation, our fully integrated clinical, medication, operational and financial system, quality indicator and Business intelligence reports keep real-time resident and facility data at your fingertips.

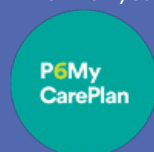
Particular care has been taken in developing P6MyCarePlan - our resident centred App. By directly enabling service users to inform service providers, the information in assessments and care plans is not solely related to the clinical observations of nursing staff but also reflects more accurately the preferences, views and feedback of the person receiving the care and support.

P6MyCarePlan App also enables residents to review their care plan and what staff have written about them, as well as add information that populates directly into their care plan, in their own time.



- ♥ Connect people, care & business
- * Ensure better care outcomes
- ⊕ Manage seamless care journeys
- 💰 Improve financial health

All new P6MyCarePlan App now available!



leecare.com.au



Turning a passion for aged care into a business

Aged care is a challenging and complex field that requires passion and dedication. Sonya Smart, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of profit-for-purpose organisation Villa Maria Catholic Homes (VMCH), shares her inspiring journey and insights into the industry.

by Andrew Barbara

Starting her career as a volunteer for a community care organisation in Perth, Western Australia, Ms Smart discovered her passion for working with older people.

She eventually worked her way up to become a home and community care coordinator and, later, the CEO of VMCH. Her journey is a testament to the fact that with hard work, perseverance and a passion for the work you do, you can achieve great things.

According to Ms Smart, the key to success in aged care is passion. "You need to be passionate about older people and be a leader. Remind leaders out there that you can get bogged down in budgets, HR, etc. But you have to remember why you're there," she says.

"Go out, go to sites, chat to residents and remember why we do the job we do."

HOLISTIC APPROACH

VMCH provides a range of services, including residential aged care, retirement living, in-home aged care, disability services, and affordable housing for people over the age of 55. The organisation also has a social enterprise arm that includes cafés and op shops, as well as a job skills arm in their disability program.

Ms Smart believes that aged care requires a holistic approach, which goes beyond just meeting the basic needs of residents. "It's about recognising that people are individuals, and they have specific needs, likes, and dislikes," she says.

"We need to ensure that we provide person-centred care, where we put the individual at the centre of everything we do."

In terms of leadership, she emphasises the importance of having a diverse and representative executive team.

In the aged care industry specifically, Ms Smart observes that traditional perceptions have often centred on property development rather than care itself, creating a male-dominated environment that limits opportunities for women.

"A lot of boards are male focused. You will sometimes notice that someone will go for a promotion and if they're a woman we will start talking about all the things that would stop them from having a promotion such as being a mother of three."

Ms Smart's perspective underscores the significance of promoting gender diversity and equality within the workplace and VMCH is a prime example of a workplace where women are well represented at all levels.

"Approximately 87% of the workforce here at VMCH is female. On our executive team, we have a large female component as well."

In her opinion executives have to be representative of the body of people that work in an organisation.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Having had a mentor herself Ms Smart knows how important it is to learn from other people's experience and get guidance when developing as a leader.

Throughout her career, Ms Smart has gained valuable insights and experiences. She highlights the importance of choosing battles wisely and allowing her team members to work in their own unique ways, understanding that not everyone approaches tasks in the same manner.

Ms Smart also stresses the need to channel passion effectively and find alternative approaches to



VMCH CEO Sonya Smart (Source: supplied)

overcome obstacles, acknowledging that youthful enthusiasm must be balanced with practicality.

Reflecting on her mentor Wendy Silva, who recently passed away, Ms Smart says "She really taught me some really good business skills as well about how to turn passion into a business".

She emphasises VMCH's commitment to providing opportunities for employees to upskill themselves and says, "We offer a lot of opportunities for people to have training and upskill themselves if that's what they choose to do."

"Our caring workforce is women, so women who have come to us and have trained as enrolled nurses."

Within VMCH, employees have many opportunities for development and Ms Smart feels strongly about supporting her staff and giving them support and confidence in their abilities.

"It's about recognising and promoting people."

"Sometimes people would be doing a job in an interacting role, and I'll say to them, 'Why don't you go for it? You're already doing it.'

"It's about telling them that they'll be great at it and valuing them for their skills, giving them the confidence to go for those roles."

She emphasises the importance of providing support to make individuals successful in their new positions and mentions the leadership programs offered to executives and senior leaders as part of building a supportive organisational culture.

With her journey in aged care testament to the fact that passion, hard work, and dedication are crucial to success in this field, Ms Smart says it's about recognising the individual needs of residents, promoting and valuing frontline workers, and having a diverse and representative executive team.

As she says, "Don't come into it unless you're really passionate about it."

SONYA SMART'S KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIPS:

- ✱ Choose your battles
- ✱ Support individuals
- ✱ Channel passion effectively
- ✱ Find alternative approaches
- ✱ Remember why you are there!



Paving her own path with care and passion

by Andrew Barbara

Annabelle Creek, a driven and passionate woman, has embarked on a remarkable journey within the realm of business. As the Deputy Director of Creek Solutions, a company providing expertise in kitchen, cleaning and laundry services for the aged care sector, Ms Creek is not only following in her father's footsteps but also paving her own path towards success.

Her initial involvement with Creek Solutions was fueled by a desire to explore new horizons while simultaneously raising her children. "My initial involvement with the company was driven by a desire to explore something new while juggling the responsibilities of raising my children," Ms Creek said.

What began as a casual venture alongside her father quickly transformed into a captivating experience filled with personal growth and invaluable lessons. Ms Creek soon realised the tremendous benefits that Creek Solutions could bring to others and eagerly embraced the challenges and opportunities that came her way.

FAMILY FRIENDLY APPROACH

As a busy mother, Ms Creek intimately understands the challenges faced by individuals who find themselves making sacrifices that put their careers on hold. At Creek Solutions, Ms Creek has helped embrace a family-friendly approach,

accommodating the needs of employees who may be housewives with multiple children.

Ms Creek stated "When we have employed people at Creek Solutions, we have always embraced a family-friendly approach. We understand that there are individuals who may be housewives with multiple children, and we accommodate their needs."

Flexible working hours allow employees to work school hours and by providing a supportive environment, Creek Solutions enables women to pursue their professional aspirations while fulfilling their familial responsibilities.

One of the unique challenges that Creek Solutions faces as a small company is nurturing leadership within its ranks. Ms Creek addresses this by fostering empathy, providing comprehensive training, and instilling a sense of purpose in every employee. Her goal is to empower individuals to become leaders in their own right.

Recognising the importance of knowledge transfer, especially for newcomers lacking the necessary skills and experience, Creek Solutions maintains a welcoming environment where information is readily shared, enabling each team member to grow and contribute effectively.

OPPORTUNITY TO DRIVE CHANGE

A defining aspect of Ms Creek's leadership style is the genuine care and passion she brings to her work at Creek Solutions. She is inspired by numerous women in leadership positions who share the same love and dedication. Leveraging the immense potential in this synergy, Ms Creek views it as an opportunity to drive positive change.

Ms Creek acknowledges the contributions of exceptional women who have played significant roles in shaping Creek Solutions' trajectory. From a talented consultant who redefined the company's strategies to remarkable female employees who left a lasting impression, Ms Creek emphasised the value of diverse perspectives and female leadership in driving success.

With her expertise and guidance, Creek Solutions has made significant strides in numerous projects. Ms Creek's journey at Creek Solutions is a testament to the resilience, determination, and unwavering commitment of women in business.



Annabelle Creek with her father Paul of Creek Solutions
(Source: Supplied)



The benefit of women in leadership roles

By Annie Waddington-Feather

Results from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency's (WGEA) Employer Census 2021-22 reveal only 22% of CEOs are women, and men are consistently more likely to hold managerial positions, even in female dominated industries such as healthcare and education.



Attracting women to leadership positions is about equality and the benefits are immense (Source: Shutterstock)

Furthermore, the report found only one in five boards has gender balance and just over one in five boards comprise only men.

BUCKING THE TREND

Looking at the figures, on the face of it, aged care appears to buck this national trend of under-representation of women in leadership roles.

The WGEA groups aged care in the 'Health Care and Social Assistance' industry under 'Residential Care Services', and the data in this category shows 51% of CEOs are female.

However, when taken in context of the aged care workforce, of which women make up 86%, this figure is not representative of the proportion of women who work in the sector.

Furthermore, when it comes to pay, according to the WGEA, the gender pay gap between female aged care employees and male employees for Key Management Personnel specifically, it is 24.6%.

IMPROVED BUSINESS OUTCOMES

The benefits of women in leadership positions are immense. According to research carried out by WGEA and Bankwest Curtin Economic Centre in 2020, increasing the number of women in leadership positions increases an organisation's likelihood of outperforming in their sector on three or more key profitability and performance metrics.

Furthermore, having a female CEO leads to a 5% increase in their market value; on average, this is worth the equivalent of AUD \$79.6 million.

Other studies suggest that having women in leadership roles is linked to more innovation and can help organisations forge a deeper connection with their customers. Plus, they will inspire other women employees and boost employee engagement.

The WGEA report author and BCEC Principal Research Fellow Associate Professor Rebecca Cassells said that women tend to have different leadership styles from men.

"There is something different about women's performance and management style. They tend to be more democratic, they tend to be more collaborative and to have a greater sense of corporate social responsibility.

They're also less likely to participate in fraudulent behaviour."

ATTRACTING WOMEN

Attracting women to leadership positions is mainly about equality. Recognising and supporting the quality input women bring to the table and providing the same opportunities across the board is vital, as is removing the hurdles that are often in a woman's way to take up a leadership role.

Karen Taylor, CEO of Women & Leadership Australia says offering a role that has a flexible work environment with a more empathetic and compassionate leadership approach is crucial for women.

Female leaders must see and feel their sense of purpose within the company at every turn. Empower female staff by developing career pathways which allow them to develop their skills and progress; as well as learning new skills and innovative ways of working, it also helps support staff retention.



Why invest in innovation and technology in Aged Care?

By Emily Erickson

Aged care providers and facilities across Australia are actively embracing the digital revolution by incorporating new technologies and online systems to streamline care management.

