

Southern Star



2023/24 Summer Edition

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Southern Cross Care⁺ (WA) Inc.

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Cover image: Success Primary School student and resident.

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A Note From the CEO



Welcome to our Summer 2023/24 edition of the Southern Star.

In this edition, we explore how we are enhancing palliative care through community partnerships, the social benefits of respite care and how we are shaping the future of aged care with our consumer-led care approach.

This issue also recognises excellence in our pastoral care services and how the Connect the 40% program is supporting our efforts to reduce isolation for residents in aged care, such as Stewart, who took to the skies in a helicopter thanks to generous public donations.

We delve into the benefits of intergenerational connections between aged care residents and children, and the incredible stories of community service from our Donovan Village residents. We shed light on mental health during Mental Health Week, and our commitment to resident wellbeing through our in-house allied health teams.

In the second half of the year, we were excited to launch several new programs and services, including our Transitional Care Program, aiding people to recover at home after a hospital stay. We also celebrated our oldest resident, who turned 107.

You can read more about our new initiatives and other inspiring stories from our residents and clients in the pages to come.

I wish you all a safe, joyful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Clare Grieveson
Chief Executive Officer
Southern Cross Care (WA) Inc.

Enhancing Palliative Care Through Partnerships



Chloe Fraser
Content and Marketing
Coordinator

Caring for and supporting our residents and their families through many stages of their life journey is something SCC (WA) is privileged to be part of. We believe everyone deserves companionship, especially in their final moments, so we have launched the No One Dies Alone (NODA) program in partnership with Edith Cowan University's School of Nursing and Midwifery (ECU). The program has been made possible thanks to funding from Aged Care Research and Industry Innovation Australia (ARIIA).

Sadly, up to 40% of aged care residents do not have regular visitors and are at risk of dying alone. Whilst aged care can provide the opportunity for carers and residents to form a connection over an extended period, holding the hands of someone who is in their final days is often not possible as our clinical teams and care staff have demanding jobs and a duty of care to all residents in the home.

"Often, when people are approaching the end-of-life, they might not have friends or family who are nearby or available to sit with them," Head of Pastoral Care Ian Simms said.

"Through the No One Dies Alone program, we want to provide that connection between spiritual and our physical palliative care services to ensure no one dies alone."

The NODA program will be facilitated by a part-time Program Coordinator and

a team of dedicated companions. Our volunteer companions will access training and support to guide them through any challenges they may face.

We understand that the end-of-life journey is deeply personal and emotional for individuals and their families, which is why we take a warm and compassionate approach to every aspect of palliative care.

Further strengthening our palliative care services, we recently received a funding grant from End-of-Life Directions for Aged Care (ELDAC) to further develop and strengthen linkages with service providers and networks.

ELDAC is a national specialist palliative care and advance care planning advisory service, which provides resources to equip care providers with skills and information to help older Australians receive high-quality end-of-life care.

ELDAC has engaged a team of facilitators to support our residential care homes at Germanus Kent House (Broome), Jeremiah Donovan House (Forrestfield) and Margaret Hubery House (Rossmoyne). The team will support our employees to assess, develop and implement sustainable improvements in palliative care and enhance the care we deliver to our residents.

To express your interest in becoming a NODA companion volunteer visit scrosswa.org.au/volunteering

A New and Exciting Direction for SCC (WA)

Over the last 18 months, SCC (WA) has embarked on a period of change, adopted new ways of working and strengthened our governance for future success.

We understand the environment in which we operate is constantly changing and so are the needs of our aging population. It's important we are ahead of those changes so we can continue to deliver the very best of care.

