



BETTER PRACTICE IN AGED CARE AWARD Resiaction – ‘a reason to get up in the morning’



Warrina Village Hostel in Castle Hill, NSW has been awarded a Better Practice in Aged Care Award for its volunteer program which provides residents with ‘a reason to get up in the morning’.






More than 70 of the home’s 96 residents volunteer within the home, completing tasks such as running activities, writing the Village newspaper, running the footy tips for staff and residents, assisting with morning and afternoon teas, looking after the Village animals, pastoral care,

buddying new residents and delivering mail and newspapers. There is even a purpose built resident-run coffee shop and library.

The Resiaction program is based on research that shows volunteering increases feelings of wellbeing. Older people who volunteer tend to be happier and have reduced depression. Volunteers are reported to be physically healthier with higher levels of functional abilities and lower mortality rates.

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Just a word



It's the time to celebrate the end of the year and consider the challenges of the coming 12 months.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and festive season. Thank you for your continued commitment to providing a safe and happy life for your residents and for striving to do things better for their benefit.

I am very proud to be involved with the aged care industry – there is much that you have to be proud of.

As we come to the end of round four of accreditation, I believe that the aged care industry has advanced in leaps and bounds in its professionalism and service to older Australians, compared to the early days of accreditation back in 2000. As we analyse the results of this round of accreditation, I believe my gut instinct will prove correct. Next

year we will publish the results of this round of accreditation and compare it with previous rounds.

It's easy to get caught up in our work and to focus on the future and how to improve – that is a positive thing. But this festive season, take a step back and look at how much you have achieved, and how you personally make lives better for the residents in your care.

Best wishes for the festive season.

Mark Brandon
Chief Executive Officer

Better Practice 2010

Call for abstracts *The time to act is now!*

We are looking for speakers for the 2010 series of Better Practice events.

Closing date for your abstract is 4 January 2010.

The themes for 2010 are:

- Fostering cultural change through leadership and management transformation
- Fostering cultural change through governance
- Fostering cultural change through clinical transformation
- Creating a personal plan of action
- Evidence-based practice: moving it from the bookshelf to the bedside
- Innovative strategies for facilitating and managing change
- Sexuality
- Effective resident assessment – from the routine to the revolutionary
- Overcoming barriers to restraint
- Various models of care.

To be considered as a speaker, go to our website www.accreditation.org.au and download the call for abstracts.

Providing older people in residential aged care facilities with the opportunity to help others is particularly beneficial as it helps overcome the feelings of powerlessness and low morale that can develop when a resident feels that they are receiving care without having anything to contribute in return. Volunteering is a positive way to promote interdependency and a sense of community between residents and staff.

Surveys have found that residents enjoy the tasks and claim ownership of them, relishing responsibility.

“I have always been able to help people and am glad I have been given more opportunities to do so.”

“This helps me from becoming self-centred.”

“Not all of us like Bingo, I like having a real job to do.”

“Throughout my life I have always believed in service above self... I have a moral obligation to help out where I can.”

“I am unable to participate in normal activities, but working as the librarian gives me a real occupation, and takes my mind off the pain that is always with me.”

Raelene Blackledge, the diversional therapy coordinator, says that Resiaction is a way to build meaningful activities into daily life. Too often diversional therapy is just seen as activities run by the activity officer in the afternoon. There is more to diversional therapy than leisure and entertainment. Resiaction recognises and respects residents’ skills, abilities and desire to learn new things.

Resiaction enables residents to contribute to those around them, to their home and their community. It encourages shared relationships with staff rather than fostering an ‘us and them’ mentality so often viewed in institutional settings. Resiaction is a program which fully involves the staff in terms of their encouragement and support, fostering a more equal and balanced understanding of each group’s part in the functioning of the village.

Getting the job done

Staff education and reminders were necessary due to a staff culture of wanting to get the job done quickly. This program represents cultural change which could have been threatening to both residents and staff. Much opposition and anxiety was avoided by starting in a small way and allowing the program to grow organically as confidence increased. It required a new way of thinking for staff and a ‘letting go’ of control over some tasks.

Managing risk

Initially, there were concerns that the Resiaction program would increase the risk of harm to residents and the risk that tasks may not be performed to required standards. This required open discussion with staff.

Procedures were developed for assessing volunteer tasks and matching them with resident abilities. Residents were provided with support in learning the tasks. All stakeholders – residents, families and staff were consulted, and feedback was sought. Residents who would require staff support to perform volunteer tasks were flagged. These approaches have been effective in managing risks.

The aged care industry is instinctively risk averse. Rhonda Nay (Professor of Gerontic Nursing and Director of Australian Centre for Evidence Based Aged Care, and Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Ltd) has described the tendency to prevent residents from exercising choice and independence because of safety concerns as “benevolent oppression”.