The innovations don't stop at replacing paper-based records with digital ones. Providers are also adopting smart technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and even robots to assist with service delivery.

So, what are the benefits of investing in and embracing new technology in aged care?

IMPROVE CARE DELIVERY

Technology can significantly improve the delivery of care in aged care facilities and at home and take the pressure off your workforce. Across Australia, providers are using a wide range of technology, such as movement sensors, telehealth services, and assistive technology.

AI technology such as smartwatches and monitoring systems, for example, can detect changes in residents' health and wellbeing, alert staff to potential falls or medical emergencies, and track medication.

Robots are also becoming increasingly popular in the sector, performing tasks such as cleaning, cooking, and delivering medication.

New and creative technology can also enhance the resident experience in aged care facilities. Technologies such as virtual reality and digital entertainment systems can help reduce social isolation and loneliness, and increase engagement among residents.

For example, virtual reality can provide residents with immersive experiences, while digital entertainment systems can provide access to movies/ music, and games which can help improve mental health and wellbeing.

INCREASE STAFF EFFICIENCY AND RETENTION

Investing in innovation and technology can also increase staff efficiency.

Technology like robotics can help reduce manual tasks, allowing staff to focus on more complex tasks that require human intervention. For example assisting in the lifting and transferring of residents, reducing the risk of injury to both staff and residents.

There are a range of systems that can automate administrative tasks, freeing up time for staff to provide more personalised care, such as electronic care records, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and rostering programs.

Staff who are trained to use these technologies and systems may be inclined to stay with organisations that value innovation, leading to less staff turnover.

Additionally, the use of technology in your services or facilities can help attract younger generations of workers who are comfortable with technology and expect it to be part of their work environment.

STAND OUT IN THE MARKET

By embracing innovation, your organisation can differentiate itself from competitors, attract new clients, and retain existing ones.

With new technologies rapidly finding their way into aged care settings, providers that don't adapt risk falling behind and losing market share. There is now every opportunity to explore new technology for your organisation.

Government investment is rewarding and supporting both aged care providers and tech companies looking to enhance aged care within Australia, with many trials taking place through Aged Care Research and Industry Innovation Australia (ARIIA) grant funding.

While it's still new ground for many providers, without innovative technology, aged care systems won't be able to grow and develop to provide better quality care and support to the ageing population.



SCAN FOR
MORE TECHNOLOGY
ARTICLES ON
[HELLOLEADERS.COM.AU](https://www.helloleaders.com.au)



National e-Tools Resident Agreement

AGREEMENTS & ADMISSIONS IN HALF THE TIME

18 YRS PROVEN COMPLIANCE

- ✓ 1200+ facilities trust NeRA agreement software.
- ✓ Compliant Russell Kennedy Lawyers agreements included.
- ✓ Automatic updates of fees, MPIR & software managed by our team - reduce your IT Support requirements.
- ✓ AN-ACC ready.

BETTER TIME MANAGEMENT

- ✓ Access NeRA Cloud application data from anywhere, on multiple devices at a time.
- ✓ Save time on quotes/flyers via templates & pre-filled data.
- ✓ Turn quotes into agreements in a few clicks.
- ✓ DocuSign^ e-signature option speeds up signing process.

WAITLIST & SALES PIPELINE

- ✓ Powerful Waitlist & Client Relationship Management (CRM) pipeline can help improve your occupancy rate.
- ✓ Track communications effectively.
- ✓ Streamline information management, from initial enquiry to finalised agreements.

TOP LEVEL DATA SECURITY

- ✓ e-Tools Software is an ISO 27001 information security certified organisation.
- ✓ International standards of data protection against increasing cyber threats.
- ✓ Azure AD^ secure sign on integration option.

Be empowered. Explore NeRA Cloud.

BOOK A FREE ONLINE DEMO

WE HAVE THE EXPERIENCE & SOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT YOUR COMPLIANCE NEEDS ACROSS THE AGED CARE CONTINUUM

Move to e-Tools Cloud Software to achieve even greater outcomes in a more secure environment. NeRA Cloud will be followed by eRAD & eSA (e-Tools Supplier Agreement) in Q2 2023.



Scheduling & Mobile Apps for Community Care enable staff to access client data & service schedules on the move. The Scheduling function, powered by eSRM & our community care software, makes it easy to assign staff to client services.

CONTACT US TODAY TO LEARN MORE

EMAIL info@e-tools.com.au | TEL 03 9573 3277 | WEB e-tools.com.au

^ Azure AD & DocuSign are integration options available with NeRA Cloud Enterprise version.
e-Tools Software March 2023 Public



Robots in aged care – the future is now



Professor Rajiv Khosla with Matilda, the AI-powered robot supporting the care of older people. (Source: Matilda)

By Alex Jacobs

In the not-so-distant future, humans and robots will coexist, learning from each other in a sustainable society. At least that's part of the vision for Professor Rajiv Khosla, the face behind Matilda – an interactive, emotionally intelligent robot that has been built on human-centred design.

Matilda's no stranger to aged care. She's been trialled in countless homes and aged care settings over the past decade. The feedback? Wholly positive thanks to what Professor Khosla calls socially-responsible design. And in an industry where technology has been hard to adopt, partly because older residents can be wary of new things, Professor Khosla has a happy medium.

"My underpinning of Matilda has been human-centred design the whole time," he explained. "That's what drove me from artificial intelligence to human-centred design, to social design. Matilda provided a medium in which all social interactions could take place through a natural interface."

"You could see that people who were averse to technology warmed up because when they saw her dancing or singing it brought out positive emotions. It brought back good memories, especially for people with dementia, and they developed a relationship."

How exactly can a robot develop a relationship with people? Artificial intelligence. Matilda learns and can recognise instances of self-harm in people, and

she'll remember a person's favourite musician to help prompt activity later on.

It's just one way that robots are helping older people and if you look elsewhere, more robotic help is not just on the way, it's here.

EMBEDDED IN EVERYDAY SERVICES

At Tanunda Lutheran Home (TLH) in South Australia's Barossa Valley, signs alert people to robots working in the area, warning them to give way. They're handy reminders of the three robots – Axil, Robbie and Speckle – working tirelessly to assist with everyday tasks. Two push trolleys around the home, transporting linen and food, while one cleans and disinfects major touchpoints using ultraviolet lighting.

Introducing robots came out of necessity. Staff were covering 9,000 kilometres per year pushing trolleys, an average of 24km a day. They were wearing themselves down while residents were missing out on direct care. That's now changed.

"There's less damage to the facility and environment, there's reduced noise, reduced touch points, and reduced staff injuries," TLH Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Lee Martin explained. "The fact that staff weren't having to push trolleys reduced work cover through fewer shoulder, back, elbow and wrist injuries."

"It also aids continuous improvement, assists in the control of food temperatures between the kitchen and rooms, and there's the improved quality and timing of services which residents love. So when we were

looking at costs we're saving about \$4.25 per resident per day which is about \$200,000 a year."

Mr Martin has gained close to 10 hours of meaningful work per day from his workforce. In addition, TLH recruits workers with the reassurance that there's limited heavy pushing and lifting because the robots do it.

It's not quite all smooth sailing as TLH is located in a 70 year old building that was not designed for robots. Swinging doors had to be replaced with sliding doors and the lift had to be adjusted to accommodate the robots. That's where patience has been important, and Mr Martin said it's paid off through ongoing savings and staff retention.

"There is a level of patience one should take, including the expectations one has for the robots. I've been going through this process for three years and my expectations are just now being met," he explained.

"Planning and timing is the big thing. In a new building, you can accommodate the technical and physical requirements of robots. You have to make allowances in an old building for all of that. A lot of technology is also required, and the environment needs to suit Wi-Fi requirements and the associated software."

WORKING ALONGSIDE ROBOTS

Mr Martin has been incredibly active in robotics research and development outside of his organisation and work is underway to introduce new robots. Some will be more advanced versions of manual labour robots, but nursing support is not out of the question.

"I believe the aged care sector will gain a lot of kudos by using robots in the future," Mr Martin said. "I've started sowing seeds that Aged Care Standards need to accept that robotics will come into the sector."

Based on his experiences, Mr Martin is confident we'll see robots right across aged care within the next three years. With the rapid advancement in artificial intelligence – as seen in Matilda – it's likely that his other prediction of robots recognising and conversing with people is not far off.

"There certainly needs to be greater discussions regarding the training of clinical and aged care staff about working alongside robots; a level of investment in the legal and workforce implications, particularly around work health and safety; and investment in the nursing and medical sectors because I firmly believe that robots will be able to do some nursing technical work," he added.

THE FUTURE IS NOW

Matilda is likely the first step towards what Mr Martin is after – robots that can provide nursing assistance. Although Matilda cannot provide physical support, she has the ability to monitor basic vital signs, make video/telehealth calls, operate as a smart home control and can even recognise changes in emotional and physical well-being by scanning the room.

Altogether, it's an example of complex technology presented in an accessible format for older people. If more technology can be embedded into everyday life, by the time we're all living in aged care, robots will just be a normal part of the workforce.



TLH CEO Lee Martin (right) with Tony Pasin MP, Chairperson Chris Pfeiffer and the robots. (Source: Lutheran Church of Australia)



Empowering carers and supporting resident

We understand that it is challenging to balance between giving residents their independence and responding quickly when help is needed. Ascom solutions are flexible and tailored to meet your needs. From planning and design, project management and training to ongoing support, our team can help you empower your residents and support your clinicians and carers.

How our solutions help you:

- Digital technology for improved efficiency and quality
- Smart messaging for streamlined workflows
- Mobile devices and nurse call systems
- Integrating smart sensors for predictive and preventative care
- Reporting for evidence-based practice

Incorporating more technology into your service

Technology can be used as a tool to address many of the challenges facing aged care providers as reporting requirements change, workforce strain is felt sector-wide and more people need aged care services.

However, it can sometimes be difficult to see how technology would improve the situation and the benefits of investing in technology may not be evident at first glance.

The right technology can help deliver better outcomes for clients, which should be a key driver for all aged care providers.

So as a provider, how do you know you're on the right track and how can you incorporate more technology into your service or facility?