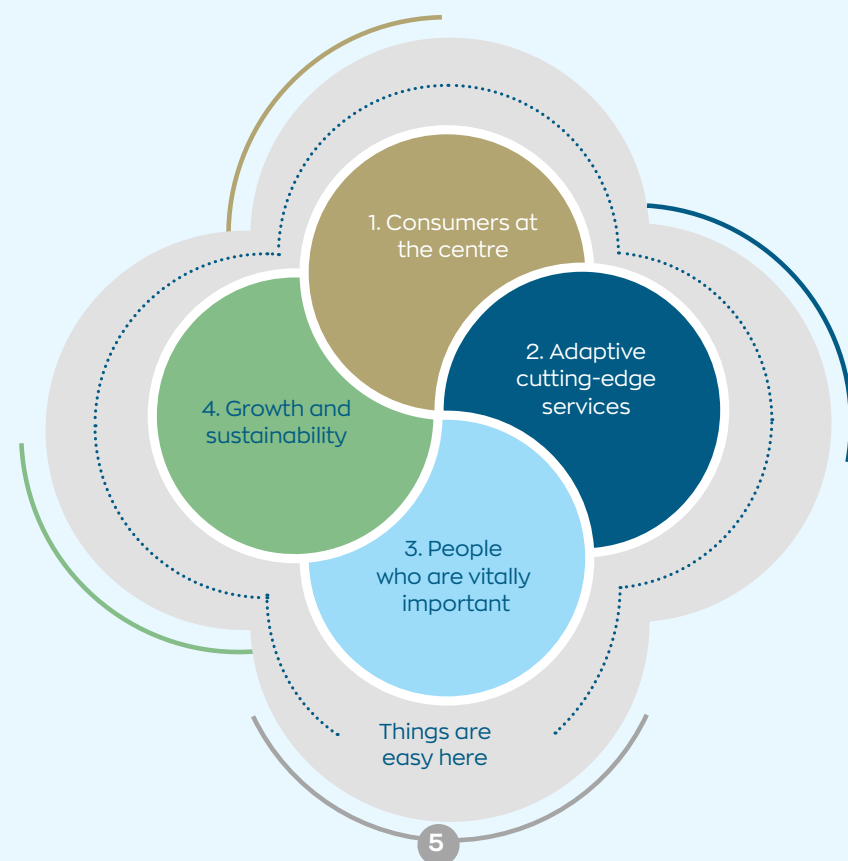
We have launched our new Strategic Plan 2023-27 to strengthen our core operations whilst seeking opportunities to grow, ensuring our long-term sustainability.

This strategy is the framework that will guide our future decisions and help us deliver on our purpose of helping people live extraordinary lives every day, connected to communities.

Our Strategic Plan places consumers at the centre, plans for the provision of adaptive and cutting-edge services, and recognises our people, who are vitally important. As we work towards growth and sustainability, we will also be focusing on an experience of ease for our employees and consumers.

Our future is focused on offering a living experience of ease and comfort by partnering with the people we care for to give them dignity and choice, creating places where we would want to live, growing to a sustainable level to continue to meet the needs of the elderly and vulnerable and creating a great culture where people want to work

It is our passion for our purpose and the promise we make to our clients, residents and each other that will help us deliver on this plan and be successful now and into the future.



Shaping the Future of Aged Care



Cathie Martin
Communications Manager

At SCC (WA), we continually strive to improve our services based on consumer needs and insights. Most recently we have engaged with our consumers to develop a new model of care to ensure our future developments and services are guided by care structures that recognise individuality and choice.

A group of 21 consumers living in retirement villages or receiving home care services attended our discussion group in August to share their ideas and opinions.

Participants in the session were asked to give their general views of aged care, with many perceiving it as institutionalised, with limited choices available. They found the system complex and difficult to navigate, commenting particularly on understanding the financial considerations when considering a care home. The focus group delved into the daily journey of people receiving aged care and the type of care people require as they transition from living independently with limited assistance to requiring full-time support.

Throughout the session, key design features were identified that could significantly enhance the quality of life for people in aged care. These design features have more of a domestic feel and are inspired by person-centred

and relationship-based care models supporting individuals' dignity and ability to age in place.

This feedback aligns with the findings of a recent dementia report and the final report from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, which suggests that a homely environment can positively impact residents' well-being and sense of belonging.

Following further consultation with the wider organisation, employees, residents and clients, the model of care and functional brief will be used to inform new builds and adapt our current homes to ensure our services remain highly adaptive to the needs of our current and future residents.