The future

Following the success of the Resiaction program in Warrina Village, the program will be implemented across all Anglican retirement villages during 2009/10. After presentations at five Better Practice events in 2009, many other aged care homes across Australia have also adopted the program.





That's entertainment!

A drama group that has aged care residents of varying abilities as the stars, and a live show complete with sketches, verse, puppets and song. Possible? Of course!

The Waminda Drama Group, from Waminda Care Centre (part of SwanCare group), Bentley Park, WA, was formed in 2004 – with many challenges at first. But with experience came knowledge and soon, success, and the drama group is now off and running with great benefits for all.

The drama group's latest performance was of "Wham-into bus trip," in late September at the home for residents, families and staff. All staff love to attend (including CEO and senior management who would not miss a show), as well as family members, neighbours and friends. The group has also performed at another aged care facility.

Marylin Snow is a former activities worker and now volunteer at the home. She is the producer/script writer for the drama group. She says it was remarkable how quickly a successful formula evolved to include everyone – from those with dementia, depression, impaired mobility, vision and hearing, to those with Parkinson's disease, stroke, limited use of limbs and low self-esteem.

Marylin has written four comedies which can be adapted to suit the needs of the group at any particular time.

The plays take place on an imaginary bus. The majority of the cast are the driver and passengers



who remain safely seated throughout. Scripts are read for the rehearsals and performances so nobody has to worry about forgetting their lines. Parts are highlighted for everyone and enlarged for those with vision impairment.

Optional non-participating roles can be added to involve people who want to be involved but cannot take an active part.

There's verse and song, even an optional puppet show which can involve up to four puppeteers. The number of cast can be increased or decreased depending on the drama group. There are many ways to include people in the drama and the rewards are huge.

"Everyone can join in, even if they just want to attend rehearsals and watch. They really do forget their problems when they're involved. It's their



Oaks Day

Oaks Day was celebrated by residents, families and staff of Uniting Care's Sefton Lodge in Hawthorn Victoria. Even the Agency assessor who had popped in for an unannounced visit joined in the fun!

Extreme adventures at Cobden

Following a suggestion at a resident meeting, the activity staff and a volunteer from Cobden District Health Services in Victoria, took 10 residents to Port Campbell for a scenic joy flight over the Twelve Apostles.

For most it was their first time on a flight. 93-year-old Alice was able to fulfil a life long ambition. Her daughters,

group and they are involved in all the decision-making," Marilyn said.

Marilyn tells the story of Jack. "Lonely and frail suffering badly from osteoporosis and the onset of Parkinson's, his back bent and his voice an old man's high pitched quaver, Jack joined the drama group. He'd arrive appearing to wonder why he was there. The more Jack became involved the more he forgot his problems. Soon a more confident, fun loving person would emerge and his deep male voice would suddenly appear as if from nowhere and he wanted to do away with his walking frame and stroll onto the stage as Jack...miracle time!"

"To see happiness and confidence return, hear laughter from someone who rarely laughs and to observe the 'return to being in control' is so special."

Now the group is preparing for the 'Wham-into Christmas' production, when the bus travels up into space!



**An excerpt from Comedy four –
"Wham-into Gold"**

Nora Bone: Don't be so daft Dr Screech - the Angel of Death had his way with your Mum 70 years ago when she dropped off the perch.

Dr Screech (with surprise): Fancy you knowing Mum dropped off the perch. I'll never forget that day. There she was, high above the circus ring, a tiny figure, with the spotlight beaming on her. (Points up and calls.) Titania Titmouse Trapeze Artist Supremo. That was her name. She was just coming off the perch to get on to the high wire..."

Marilyn Snow has written a comprehensive easy-to-follow manual on forming and running a special needs drama group. It includes four of her comedies that can be photocopied for use in small drama groups.

To find out more go to www.snowdrama.com or contact Marilyn Snow via email: marylin@snowdrama.com.

grandchildren and great grandchildren were all there to watch her take this joy flight.

The next challenge is to find another activity as exciting and enjoyable for the adventurous residents; maybe hot air ballooning or skydiving?



Summer and fluid intake – staying hydrated during the hotter months

Studies of residential aged care homes indicate that dehydration occurs frequently. A significant number of residents consume less than the daily recommended fluid intake leading to hospital admissions associated with dehydration and electrolyte disturbance.

The guidelines to effective hydration in aged care facilities, highlight that it can be difficult to distinguish between poor outcomes due to an underlying illness and poor outcomes of dehydration itself.

Risk factors include:

Poor oral intake

- inability to feed independently
- refusing oral intake
- poor access to fluids
- swallowing difficulties

Increased fluid loss

- fever associated illness
- diarrhoea and vomiting
- medications and illnesses that increase urine output

Other factors

- female
- high number of medications
- impaired functional status
- dementia
- greater number of chronic conditions

Inadequate staffing

- inadequate staff training and or awareness of hydration.