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Whilst the majority of residential aged care beds these days are managed with clinical software and many providers use some sort of medication management software, a recent report from RMIT University shows 42% of aged care providers have no digital strategic plan. In addition, less than half use even the most basic smart technology, and only 14% use fully integrated software systems.

The *Transforming Aged Care: Towards a future in which digitisation clasps hands with respect, and connection drives improvement report*, released in 2022 also found that while 61% of older people use the internet, only "a handful" of aged care facilities offer WiFi.

Even something as seemingly simple as providing WiFi access for residents, so they can feel connected to people outside of the facility or search for their favourite movie to watch, can make a difference to the wellbeing of residents.

Basic technology like internet service may also require minimal investment or infrastructure compared to the benefits.

Across Australia there are examples of facilities using a wide range of technology, from low cost adaptable

tech right through to sophisticated infrastructure, such as;

- * Assistive technology for mobility and safety of residents, including assisting staff to move residents, for example bed hoists and shower chairs
- * Motion sensors for safety, for example to detect if a resident has a fall
- * Facial recognition for security, for example to allow certain people to enter a secure dementia unit
- * Telehealth for healthcare that does not need to be done in person
- * Tablets and other mobile devices to help residents connect with family and others outside the facility
- * Virtual reality to train staff in care, particularly specialised care such as for people with dementia
- * Sensory technology to improve wellbeing and social programs for residents
- * Robots for delivering food, collecting laundry, infection control or cleaning

With all these options and many more on the market, you need a clear idea of how to identify the technology that will be the most helpful for your service or facility.

A good starting point is to develop a digital strategic plan outlining what investment in technology should do for your organisation.

FOCUSING ON OUTCOMES

While there are different challenges technology can help with in home care and residential care settings, there are common outcomes that providers of care can aim for and use to assess the suitability of technology.

Focusing on these outcomes gives providers a way to identify what technology option is the best investment for their situation and will provide the most benefit for the ultimate outcome – quality care.

These outcomes can be summed up in three clear goals any technology should help providers work towards:

- ✳ To help deliver better outcomes for clients
- ✳ To improve staff experience, helping to attract and retain staff
- ✳ To optimise opportunity for the organisation to benefit through delivering better care and improving organisational outcomes

GOOD FOR CARE

Daniel Pilbrow, Intelicare Chief Executive Officer (CEO), spent 28 years in the aged care sector and has recently moved into the tech side of care.

He understands the challenges of providers but believes investing in technology is, “good for care.”

“It’s good for clients and it’s good for staff,” Mr Pilbrow said.

The questions providers grapple with, according to Mr Pilbrow, are, “Where do I start?” and “Where do I invest?”, and he says the answer is that technology investment should be about providing higher quality care.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR AUTOMATION

Paper based record systems are still widely used and a lot of time and resources are directed towards enhancing providers’ record management to make it more efficient and enable more time to be spent on direct care.

“Care is a people centric business, so if providers can invest in technology that frees up staff to spend more time with clients, be they home care or residential, that’s only going to bring benefit,” he said.

The other major benefit to using technology for records and moving away from paper based systems is that the reporting required of aged care providers is also through electronic systems.

The better the electronic data your organisation keeps, the easier it is to meet your compliance, regulatory and reporting requirements.

There are a range of specific types of technology and software that could be used to support staff and improve organisational processes, including:

- ✳ Electronic care and health records – this could be combined in a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system

- ✳ Medication management systems
- ✳ Rostering programs
- ✳ Workflow management systems
- ✳ Health and wellbeing analytics – to learn more about clients and help identify when they need changes in care
- ✳ Finance and payroll systems
- ✳ Assistive technology for use in a client’s home or residential facility

Investing in technology systems and products such as these help to streamline the processes of an organisation, making life easier for staff and management and allowing them to spend more time providing better, more targeted, care to their clients.

Remember technology is not a substitute for adequate staffing, but it can support the staff and free up their time for the human caring that cannot be done through technology.

THE RIGHT BALANCE

Finding technology that can be adapted to exactly what a provider needs to achieve the best outcomes is also important, as technology that is the wrong fit can cause further issues.

Mr Pilbrow explains, “Staff in residential and home care are just so pushed for time and one of the benefits technology can bring – I’m careful in saying that – is that it can help free up time for staff to care better. But sometimes if it’s not done well or not planned well it can actually create more administrative burden for staff.”

The key to finding a solution that does not create other problems is to choose technology that is tailored to your organisation, just as you tailor care to your clients.

“It’s not a one size fits all, there’s no magic silver bullet,” Mr Pilbrow said.

To find the right technology for your organisation, the best place to start is to make a list of the challenges your service is facing and prioritise which are the most pressing issues.

The Department of Health and Aged Care has a webpage focused on resources for digital transformation in the aged care sector, which can provide further ideas and information.

Once you have an idea of the biggest challenges, you can look for technology that fits these issues and your situation. This planning can all be part of your digital strategic plan and inform your decisions on investment.

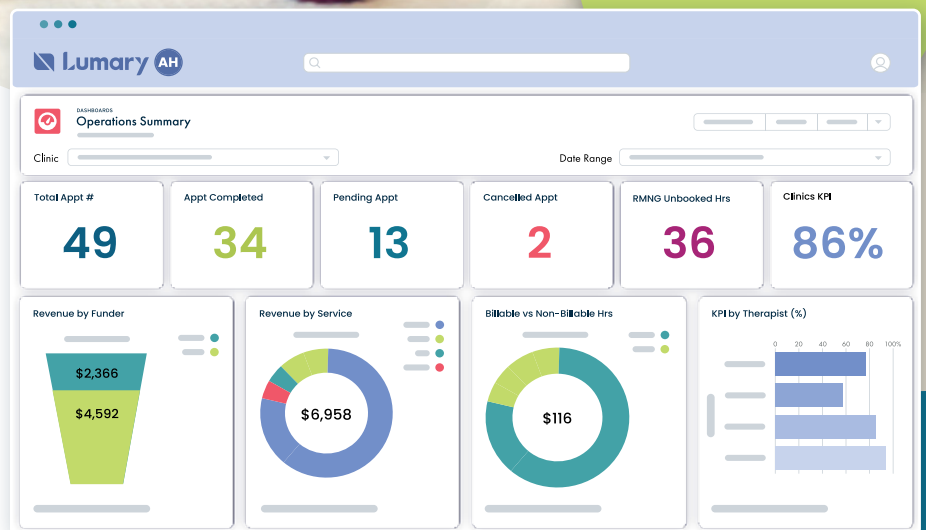
All-in-one software transforming allied health



**NEW
PRODUCT**

No matter your allied health service, we've got you covered!

Take control of your business. Deliver quality care with Lumary's **NEW** purpose-built software, designed to optimise your entire practice.



 **Lumary**

Better Wellbeing Through Technology

Find out more www.lumary.com



Australian Home Care Reimagined with Epicor Care Quadrant

The narrative of change has engulfed the aged care landscape over the last decade.

As a result, it is now time to reimagine what aged care means; for providers, recipients and all stakeholders involved in the market.

Scan the QR code to download the eBook “Australian Home Care Reimagined” to become the leading aged care provider in your market.



EPICOR



Cyber hack wake-up call: How can you protect your client data?

The recent data breaches with large companies such as Optus and Medibank have brought cyber security to the forefront of concerns in a number of sectors, and aged care is no exception.

Australian cyber security company, CyberCX, data shows there has been an increase in cybercrime targeting the healthcare and aged care sectors over the last few years.

According to the data, in the second quarter of 2021 the number of ransomware attacks doubled compared to the previous quarter. Experts believe this is because aged care providers hold much sought after personal health and care records.

Getting caught up in a cyber attack can have far-reaching consequences for your business including financial loss, legal implications and reputational damage.

It is important for aged care providers to understand they are not exempt from cyber threats and in fact should be actively investing in preventing them according to Nigel Phair, Professor of Cyber Security at the University of New South Wales.

"It's great to have the internet and access to all the online technologies but [providers] need to invest in controls and risk management around that, and make sure they're resilient to cyber attacks," he said.

So what can you do to protect yourself from this increasing cyber threat?

IDENTIFYING WEAKNESSES

The first step in identifying where your organisation is vulnerable to data breaches is to understand a number of factors about your current situation.

You should find out:

- ✳ Why you are collecting certain pieces of personally identifying information

- ✳ Who has access to that information
- ✳ Why they have access to the information
- ✳ How that access is recorded
- ✳ When that information is deleted
- ✳ What it would mean if this data was breached

From there, a competent risk management assessment needs to be done and a risk management framework used to identify the areas of high risk.

A good place to start is reviewing the policies and procedures you have in place around cyber security and how much protection they provide, as well as how well they are adhered to by your employees and clients, to identify weaknesses there.

That said, it's one thing to have a policy in place but if it's been created by someone that's not a cyber security professional, or not implemented and monitored by an employee with the right capability, it's not worth the paper it's written on.

SPECIALIST ADVICE

An external HR company may be best placed to review your policies for you to ensure they cover what is required from an organisational point, but you might also need the advice of a specialist in cyber security policy.

If you haven't already, engaging a third party firm to conduct a technical investigation such as penetration testing and vulnerability scanning, where the person pretends to be a malicious hacker trying to gain access to your system, will show where there may be vulnerabilities.

It is important to note that cyber security experts are exactly that, 'experts'. Your standard web developer or IT employee, in most instances, isn't trained in this specialised area.

Think of it like having a heart problem, you want to see the cardiac specialist in addition to having the advice of your GP.

Websites with directories of Australian cyber security firms where you might like to start looking for a consultant include Clutch and Consultancy.com.au.

PREVENTING CYBER ATTACKS

There are a number of types of hardware and software that can be used together to prevent a cyber attack.

These protections, referred to by Professor Phair as "controls", include:

- * Physical backup drives or encrypted drives, which may be located onsite or offsite
- * Firewalls
- * Multifactor authentication
- * Antivirus software
- * Strong passwords

Other types of controls can be found on the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) website.



Any personal client data you keep needs protection against cyber risk. (Source: Shutterstock)

Using one type of protection may help, but using a combination of these should provide stronger protections against a wider range of cyber attacks. The ACSC suggests the top three controls that should be combined for stronger protection are updates to devices, multifactor authentication and a backup drive, so you should start with at least these three protections.