Recognising Excellence in Pastoral Care



Cathie Martin
Communications Manager



Our Head of Pastoral Care and Volunteer Services, Ian Simms, has been recognised with an Excellence in Pastoral Care Award at the 2023 Catholic Health Australia Conference.

Through Ian's leadership, our dedicated Pastoral Care Team supports residents and clients in reflecting on the journey of life so they can be empowered to make decisions that will enrich their lives. Ian trains his team to listen and share life sensitively and joyously through skilled companionship.

"A person's story is crucial to their sense of identity. If we can get to that story, we are tapping into the mainstream of who they are, how they see themselves and where they see themselves going," Ian said.

"It's important we connect with people at this stage of their life. We are not coming at it from a clinical perspective, we are tapping into their story, which is important for people to get a sense of what their whole life journey is about. It's so important if they are going to have a cohesiveness to the last stages of their life."

The Excellence in Pastoral Care Award honours individuals who contribute to the integrity and effectiveness of the Catholic Ministry of Health and Aged Care through their outstanding efforts to enhance pastoral care.

Ian's integrity, compassion and excellence has greatly improved the way we look after the emotional and spiritual needs of our residents and clients.

Ian and his team have been instrumental in implementing the Connect the 40% program, which has so far delivered 17 personalised gifts and experiences to residents at Joseph Cooke House and Villa Pelletier.



Scan QR code to view video.



"The program is a tangible way of reminding our residents that there are people who have thought about them enough to give them a gift," Ian said.

Read more about how the Connect the 40% program is lifting residents' spirits on page 20.

Planting Seeds of Joy

Bunnings Warehouse in Kalgoorlie has generously donated and planted a sensory garden for Victoria Park Nursing Home (VPNH) residents to enjoy.

The garden will have brightly coloured flowers, offering a range of scents and calming sounds from a water feature.

The aim was to create a peaceful area where all residents, particularly those with dementia, can relax, enjoy nature, and even help with the garden's upkeep.

VPNH Manager Cheryl Hahn said the garden would provide a special and soothing environment for residents, letting them reconnect with their past and the outside world.

"The garden will encourage connection through conversation amongst residents and provide them with the meaningful task of maintaining the garden," she said.

"The sensory experience that the garden will provide is also very important in improving residents' overall health and wellbeing."





A Crafty Christmas

The festive season brought a joyous spirit and creative flair to our aged care homes this December as residents and our teams united for our Crafty Christmas Competition.

The competition sees residents at each of our eight aged care homes hand-craft unique ornaments to decorate their homes. The activity brings more than just a festive spirit to our residents. It also helps keep their minds stimulated, encourages their creativity and reinforces a sense of community.

Residents at Villa Pelletier have been busy creating paper chains, cinnamon sticks with ribbons, and snowmen. Whilst over at Margaret Hubery House, sheets of newspaper have transformed into beautiful Christmas trees. At Southern Plus East Fremantle, residents have been making Christmas lanterns, Christmas door ornaments and Christmas wreaths out of coat hangers.

“Arts and craft activities like our Crafty Christmas competition create an opportunity for residents to express their creativity, stimulate their cognitive

abilities and share in the joyous spirit of Christmas,” General Manager of Wellbeing Services Annette Brown said.

“The festive season can often be a lonely and isolating time for aged care residents, but engaging in crafting activities brings them together and provides an experience that can evoke memories, laughter and comfort.”

Judging will wrap up by the middle of December, with prizes awarded for the best decorations that reflect resident engagement and involvement.

We look forward to sharing the prize winners with you soon.

New Transitional Program Aids Recovery at Home After a Hospital Stay

SCC (WA) has launched a new Transitional Care Program (TCP) to support older people return to the comfort of their homes after a hospital stay.

Derryle, 83, is one of our first TCP clients. After spending 40 days in hospital after a fall, she has finally been able to return home safely with support from our program.

Staying in her home for as long as possible is incredibly important to Derryle, as her late husband built the home she has lived in for nearly 70 years.