Some clinical signs of dehydration include:

- reduced underarm sweating
- reduced skin elasticity
- dry oral mucosa
- recent change in consciousness including confusion
- reduced urine output and darker urine.

Some strategies to prevent dehydration include:

- frequently offering fluids including during specific routine events such as before and after showering, after toileting, before/after an activity program and with medication rounds

- prompting residents to drink at meal times
- ensuring fluids are within reach and freely accessible
- educating families, visitors and volunteers to offer fluids when visiting
- encouraging other 'wet' foods such as jelly, custard, yoghurts, soups, pureed fruit etc
- including social activities that include fluid intake
- maintaining regular documentation to establish baselines, identify and monitor residents at risk and alert strategies for risk factors such as gastroenteritis
- including dehydration tests when other clinical tests are ordered.

This information is taken from the Guidelines to effective hydration in aged care facilities by Associate Professor Michael Woodward, Medical Director, Aged and Residential Services Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, December 2007

Organisational leadership the key to a happy workforce

A study conducted by the Australian National University (ANU) in relation to optimising the residential aged care workforce, has found that while individual leadership is important for retaining a happy workforce, appropriate organisational leadership is vital.

The report, completed in June this year, found that focusing on individual leadership and management development is not the only solution to staff job satisfaction and retention, and in turn quality of care and wellbeing of residents in aged care. It concludes that any endeavour to improve leadership and management is likely to fail without organisational leadership and appropriate policies to guarantee philosophical cohesion, coherent psychological and structural frameworks, physical and environmental support. This includes adequate financial, physical and administrative resources, staffing and skill-mix, remuneration and staff training and development.

In short, individual leaders can only be effective if they feel confident they have sufficient resources at their disposal to ensure the delivery of high quality care and sufficient support for their staff, for example through an adequate skill mix of staff, clear HR practices and communication policies, administrative support, attractive incentives/rewards and career pathways.



Art and Crafts Show

Last month, Cardinal Stepinac Village in St Johns Park Sydney, hosted the Annual Residential Aged Care Arts and Crafts Show for 2009. The Show was a real team effort, with home made cakes, tea, coffee and refreshments provided by the Village's catering team and served by the catering team along with the recreation officers, activity coordinators and staff from participating aged care homes.

Exhibits at the art and craft show came from more than ten homes in the region, with entries divided into individual and group events. The participants proudly worked all year around preparing their entries.

Matt Smolcic, CEO of Cardinal Stepinac Village, said the most important part of the show is getting the residents together, to come along and have a look at other residents' art and craft pieces and catch up with other residents for a social outing.

"It's not so much about winning an award, but giving the residents an opportunity to continue doing what they love and to see what other people have done."

"I wish to thank all the residents who participated in the show. Thank you to the hard working special people who work in the area of activities. Your efforts and results of your inspiration are a credit to all of you. You give our residents a reason to smile and encourage them to maintain their quality of life."



If you are interested in participating in the show, contact Sr Tereza by email admin@csvcare.com. This year's show is recorded on CD format and is available to homes who wish to show it to their residents. Send an email to admin@csvcare.com for a copy to be posted to you.

Seminars and courses

Seminars

The series of one-day seminars to the industry aims to equip key personnel with the skills and knowledge that will improve quality of care for residents.

Four-day assessor courses

The internal assessor course aims to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge to conduct assessments of their own aged care facilities. This course is designed for staff working in the aged care industry who are seeking to develop their skills and knowledge in assessment and accreditation processes.

Organisation-direct training

We can deliver our one-day seminars and four-day assessor courses direct to your staff in your own facility. Our highly-trained facilitators will work with you to minimise disruption to normal operations.

"It was very accommodating of the Agency to do a course for the organisation."

"Very valuable, informative and specific to my current needs. I enjoyed the opportunity to network with my colleagues."

Visit our website www.accreditation.org.au or contact us on 1800 728 589.

	Seminars				Courses	
	Continuous improvement	Evidence-based practice	Achieving compliance with 1.8 Information systems	Managing risk to avoid non-compliance	Assessor course – four day	Assessment fundamentals (aged care) course – five days
NSW/ACT		9 February, Parramatta	4 February, Campbelltown 16 February, Coffs Harbour	18 February, St. Ives	8-11 February, Parramatta	
Qld			17 February, Southport	10 February, Townsville	22-25 February, Stones Corner	
VIC/TAS	5 February, Melbourne	2 February, Wodonga	25 February, Melbourne			8-12 February, Box Hill
SA/NT				24 February, Barossa	8-11 February, Glen Osmond	
WA			11 February, Busselton			15-19 February, Mt Claremont



Aged Care

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