Want more?

- More insights
- More industry news
- More guidance
- More information
- More topics
- and so much more.

www.helloleaders.com.au

The leading source of information for decision makers in the aged care industry.



You should also ensure all of these controls are kept up-to-date, either with automatic updates or by hiring a specialist to regularly update them.

The CyberCX data in particular shows ransomware and data extortion attacks are on the rise.

BACK UP YOUR DATA

Professor Phair said one of the best ways to combat ransomware attacks, which occur when criminals hack into a system and steal or encrypt data, is to have an appropriate backup system for files.

“Having what we call a ‘cold backup’ is a very sensible thing to do, and a very cost-effective thing to do,” he said.

This could be as simple as having a separate drive that is set up to automatically back up files saved to the main drive by creating a copy on the backup drive.

The backup drive should be updated often, for example, if you are changing or adding data daily it should be updated daily, so that you do not lose any data in the case of an attack.

To identify the types of controls and providers of these that will be strongest for protecting your data, you can start by researching international standard 27001, which is considered the best information security management standard globally.

In case your data is breached, you can also consider cyber risk insurance – to protect you financially and help your organisation recover after an attack.

However, Professor Phair cautioned that insurance is not a “panacea”.

“It’s not the panacea but it’s just like [providers] would insure their buildings and their cars and all the other factors. But cyber insurance, just like you still lock your car and don’t leave your phone and sunglasses on the dash, cyber insurance is not the panacea, it’s like a control,” he said.

Modern technology for modern care

Tunstall

The Lifeline Digital is a sleek, modern, European design manufactured by Tunstall - the culmination of more than 65 years of experience.

We enable independent living and continual care monitoring for millions of people across the world, so you can trust us to provide your clients with **the most affordable, powerful and flexible** medical alarm on the market.



Discover how our Connected Care solutions can benefit your clients.

**www.tunstallhealthcare.com.au
1800 603 377**

THE HUMAN ELEMENT

Even with all the technical protections in place, there will always be a human element to your cyber security.

To mitigate the human factor you will need to invest in training both employees of your organisation and residents of any facilities you operate.

This is because anyone using a shared network can be a target of hackers attempting to gain access to the data you store.

All employees should have cyber security awareness training, including gaining an understanding of the threats they are facing and the information they're accessing.

Professor Phair explained employees need an "understanding of how to be good, safe, secure citizens online".

Staff with access to more sensitive information, such as ACAT records, may need additional training around cyber risk management.

There are providers offering these kinds of training through online or in-person courses across Australia.

You can start by looking through programs on the Australian Cyber Security Centre directory matching the training your employees need.

As for residents, a basic understanding of cyber safety is likely all that is needed, as they won't have direct access to the sensitive information of other clients.

The main risk that residents pose occurs when they use a shared network for sensitive tasks such as internet banking, not simply when using a password-protected WiFi source.

The cyber safety education for residents should include:

- * Being wary of not clicking on suspicious links
- * Being alert to phishing emails or text messages
- * Understanding how people are trying to scam them
- * The use of long and strong passwords
- * Implementation of multifactor authentication across devices

Whatever training you do provide to residents and employees will complement the hardware and software controls, and policies you use to mitigate the risk of a cyber attack.

Professor Phair said, above all, providers need to remember that they are not immune to these kinds of crimes, as they hold valuable data, and need to take action to prevent that data being stolen.

"They shouldn't go thinking, 'Why would anyone hack us?'," he said.



TARGETING YOUR MANAGEMENT NEEDS

AIM 2GEN Software meets the challenge

AIM Software is acutely aware of the challenges facing aged care providers across Australia and fully supports the Industry in its push for reform and an equitable return on investment

With AIM 2GEN Software at the core of your financial management operations you will:

- ✓ Keep costs down
- ✓ Save time
- ✓ Integrate key aged care financial management modules
- ✓ Create meaningful financial reports
- ✓ Keep current with legislation
- ✓ Enjoy product innovation and development
- ✓ Have support services
- ✓ Experience user friendly software with new features
- ✓ Benefit from interfaces to 3rd party software as required

For confidential chat please phone our sales team



Call sales
0417 363 443



Visit us
www.aimsoftware.com.au



Email us
sales@aimsoftware.com.au



The role of hospitality in aged care

‘Do you like the food here?’, ‘Do you feel at home here?’ and ‘Is this place well run?’ are three questions asked on the Residents' Experience Rating on the My Aged Care website.

By Annie Waddington-Feather

The dining experience, food, laundry and cleaning services will influence a resident's decision when answering these three questions, so delivering high level services that focus on a positive customer experience for your clients and residents in these areas can set you apart as a provider.

Food isn't just a necessity to life, it is one of life's pleasures; high-quality food, presentation, taste and smell all play a part in contributing to a positive dining experience.

Furthermore, mealtimes can enhance social interaction, build a sense of community and the right nutrition contributes to a person's mental and physical well-being.

WHOLE DINING EXPERIENCE

Attaining a Michelin star rating experience for a dining experience isn't compulsory, and indeed, not everyone wants to eat in a designated dining area every day; a resident may sometimes choose to eat in their room or enjoy their meal watching their favourite TV show.

But having good quality food, core basic standards of food delivery and aiming to deliver residents the best meal experience possible is essential.

From what is on the menu, to where and how the food is served, every aspect of the food, food delivery and the dining experience as a whole must be considered, and we've come a long way since the 'one meal fits all' mentality.

Aged care chefs recognise the importance of accommodating numerous different dietary needs – vegetarian, vegan, medically-advised, food intolerances or allergies, and cultural diversity but to name a few. They are also getting creative when catering for conditions such as dysphagia.

Innovations in crockery and cutlery design maintain dignity and support independence, while studies suggest blue crockery helps people with dementia to identify the food they are eating.

TEAM EFFORT

The importance of staff training cannot be underestimated. It could extend to giving them the perspective of a resident with dementia through a virtual reality (VR) headset. These show how different scenarios can impact on their enjoyment of the meal, and give staff a better understanding of what a person with dementia is experiencing.

Creating a good dining experience is a team effort. As well as chefs, and staff to serve the food, occupational therapists and speech pathologists can advise on how best to meet residents' needs. And this team includes the residents themselves, who can suggest where improvements can be made.

An essential factor to a positive dining experience is the dining area itself; eating in a dark and dingy area is not pleasurable, and residents should be confident there is a high level of hygiene.

Adhering to industry health and safety guidelines, as well as having efficient cleaning and laundry procedures, should be reflected throughout the home.

'A clean home is a happy home', or so the saying goes, and that is what every care home manager is aiming to have.



SCAN FOR
MORE HOSPITALITY
ARTICLES ON
[HELLOLEADERS.COM.AU](https://www.helloleaders.com.au)



Eating with our senses – rethinking texture-modified foods

By Bianca Iovino

Ensuring clients with dysphagia have their food texture needs met is important for their safety but that doesn't mean the joy of eating should be sacrificed.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach for texture-modified food and drinks and aged care Quality Standards state that clients must have enough nutrition and hydration to maintain good health and reduce the risks of malnutrition and dehydration.

But while the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) Framework outlines standardised names and descriptions of texture-modified food and drinks across

8 levels, the presentation, aroma and flavour of food can come down to the choices of the people making it.

A PLEASANT EXPERIENCE

Have you ever thought about how the texture-modified food in your organisation is being presented to you residents? And most importantly – what does it taste like?

Most dietitians and chefs say the whole dining experience can impact our appetite. Most of us eat with our senses and appetites are often stimulated by the appearance and smell of the food we eat.

Aged care clients can lose their appetite based on what is being put in front of them, particularly if they require modified foods but what is presented to them looks unappealing and lacks flavour.

With strict malnutrition reporting in place for aged care providers, making your food as appealing as possible to clients helps you stay compliant whilst keeping the older people in your care healthy and full and making mealtimes a pleasant experience.

It's important to put thought and care into the design of modified meals when they're still an idea on paper to ensure that the end product has maximum flavour and visual impact.

Clients have the right to safe and appealing food even if it has to be modified for their swallowing capacity.

PLATING UP

Head of Food Culture at HammondCare, Sarah Brown, said putting care and consideration into the recipes and construction of these modified foods is important for clients' dignity and overall nutritional intake.

Whether it's a chef, a cook or a carer that is preparing the food, the recipes should be thoughtful in terms of flavour for all the different textures.

"Presenting these nutritious meals in an appealing way improves meal acceptance and then the amount that a person is willing to consume and therefore, the nutrients that they're able to consume," she explained.

"We should have a variety of colours on the plate and can use food moulds, scoops, piping or quenelle to present each of the coloured components and keep them individual so they're not all bleeding into each other. Or you could keep each component separate with different ramekins or different plates."

FLAVOUR!

Often a liquid needs to be added to food in the modification process to change the texture, and that shouldn't always be water.

If a liquid is required to assist in texture modifying a food it needs to be both flavourful and nutritious.

"We want to go for more flavourful and nourishing liquids like cream, coconut cream or stock so that it is actually adding to the meal," Sarah said.

"The meal might not appear in a familiar way but then if those flavours are familiar and have been added in the cooking process and the texture modification process, that's really going to entice the individual to continue enjoying that meal."

TEXTURE-APPROPRIATE GARNISHES

Using a version of basil oil, for example, or a smooth coulis for a dessert is a thoughtful way to add to the enjoyment process.

Build these elements into the recipe planning and development process to ensure that every texture will be as appealing as the next.



Better care through high quality, nutritious meals



Contact us

1300 641 190 | spccare@spc.com.au

spccare.com



Clients have the right to safe and appealing food (Source: Shutterstock)

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission outlines ways to maintain the appeal of food and drinks requiring modification.

To ensure your clients feel content with their foods and drinks, it is important for staff to be able to tell residents what the pureed food is, as it can all look the same.