Through TCP, Derryle now receives daily personal care, physiotherapy sessions five days a week and clinical care twice a week.

“All the staff are very friendly and have helped me. I want to stay at home for as long as possible and they have been very good. I want to say thank you to them,” Derryle said.

The 12-week program gives people time to recover at home and improve or maintain

their independence after they leave the hospital. This includes people who do not have reliable help at home or those who need extra time and care to recover.

Our team of TCP healthcare professionals, including nurses, therapists, and home-based care workers, work alongside clients to help them regain as much autonomy as possible. We tailor each plan to be goal-oriented, focusing on their personal objectives and aspirations to maintain or enhance mobility.

To qualify for the program, clients will need a referral from a hospital social worker as well as an ACAT assessment. They also need to live in Fremantle, coastal or surrounding areas and are required to commence their program within four weeks of approval.

After finishing TCP, Derryle hopes she will feel confident enough to continue prioritising her wellbeing by visiting our Health and Wellness Centre at Southern Plus East Fremantle weekly.

Building Connections in Our Retirement Villages

Building community connections is important not just for clients and residents, but for our employees too. That's why members of our Executive Team have engaged in a year-long calendar of visits to our retirement villages, joining residents for morning tea and a chat. These visits are an integral part of our commitment to building a strong sense of connection and community within our villages.

This year, CEO Clare Grieveson, Chief Operating Officer for Residential Aged Care Janelle McFarlane and Chief Property Officer Ian Nichol have each attended morning teas held at Foley Village, Thomas Perrott Village and BF Prindiville Village. Clare also put her bowling skills to the test by participating in a resident bowls tournament at Margaret Hubery Village.

Each morning tea has presented an opportunity for members of our team to engage in rich, meaningful conversations with residents from diverse backgrounds who shared their feedback and perspectives on their living experiences within our villages.



"It's incredibly important for our executive team to visit our retirement village residents," Clare said.

"Every conversation we have with our residents helps us learn more about them and understand areas we can improve. But it isn't just about checking on the quality of services we provide. It's about sharing a cup of tea, lending an ear, and showing our residents they're not just a number but valued members of our community."

"These visits are one of the ways we ensure our residents feel valued, heard and supported."



Reducing Isolation Through Intergenerational Connections



Chloe Fraser
Content and Marketing
Coordinator

Intergenerational visits between children and aged care residents are not only heart-warming but have profound benefits for both the elderly and the young. The simple joy and laughter that children bring often diminishes feelings of loneliness, isolation or boredom in older people.

Each year, children from the Goldfields Child Care Centre visit Victoria Park Nursing Home and Hostel in Kalgoorlie to perform a concert and distribute gifts to the residents in celebration of International Day of the Older Person. While the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic put a temporary hold on visits, we were excited to welcome the children back to the home in September.

In the lead up, the children and their families worked together to collect donations of everyday essentials such as flannels, bars of soap, shampoos, conditioners, hand creams, tissues, toothpaste, and toothbrushes to gift to residents. Each resident received a gift bag, personally delivered by the children, with messages of love to brighten their day and remind them that they are remembered and cared for.

Goldfields Child Care Centre Educator and Event Organiser Maureen Nicholls said the partnership first began in 2004 and had continued for 19 years in honour of the Centre's founding member, Lorna Mitchell, who was a resident at the home until she sadly passed away nine years ago.

"I identified a need to engage children with the elderly, as many families here do not have their grandparents living close by or their elderly family members had passed away," she said. Victoria Park Nursing Home and Hostel Activities Assistant Sue Stewart said it was heartwarming to see the smiles on the residents' faces.

"They were very excited; they said every moment (of the visit) was absolutely delightful," Sue said.

"Through this partnership, the children are learning good morals and values, inclusion and acceptance of others, learning about respect and beginning to understand that kindness to others and doing for others is essential for the wellbeing of everyone."

The benefit of intergenerational visits for both children and elderly residents was evident in another recent project where students from Success Primary School joined forces with residents at Frank Prendergast House (FPH) for a community sewing project.