Other recommendations for visual presentation include:

- ✳ Piping different foods into varied shapes and patterns
- ✳ Layering pureed fruit and custard in a clear container
- ✳ Layering minced meat, vegetables and sauce like lasagne

- ✳ Providing sharp knives to cut up foods where needed to avoid a 'mashed' look
- ✳ Including regular menu items where they are still suitable such as mousse, pate and custard

And just because what's on the plate had been adjusted to meet a resident's needs, doesn't mean that the overall dining experience of a resident should be compromised as well.

The Commission has made a number of guides available on its website for providers to help improve the eating experience and standard of nutrition for aged care residents.

Texture-modified food shouldn't just be a mess on a plate. Taking time to consider a client's needs, preferences and modification requirements is an important part of ensuring nutrition is upheld and overall food enjoyment is achieved.

SOME GENERAL SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE MEALTIMES A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR ALL RESIDENTS ARE:

- ✳ Consider the dining room atmosphere – the table layouts, lighting, decorations, table coverings and settings. Ventilation, glare, and background noise are also important factors to consider in a resident's eating environment.
- ✳ Ensure all meals look appetising and served at an appropriate temperature, regardless of texture.
- ✳ Support independence and dignity by empowering residents to eat and drink using modified tables, cutlery and aids, if required. Provide mealtime assistance only if needed or requested.
- ✳ Ensure residents have adequate time to eat, drink and socialise and do not remove food before checking if the person has finished.
- ✳ Involve residents in the planning and assessment of their dining experience by asking for suggestions and feedback.
- ✳ Avoid using clothing protectors to maintain residents' dignity unless they are requested or they are absolutely necessary for excessive food spillage.
- ✳ When serving texture modified foods, explain to residents what the food is.
- ✳ Avoid stirring and/or mixing the food and don't mix texture modified meals all together, as it is undignified.
- ✳ Provide culturally-appropriate food and cutlery including chopsticks, spoons, forks and handwashing bowls for those who want to use their hands to eat.
- ✳ Provide time for cultural prayer or traditions during mealtime.
- ✳ Encourage all staff to sit down with residents during mealtimes.



Improving food delivery in aged care

The quality and quantity of food being served in aged care facilities has been a topic of conversation for a while.

The Final Report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety expressed the importance of good quality food and nutrition for older people.

It is well known that there are significant consequences of poor nutrition on older people and they can be associated with other health risks, including an increased incidence of falls and fractures, pressure injuries taking longer to heal, and higher risk of infection.

All of which can put an extra strain on an aged care provider and delivering quality care.

Julie Dundon, Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian at Nutrition Professionals Australia (NPA), said

improving food and nutrition in aged care has been a process over the last decade.

Working in the aged care sector for almost three decades as a residential site manager and managing aged care kitchens, Ms Dundon said food in aged care facilities needed to be both nutritious and appetising to best cater to older residents.

“Good food and good nutrition is a human right, no matter who we are and no matter where we live,” she said.

“We need to put ourselves in the shoes of the person we are caring for – if you plate it and you wouldn’t eat it, don’t serve it.”

CONFOIL

DUALPAKECO CERTIFIED COMPOSTABLE FOOD TRAYS

Microwave to mushroom

DualPakECO® food trays are made in Australia with certified compostable ecovio® by BASF. They're ovenable, microwavable and compostable. For more visit confoil.com.au

DualPakECO
Packaging with Purpose

Having been appointed to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council, Ms Dundon said that since the Royal Commission, moves have been made to improve food and food delivery in aged care facilities, and she would like this focus on food to grow within the sector.

MALNUTRITION RISK

With aged care facilities required to report the overall weight loss across the facility every quarter to mitigate the risk of malnutrition for aged care residents, it is very important to improve your food quality and nutrition so you can provide better weight loss data to the Government.

In the last quarter of 2019–20, residential aged care providers recorded that 8% of residents had experienced significant unplanned weight loss and 7.94% of residents had experienced consecutive unplanned weight loss under the Quality Indicators (QI) Program.

However, this number has increased to 10.9% of aged care residents having significant unplanned weight loss and 11.2% of residents experiencing consecutive unplanned weight loss in the January to March 2022 quarter.

While documenting weight loss is important, dietitians advocate for measuring malnutrition risk instead of measuring weight loss, as someone can remain the same weight but become malnourished and would then not be picked up in these figures.

Ms Dundon encourages aged care providers to also consider how they measure malnutrition within their facilities, rather than just weight loss.

“I’d expect those numbers would jump significantly if we were measuring malnutrition,” she said.

Since the first of July last year, the Government has given aged care facilities that spend less than \$10 a day on each resident with an additional \$10 per resident per day to be spent on food and nutrition called the Basic Daily Fee supplement.

Ms Dundon said this supplement should really be utilised to improve on food and nutrition delivery and overall resident meal experience.

“The Government is measuring money spent on food and staff, but if you’re putting down a plate of something that no one likes, it all goes in the bin and they’re still not getting any nutrition,” Ms Dundon explained.

FOOD QUALITY AND QUANTITY

While three main meals a day are considered important for nutrition, Ms Dundon noted the importance of providing mid-meal snacks like morning tea, afternoon tea and supper.

An older person needs at least 30g of protein, equating to about 100g of meat, at every main meal of an adequate serving size to fulfil the amount of protein needed in a day.

Ms Dundon explained if an older person was served inadequate foods as a main meal – such as party pies, pizza and fish fingers – someone would need to eat about six party pies, two-and-a-half cups of tinned spaghetti and 29 spring rolls to meet their daily protein requirement.

“You can use these types of foods to get protein, but the amount necessary to meet that target far exceeds our residents’ appetites,” she said.

“They’re things to have in between meals.”

Ms Dundon adds it is important that providers balance enjoyable or nostalgic food for residents with nutrition-packed meals.

DELIVERY OF TEXTURE MODIFIED FOODS

When a resident has swallowing problems, facilities need to appropriately access the appropriate level of nutrition, food texture and fluid consistency needed to make eating easier and safer, without losing that food enjoyment.

Some providers focus on the texture of foods – in terms of safety for the resident – but neglect how they taste, with soft and bite sized foods often being the most poorly presented and executed, according to Ms Dundon.

“We need to be careful of how we are plating [food], and it comes down to the taste as well,” she said.

“Using moulds [to set modified foods] isn’t new, and they certainly make modified foods look better, but it comes down to staff knowing what they’re doing, how to reheat food, and how it should look when it is plated.

“There are times we obsess over the textures so we don’t put the person at risk of choking, for good reason, but the purpose of food is for enjoyment and nutrition.”

HOW TO IMPROVE

Ms Dundon suggests providers hire a dietitian to assess their menu and mealtime experience to provide them with a map of where their shortcomings are and how they need to improve.

Once a provider is aware of what the priorities are to work on, they can choose to either use a dietitian or implement the changes themselves if they have enough resources.

Nutrition Professionals Australia also has online training modules for all aged care workers and providers about food and nutrition, to equip staff with information and skills on how to provide older people living in care with easy access to good food.

Nutritionally balanced meals for healthy seniors.

With over 235 meals developed by dietitians and prepared by chefs, Lite n' Easy offers a delicious, food-first approach to promoting independence, choice & health for older Australians.

Lite n' Easy have also introduced a new range of meals called My Choice which have been designed to meet the specific nutritional needs of older people who may have a reduced appetite. My Choice meals provide the same energy and protein (an essential nutrient for seniors) as our standard dinners but in a smaller portion, making them easier to finish.

Lite n' Easy partners with many Home Care Package providers across Australia, so that seniors can have access to even more affordable healthy, delicious meals. If eligible, HCP recipients could save 70% off the cost of their meals.

Lite n' Easy's service is flexible with no lock-in contracts or subscriptions, so customers are free to order week-to-week as needed.

In addition to supporting HCP providers and recipients, Lite n' Easy is now also supporting the broader Aged Care sector by providing meals in bulk to respite centres, residential aged care facilities, hospitals and many other organisations looking for alternative healthy meal solutions for their employees and residents.

For an effective and affordable meal solution to suit your business needs, please email Lite n' Easy at: agedcare@liteneasy.com.au

Visit www.liteneasy.com.au/my-choice or call 13 15 12 for more information.



“It’s given me back my independence. It’s given me back my health. It’s just wonderful.”

Aunty Barb & her daughter/carer, Yoni



“The meals from Lite n' Easy are a tremendous help for my health and independence - one of the best food delivery services I have tried.”

Penny - QLD NDIS participant

Independence | Choice | Happiness

My Choice
by Lite n' Easy



Food, nutrition and the Quality Standards

By Bianca Iovino

Food, nutrition and the dining experience are important elements of care in residential aged care facilities as they often directly impact residents' health and quality of life.

A full three-meal-a-day program consisting of at least 30g of protein and snacks in between has been outlined as best practice by dietitians in the aged care space, but residents don't always receive the right amount of nutrition they require in every meal.

There are a number of factors that impact nutrition in aged care: the rushed nature of mealtime where residents may not enjoy eating and skip meals, and staff may need to be made aware of the signs of malnutrition.

The Final Report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety expressed the importance of adequate portioning and good quality food for older people, which is why they are outlined in an official requirement in the Aged Care Quality Standards.

FOOD SAFETY PROGRAMS ARE A MUST

Standard 3.3.1 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code outlines the responsibilities for aged care providers when processing or serving food to vulnerable populations such as older people or those living with a disability.

Aged care providers are required to have a food safety program that complies with the Code which is a written document indicating how you will control the food safety hazards associated with food handling activities. This sets out your specific food handling controls related to the receipt, storage, processing, display, packaging, transportation, disposal and recall of food.

The Code also outlines other requirements related to the skills and knowledge of food handlers and their supervisors, the health and hygiene of food handlers, and the cleaning, sanitising and maintenance of the food premises and equipment within the premises.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF ME?

The Aged Care Quality Standards are currently under review to strengthen the standards around food, nutrition and delivery but Standard 4 has outlined the importance of appropriate food since they were put into play in 2019.



Providers must ensure meals are varied and of suitable quality and quantity (Source: Shutterstock)

It outlines requirements for providers around services and supports for daily living in residential aged care who must ensure their residents' meals are "varied" and "of suitable quality and quantity".

In order to be compliant with Standard 4 of the Quality Standards, providers must prove they:

- * Understand the requirement
- * Apply the requirement, and this is clear in the way they provide care and services
- * Monitor how they are applying the requirement and the outcomes they achieve
- * Review outcomes and adjust their practices based on these reviews to keep improving

The Standards define what good care should look like and all Government-funded aged care providers are required to comply with the Quality Standards, as suggested by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

Nutrition can have a significant impact on the quality of life for your clients. Linked to so many health conditions and general wellbeing, investing resources and focus on ensuring clients are provided with adequate food and nutrition can be a vital key in improving the aged care sector and making you a Provider of Choice.



Why good design and equipment matters

By Margot White

Aged care is more than policies and processes and an important element that will positively impact the health and wellbeing of residents and staff is a well designed environment and effective equipment.

This could be creating a living space that is easy to navigate for residents and staff without safety hazards, having the right equipment in the facility kitchen for efficient workflow so staff can save time and serve food quickly to residents or having accessible showers and grab rails that make personal care easier and prevent injuries.

The Aged Care Quality Standards highlight that any equipment used should be safe, suitable and fit for purpose, and that quality aged care should be delivered in an environment that is "well designed and welcoming for all consumers and encourages a sense of belonging".

GOING GREEN

At the same time there is an increased focus on sustainability in many different industries and some aged care providers are catching on to this new trend when building or refurbishing facilities or implementing innovative equipment.

Putting in place green and sustainable measures in your facility isn't just about construction, there is so much more providers can do to implement a sustainable model of care.

Key to this is having a sustainability strategy in place to help ensure everyone within the organisation is on the same page and help you reach the targets that you wish to achieve within your facility.

From there, you can contact providers or suppliers of sustainable and green products and equipment. Whilst there may be the assumption that going green will cost more, the long term return on investment may surprise you, as well as the green benefits it will provide your facility.

POSITIVE IMPACT

A well-designed home can have a positive impact on residents and flow-on effects into different facets

of your facility operation but will also have a positive impact on your workforce including:

- * Provide a safe and welcoming environment
- * Reduce aggression or behaviours of concern in residents
- * Increased happiness and spirit for residents and staff
- * Enable independence and purpose among residents
- * Increased socialisation, connection and communication between family, friends, and staff in common areas
- * Encouraging families to visit their older loved ones more often

Having access to equipment to support mobility in residents will promote independence and encourage participation in social activities which will ultimately result in helping them live more satisfying and productive lives.

THE RIGHT TOOLS

Providing staff with the right tools to ease the physical impact of the job will reflect on the operation side with less injuries of your workforce and increased job satisfaction.

Other benefits include improvements in your aged care facility standing and image, and attracting more clients due to the improved visual environment of your home.

Whether it's making sure your facility is easy to navigate for residents living with dementia, implementing environmentally friendly or renewable materials in a new extension or being able to offer supportive goods that increase staff and clients' wellbeing and independence, well considered design and equipment can make all the difference.



SCAN FOR MORE
DESIGN & EQUIPMENT
ARTICLES ON
HELLOLEADERS.COM.AU

YOUR LAUNDRY BUSINESS IS OUR LAUNDRY BUSINESS



**INDUSTRIAL
TROLLEYS**

**COMMERCIAL
ENVIROSAVER**

**SERVICE
LABELLING**



1300 666 289
www.laundrysolutions.com.au
info@laundrysolutions.com.au



Designing for joy – 5 ways to make aged care more dementia friendly

There is an increased focus on specialised dementia care in residential aged care, community living and independent living, including how design elements and the environment is used to support residents with dementia.

By Alex Jacobs

There are a number of dementia-friendly design elements at your disposal that will support engagement and resident wellbeing.

It could be as simple as aesthetic changes to create contrast and reduce confusion or the introduction of a new outdoor space designed for sensory stimulation.

Architecture and design firm, Deicke Richards, has experience designing residential aged care that better meet the needs of people with dementia.

Senior Interior Designer, Magda Myszkowski, spoke to Hello Leaders about some of the design elements they incorporate when designing places for older people with dementia.

1. DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY OUTDOOR SPACES

By providing residents with a dementia-friendly garden you can help promote social engagement and reduce agitation and apathy in people with dementia.

For some, it may be a safe space that reminds them of gardening at home, while others may just enjoy the time outdoors. The mental and physical rehabilitation possibilities through outdoor spaces could slow cognitive decline.

There are a number of elements to consider in a dementia-friendly garden. The layout, accessibility requirements, seating and shading and maintenance requirements are all important.

Plants should be sensory-provoking; various colours of flowers and foliage, flowers and herbs with noticeable scents, and trees with leaves that rustle and crunch.

Ms Myszkowski said connectivity to the natural environment plays a large role in providing comfort and serenity to aged care residents.



The outdoor terrace at Aveo Carindale
(Source: Christopher Frederick Jones)

“A visual and physical connection to the landscape improves health and supports positive wellbeing,” said Ms Myszkowski.

“Places for ageing can provide a connection to nature by enabling unobstructed views of nature, the inclusion of green foliage walls, safely arranged potted plants, nature-inspired super graphics and murals, water features and fountains.

“Safe access to gardens that are shaded and have a clear and defined path arranged in a circuit encourages exercise and movement, prompting meaningful use and interaction through activities like gardening.”

2. DEFINED SPACES

Ms Myszkowski said reducing confusion should be at the forefront of design when planning a facility. If a resident was to lose their bearings or forget which way to turn, it helps to be able to see a common area or familiar space to help them recentre themselves.

She explained if they have to walk past more than four rooms, the chances of confusion increase.

“Confusion and agitation make anybody function more poorly, thus smaller more familiar environments will reduce stress and enable a resident to function at their best Ms Myszkowski explained.

“Through planning, visual cues can be strengthened to assist with wayfinding, such as being able to see the bathroom from the bed.”

Alongside the layout, contrast supports the identification of spaces and usage. Easily defined items such as handrails, doors and toilet seats allow residents with dementia to spot them more easily and have a sense of familiarity.

Multipurpose spaces also benefit from design contrasts. For instance, large communal areas need to be versatile, as sometimes they can be overpowering, so distinction and separation help.

3. BRIGHT AND EVEN LIGHTING

The lighting within your aged care home is crucial to promoting a dementia-friendly environment. For some people with dementia, the brain may interpret dark and light spots in very different ways.

Dark spots may cause distress as the brain can't accurately process what is being seen. Therefore, you want to balance any contrast with even, consistent lighting.

“Appropriate lighting plays a significant role in safety, reducing the risk of fall accidents and spatial confusion,” said Ms Myszkowski.

“Naturally lit interiors with window coverings provide the resident with a choice to adjust natural lighting to their needs.

“The colour of the light is important too; artificial lighting which adjusts to circadian rhythm has benefits such as boosting concentration, promoting productivity and improving residents' mood and behaviour.”

Cool lighting – which has more of a blue tone – is also often used in household kitchens as it promotes activity. Whereas, warm lighting – more of a yellow tone – is best for bedrooms where it can relax the mind and reduce stimulation at night.



TriCare Kawana water mall,
(Source: Christopher Frederick Jones)

Installing smart lighting around your aged care facility means you can program it to mimic natural light. For example, it would be cooler in the morning but warmer towards the end of the day.

4. FAMILIAR, HOMELIKE SETTINGS

The personalisation of space is a great way to make a resident with dementia feel safe and comfortable. You want their own room to feel familiar and for common areas to express a sense of community and belonging.

One way to achieve a sense of familiarity is to add personalised touches to rooms. Past examples include ‘The Front Door Project’ where facilities individually painted resident doors to resemble their childhood homes, or used their favourite colours.

At Deicke Richards, there is a focus on removing any sense of “institution” living. Ms Myszkowski mentioned one facility where the design incorporated a domestic-style kitchen where food is warmed and served to residents, but the harsher elements of a commercial kitchen are hidden away.

Personalisation also helps, whether it's the introduction of furniture or decorations from a resident's own home or design elements that feel warm and nostalgic.

“The use of traditional finishes i.e. wallpaper with pattern and texture may be nostalgic for some residents, proving a sense of familiarity,” said Ms Myszkowski.

5. ENHANCE CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Fostering creativity in residential aged care allows residents to express themselves and remain mentally or socially engaged. Creativity is arguably more important for residents with dementia.

There are several ways to enhance creative activities, such as a dedicated art gallery offering definition and direction. It's an engaging space with a clear purpose and artwork can be visible all year round.

Defined creative spaces will attract people who gravitate towards those pursuits, build relationships, and feel included.

Technology such as interactive projectors featuring games or sensory experiences, can also be used for a wide range of creative sessions.

Specifically designed to be used by people with dementia, projectors are a mess-free way to encourage movement and active participation. This could be a simple way to utilise multipurpose rooms without overcrowding the space.

DESIGNING FOR JOY

Ultimately, the design of your building is going to influence how residents feel and act. Residents with dementia need to be supported in a purpose-built environment where they can thrive.

“We all want to live a life of joy, purpose, connection and belonging, that is our ultimate goal when designing for all.”

3-in-1 Rail

- Standard
- Splayed
- Fold-Down



The functions of the 'Standard', 'Splayed' and 'Fold Down' rails have been incorporated into the '3-in-1', making it the most convenient toilet support system on the market.

The benefits of the **Throne Accessories '3-in-1'** Rail System include:

- This rail replaces the previous three models
- Simplified ordering... etc

The new **Throne Accessories '3-in-1'** Rail System will be of great advantage for:

- Equipment loan departments in hospitals, schools, respite care and hospice facilities
- Nursing homes and retirement villages
- Hotels, motels, hostels, residential and other accommodation outlets



CHILDREN'S RAIL AND STEP

The children's rails assist them with their safety and independence. The step attaches to the rail and in many cases the child is able to get off the toilet without any assistance. The step can fold up against the bowl when other people wish to use the toilet. Throne Accessories also produce a range of smaller rails to fit infant toilets used in pre-schools and kindergartens. The step is suitable for any of the Throne Support Rails.

DIGNITY, INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENCE FOR EVERYONE

THRONE SPACER

THE ULTIMATE AND MOST VERSATILE
TOILET SEAT RAISER

The Throne Spacer has been developed to add height without changing the appearance of a standard toilet and toilet seat, and offers comfort and safety.

*Two sizes!
50mm & 80mm
heights*

*The best option
OT's could
hope for!*



- Use with or without Throne Rails
- The Throne Spacer fits under the toilet seat
- Unobtrusively integrates with the bathroom decor
- Raises the height of toilet seats and electronic bidets
- Easily installed and conveniently transportable
- Spacers and rails are available from reputable healthcare suppliers

BARIATRIC TOILET SUPPORT RAIL

This particular Bariatric Rail model meets the needs of the larger built person. The handgrips are supported by adjustable legs that are firmly positioned to the side of the toilet by rubber-capped feet to prevent tripping. The Bariatric model comes in polished stainless steel.





Creating an accessible and usable garden space

Every aged care home has some form of garden and these outdoor spaces can add happiness, calm and a sense of purpose to residents' lives.

The humble garden can be an important part of health and wellbeing for aged care residents, so taking steps to develop the most fabulous garden spaces is time well spent.

Much of the success of a garden space will come from the planning that goes into it, but there are other factors you can discuss with landscapers and other contractors to lift the overall outcome.

DECIDING ON FEATURES

The first step in the planning of your garden is to consider who will be using it so that you can determine what features will suit them.

The mobility and care needs of the residents are an important consideration because you want them to be able to get the most out of the space.

For example, residents in a dementia wing might benefit more from a garden that has lots of sensory elements and is easy to navigate. Whereas, wheelchair users will need wide, flat paths to be able to access the garden.

Some of the most important elements of a facility garden include:

- * Shade
- * Benches or seats
- * Paths
- * A variety of plants
- * Features residents can engage in or be stimulated by – whether it's the look, smell, texture or physical activity that engages them

It might help with the garden design to ask residents what they would like to see included. Would they like a theme to the plants, such as a tropical garden? Would they like a water feature or garden statues? Is it important to have a shaded feature like a rotunda?

Consider the purpose of the garden as well, for example is it important to have residents involved in cultivating the plants to improve their wellbeing?

Some features that can be included to create specific therapeutic benefits for aged care residents, could be:

- * Plants that stimulate all five senses and are chosen for their scent, texture, colour and edibility

- * Quiet spaces for meditation
- * Visual cues, such as signs, that can be used by residents with dementia to navigate the garden more confidently on their own
- * Bird feeders and bird baths for interaction with nature
- * Features that invite residents to complete home-like chores, such as posting a letter or sweeping leaves from the paths

ACCESSIBILITY

Aged care provider Lifeview was awarded the 2022 InnovAGEING Award for Enhancing Consumer Experience for its Planting with Purpose program.

The program is a collaboration between residents, chefs and gardeners at the provider's facilities, who together grow fresh produce for residents' meals. The response from residents involved in the program has been hugely positive, with staff noticing improvements in the physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing of residents.

Lifeview Head Gardener Daniel de Sachau said the award winning gardening program had features which made it accessible and usable for everyone, which was one of the top considerations for design features.

"You need good access for residents to walk around and look at different garden beds with different coloured flowers and native plants and ornamentals," Mr de Sachau said.

"You also need it to be useable, so a space that people will want to go out in and spend some time, so not just a lawn area but having a good balance of plants around it as well and things that will draw people out there.

"Usually we make sure nothing ends in a dead end, so the path feeds itself back around the garden and encourages them to go on a good walk around the whole garden, not just go out the door, look at something and go back in."

If you have gardens where residents will be working, for example, growing vegetables, weeding and tending plants, these also need to be accessible.

Lifeview uses raised garden beds, some on wheels to move them around, as well as some at a height that

a person in a wheelchair can sit underneath to reach the whole garden bed.

LOOKS VS PRODUCTIVITY

Should you have a garden that is purely decorative or one that produces food for use in the facility's kitchen?

The answer is both!

A garden that is established for looks is just as important as a produce garden as they both offer different options for residents.

Owner of landscaping business Great Spaces, Peter O'Neill, said in his experience working with aged care facilities it is good to have a destination in a garden, such as a bench overlooking an eye-catching flower bed, where residents can go to enjoy the aesthetic.

But he said the produce side of a garden adds another level of enjoyment for residents as it is an opportunity for more engagement in gardening and outdoor activities.

"Residents get a lot of pleasure out of producing the food and I think the generations that are in facilities now are probably more gardeners than we are, so they appreciate that," he said.

Some facilities keep these two types of gardens separate – with a dedicated area for food production and gardens in other areas that are designed only to be attractive.



Gardens can have a great impact on resident wellbeing. (Source: Lifeview)

Consultation over what the residents, grounds staff and kitchen staff would like their gardens to look like will help you to plan the right mix of looks and productivity.

If you are putting in a section of garden that residents will be involved in planting or maintaining, you can also consult with your landscaper on using plants in this space that your residents will like to work with.

This can be based on what residents have said they used to have in their own gardens, as well as what will grow well in the facility's climate and require less ongoing maintenance.



OM Interactive Projector System

Interactive activities to enhance the quality of care and wellbeing

- Fully mobile interactive projector can be moved from room to room
- Projects onto floors, tables and bed tables
- Comes with over 100 games and effects
- Easy to clean & sanitise.
- Editable so you can customise residents experiences by adding in their own photo's, images & sounds.



(07) 5324 2677 | www.sensorywizard.com.au



The key to best practice in aged care delivery

Having access to quality care is a human right and to ensure older Australians receive the high level of aged care they deserve, providers need to meet Government standards and regulations.

Compliance is crucial in the sector, with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission tasked to monitor and regularly check that aged care homes and service providers are continuously providing effective and high quality care while keeping their clients, residents and staff safe.

The Quality Standards and Quality Indicator (QI) reporting, Star Ratings, the Charter of Rights, the Mandatory Quality Indicator Program and the Serious Incident Response Scheme are some examples of initiatives introduced by the Government to ensure providers deliver best practice aged care.

Each of these have their own set of requirements around assessments, record keeping and reporting, making the task of ensuring compliance within an aged care business a demanding, ever changing and ongoing responsibility.

It not only involves being across the latest laws and regulations, but also making sure those rules and codes are rolled out across all areas of an organisation while ensuring staff is well equipped and trained to meet the compliance demands as part of their day to day responsibilities.

Aged care providers must not only meet the compliance standards that are set out by the Government. Just like any other business they have a responsibility to their staff and the broader community to make sure they meet relevant laws and regulations.

Within the workplace there are Work Health & Safety laws to comply with, legalities around workplace equality and anti discrimination to be aware of, how to manage termination or redundancy of employees and regulations around unfair dismissal. But you should also be aware of privacy laws and how those impact your stakeholders, building and construction regulations and the legal impact of voluntary assisted dying.

Being aware of what is required of you as an operator in a legal and compliance sense and understanding the legislative framework that applies to the aged care system will ensure you can meet all your responsibilities as a best practice care provider and employer.



Understanding the legislative framework that applies to the aged care system is crucial (Source: Shutterstock)

When you need support, not judgement

YOUR NEEDS



Tailored engagement to meet the unique needs of your residents, your team and your home – large or small

EXPERTISE



Our people work alongside your people to cultivate a robust and dynamic team of proficient aged care professionals



RESOURCES

We help build your clinical capabilities and optimise efficiency through skills matrix analysis, planning, and education

ELIGIBLE ADVISORS



Our professional experts support you to actively engage with the Commission, and fix compliance issues at the source

FUNDING SURETY



Focus on improving your funding position through detailed needs analysis and accurate AN – ACC assessments

NATIONAL COVERAGE



Our team of Consultants, Advisors and Clinical Experts respond quickly and locally, anywhere in Australia



CONNECT WITH US

Contact one of our passionate Client Partners to discuss how we can assist to position your home to deliver exceptional aged care services

Continuous Compliance Through Easy-To-Use Software



Easy Access to Contextualized Policies & Procedures



Single Point **Data Capture** for Risks, Reporting & Decision Making



Quality Systems including Continuous Improvement Plans



Workforce Training through E-Learning



Way Finding of Key Information



Keep on top of Compliance with **Up-to-date Content**

Learn More



complispace
an Ideagen solution

Delivered to your inbox weekly, Aged Care Essentials (ACE) is focused on helping Aged Care Providers understand their ever-changing and increasing regulatory and compliance obligations.

- > Feature Articles
- > Webinars
- > Reports

Subscribe
Today



agedcareessentials
BY COMPLISPACE



Managing workplace disputes

If your staff members fall into conflict, sometimes the situation escalates to a complaint. Perhaps it's due to an incident or personality clash. Or maybe it started outside the workplace and became an internal issue due to unresolved hurt feelings.

Knowing what to do and understanding your obligations can significantly impact how effectively you manage the dispute.

Any intervention must be fair, transparent and expeditious, with a view to resolving the issues rather than making matters worse.

EMPLOYER DUTIES WHEN THERE'S A WORKPLACE CONFLICT

When faced with a conflict, as an employer, you must take steps to:

1. Minimise the disruption to your workplace
2. Fairly investigate all complaints and cases
3. Manage inappropriate workplace behaviours

It will help to resolve the dispute and restore a harmonious workplace while reducing any risk to workers' health and safety.

TAKE COMPLAINTS SERIOUSLY

To you, a complaint may seem trivial or unrelated to the workplace. But to the person who has complained (the complainant), it's a much bigger problem. They're so affected by the issue that they've spoken up. It means that you should consider intervening, especially if the issue:

- ✳ Impacts the complainant's work performance
- ✳ Makes the complainant feel unsafe or unwell at work
- ✳ Causes disruption to others

While there's no universal approach to managing workplace conflicts, a good starting point is getting advice from a workplace specialist to ensure you're on the right track. The steps outlined below are also generally helpful and, if followed correctly, should see you through the process while minimising disruption.

BEFORE THE INVESTIGATION

Before you start investigating, think about the following issues:

- ✳ Who is implicated in the complaint?

If your human resources team or a manager has a potential conflict of interest, they can't participate in the investigation.

- ✳ Is the issue an interpersonal dispute?

If you're dealing with a personality conflict, consider whether mediation or a grievance procedure is appropriate.

- ✳ Is the issue about workplace rules or practices?

If the complaint concerns a workplace rule or practice, consider whether it needs changing or enforcement.

- ✳ Is the issue relevant to the workplace?

Consider whether there's a sufficient connection with the workplace and whether the issue raises concerns about out-of-hours conduct.

- ✳ Is the complaint frivolous?

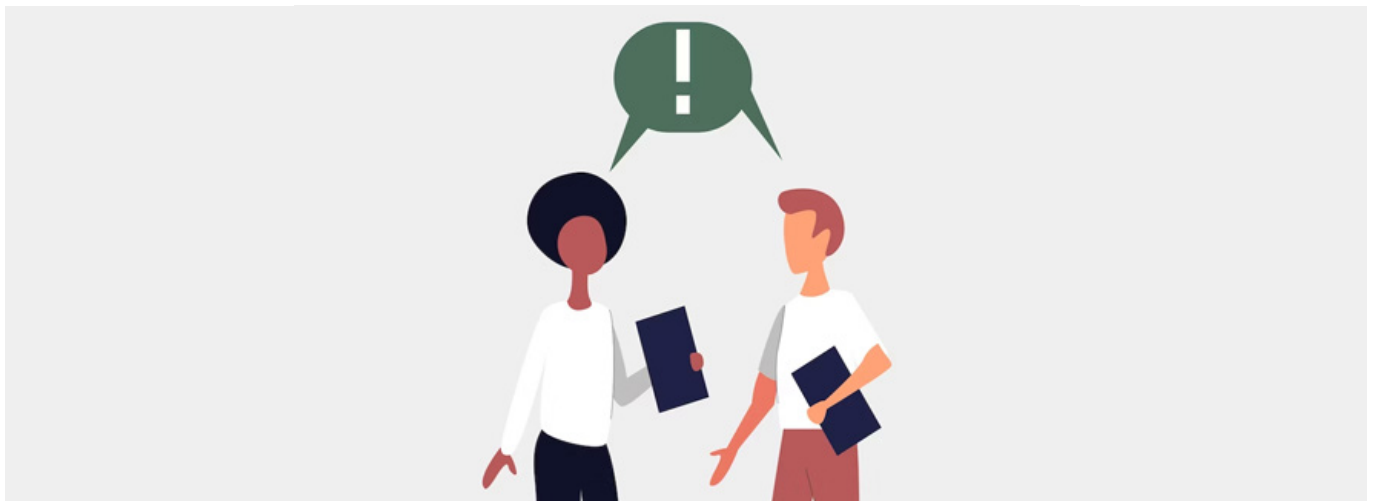
For example, is it trivial, far-fetched or otherwise not worthy of serious attention? If so, you may not be obliged to investigate.

- ✳ Is the complaint vexatious?

For example, is it without merit and only designed to inconvenience or annoy another person or you as the employer? If so, you may not be obliged to investigate. However, you must remember that without an investigation, it is difficult to know whether a complaint is vexatious.

- ✳ How old is the complaint?

If the complaint is older than six months, consider how long you've known about it and whether the delay in



If there is a conflict within your workplace between staff, it can cause wider issues throughout the organisation. (Source: Shutterstock)

your investigation may cause any issues. Also, if the complaint is minor, consider whether it's necessary to investigate.

- ✳ Is there a risk of widespread or repeated conduct?

Even a trivial issue, such as the theft of a \$1 item, could have broader implications if the conduct isn't addressed, so consider whether the current circumstances pose this risk.

- ✳ Is there a risk to your organisation's brand and reputation?

For example, will there be negative publicity that harms your organisation if there are criminal charges due to the conduct? If so, consider how to manage these issues and whether you need external support, for example, from a public relations consultant.

- ✳ Is there a broader public interest?

Consider whether there is a risk to public safety, as this may determine whether you investigate and how you approach the investigation.

- ✳ Have there been repeated complaints about the same person or the same type of conduct?

Patterns of behaviour may indicate systemic problems, so you'll need to know the issue's history when determining how to investigate.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

It's important to remember that some aspects of an investigation are critical to its success. These elements are the cornerstones of all workplace investigations and must be treated with care.

✳ Confidentiality

When you advise your employees about the outcome of your investigation, remember to seek legal advice about how to convey the message with fairness. Avoid making promises about anonymity because you may not be able to do so.

✳ Conflict of interest

Remember that if the complaint is about you, you cannot be the investigator, and you should avoid direct involvement in the investigation. Similarly, if the complaint is about one of your managers, that manager can't act as an investigator.

✳ Client legal privilege

In some circumstances, you may need to seek legal advice about client legal privilege. In particular, legal advice is a good idea if the allegations are proven and termination of employment is possible.

✳ Disciplinary action

If an employee refuses to cooperate or breaches your direction about maintaining confidentiality, you may need to take disciplinary action. Again, seeking legal advice to discuss this possibility is a good idea.

IN A NUTSHELL

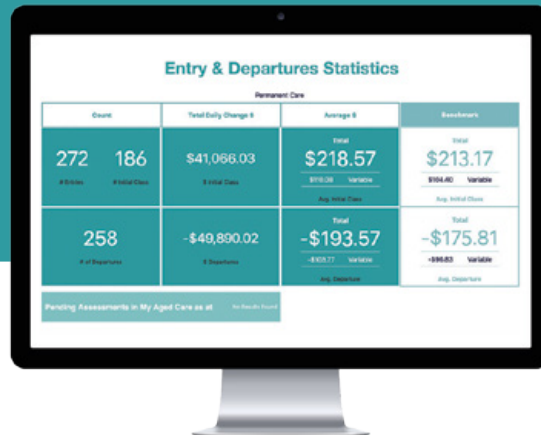
Managing workplace disputes is often challenging and complex. The investigation's success often depends on the ability of the manager to navigate legal requirements. So seeking legal advice of an experienced workplace lawyer as soon as possible can have a significant impact.

Jodie Bradbrook is an Adelaide-based workplace and employment lawyer with additional expertise in workplace health and safety and workers compensation claims. Through her firm Bradbrook Lawyers she represents clients from various industries, including aged care, disability, and corporate services.



SCAN FOR MORE
LEGAL & COMPLIANCE
ARTICLES ON
HELLOLEADERS.COM.AU

MyVitals



We combine data daily from:



Services Australia Data:
Payment Statements & Claim Data

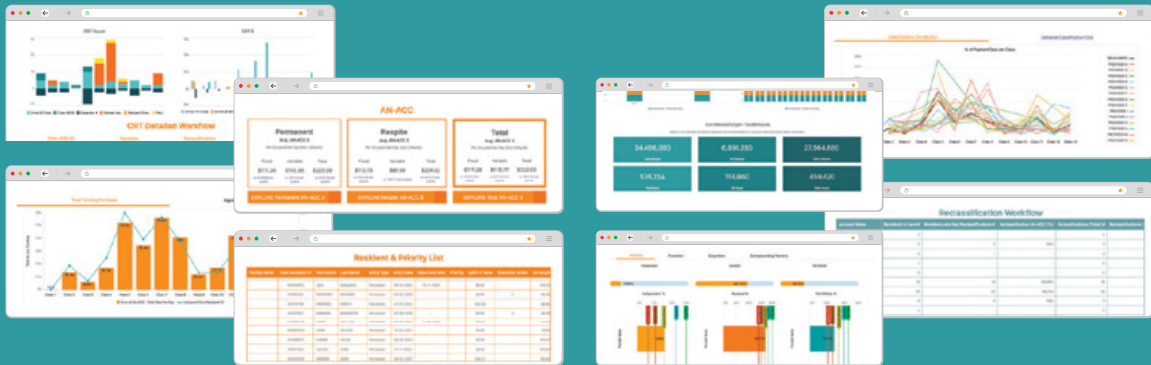


My Aged Care Data:
AN-ACC Assessment Requests

Plan, review, & optimise your AN-ACC, Occupancy, Care Minutes and Government funding with our all new MyVitals Software. Clinically driven, business-minded software to ensure you're being funded for the care you're delivering.

Track your performance over time and compare your Organisation to multiple benchmarks to find out exactly where you're excelling and where you can improve.

Manage your Assessment & AN-ACC Workflow as Residents Enter, Depart, and require Reclassification. Stay on top of your Care Minutes targets with the comprehensive Dashboard.



Get in touch to book a demo!

1300 419 119

team@providerassist.com.au

providerassist.com.au

Do you want to know exactly how much
AN-ACC Funding you are missing right now?

Book a complimentary AN-ACC Health Check & receive your free AN-ACC Education!

Book your Health Check Analysis now!

1300 419 119

team@providerassist.com.au



Have you heard? Alexys wins again!

Alexys International's design and engineering prowess in Nurse Call solutions has been recognised by the award of the **"Excellence in Cyber-Security"** accolade at the 2022 ITAC National Congress.

Through its latest IP-Driven Nurse Call technology **Alexys** is recognised as a true leader within the Residential Aged Care sector. Innovations like **Aptus Unity Nurse Call (Poe, Wi-fi, BLE, RTLS), Critical Messaging System** and **Aware Android mobile communications app**, have literally changed the way you manage your Nurse Call communications.

Did you also know that **Alexys** is now rapidly becoming the expert authority in upgrading and supporting existing Nurse Call and communications systems?

With an **Alexys** update it may not be necessary to replace every component of your existing Nurse Call system, **saving you thousands** of dollars and major operational disruption.

Don't wait any longer. Breathe new life into your aging system without breaking the bank.

To celebrate the ITAC award, Alexys are offering an additional 10% discount off new and refurbished Nurse Call projects until June 30, 2023*.

TERMS & CONDITIONS: *10% additional discount on all booked Nurse Call projects valued between \$10,000 and \$100,000 (ex.GST). Register your interest through our dedicated website: www.alexys.com.au/discount-offer/

Alexys wins Cyber-Security Award



Excellence in Cyber-Security
WINNER ITAC AWARDS 2022

"The Alexys Unity system was by far the most technically advanced solution. We would recommend using Alexys for your new build or refurbishment."

- Brett Reedman, CIO - Catholic Healthcare Limited

living well



ALEXYS
ALEXYS.COM.AU