The students spent the term crafting soft toys based on designs drawn by FPH residents. The project concluded at the end of the term and the students presented their creations to the elderly residents during an afternoon tea at the home.



The project was established to further develop student's empathy and strengthen intergenerational connections. With up to 40% of residents in residential aged care homes not receiving regular visits, this project was also a wonderful example of how community members of all ages can help combat loneliness and isolation in the elderly population.

FPH Lifestyle Coordinator Vanessa Parker said she saw a noticeable difference in residents during the student's visit.

"Some residents who are quite withdrawn or at risk of isolation, came out and engaged with the students the whole time they were here," she said.

"I definitely saw a big difference (in their overall mood)."

The positive impact of connecting different generations has been further demonstrated at our homes with students from Trinity College visiting our residents at Villa Pelletier. During their visits, the students connect with residents by playing board games, going on walks, and engaging in meaningful conversations. Each activity acts as a bridge, connecting two generations and facilitating the sharing of experiences, stories, and life lessons.

If you are a school teacher, student or individual wanting to reduce social isolation in our elderly residents, you can register to become a volunteer at scrosswa.org.au/volunteering.



Scan QR code to
view Success Primary
School video

Driven by Passion: Donovan Village Resident's Life of Community Service



Chloe Fraser
Content and Marketing
Coordinator

Donovan Village resident and volunteer John van Bockxmeer has lived a life of resilience, passion and selfless service.

Born in Holland in 1936, he ventured into an apprenticeship as a bootmaker before immigrating to Australia with his parents and five siblings in 1956. Unable to find work in his trade, John instead began work in a wool store in Coogee before becoming the manager of a cleaning company. His entrepreneurial spirit eventually led him to establish his own cleaning business, which he managed successfully until his retirement.

In 1961, John proudly became an Australian citizen. Over the years, he has shown a remarkable commitment to the community, becoming an active member of the Order of the Knights of the Southern Cross in 1977 and contributing to the Morley Branch for over 40 years.

John's love for motorcycles, a passion ignited back in Holland, has remained a constant throughout his life. As a life member of the Motorcycles Racing Club of WA (MCRCWA), he served as the club's vice patron from 1979-1988 and patron from 1991-1995 and travelled extensively to support its events and members. It was at MCRCWA that he met his wife Jenny, a fellow motorcyclist. Together, they have been enjoying life at Donovan Village for nearly two decades.

In addition to his love for motorcycling, John has consistently demonstrated his commitment to helping others by volunteering as a marshal and scrutineer

for MCRCWA and as a bus driver for Southern Cross Care (WA), where he has been driving residents to their shopping trips and excursions for over 15 years.

In 2019, John was recognised for his remarkable contribution with a service award at the organisation's annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast. His wife Jenny also celebrated a decade of volunteering with the organisation running Bingo and other activities for residents at Jeremiah Donovan House.

"I miss bus driving, but I guess everyone has to retire one day," John said.

"We used to take a lot of people from the aged care home for picnics and out on trips. I loved spending time with the residents and still try to visit a few of them who I know quite well."



Shining a Light on Mental Health

With the theme 'Mind. Body. Environment,' Mental Health Week 2023 emphasised the significant role holistic recovery methods and supportive environments play in improving overall wellbeing.

At SCC (WA), we are dedicated to this holistic approach, aiming to not only help individuals achieve their recovery goals but also strive to create supportive environments through our residential mental health recovery program and community support services.

Peter, who has been a resident at Community Options in Bentley since July, said his team of Recovery Partners have supported him to reach his goals by helping him to be more independent and find meaningful employment opportunities.

"My goals have been around medication compliance, finding employment and managing my diabetes, which they have helped me with," he said.

"They have also taken me to Homes West to help me enrol for housing and I'm now self-medicating, so it's great to be more independent.

"I really don't have big goals, but these goals will give me independence, which will make me feel content."

Mental Health and Disability Manager Shivani Lala said supporting clients to achieve their goals, no matter how big or small, not only boosts their self-confidence but also empowers them on their path towards independent living in the community.

During Mental Health Week, SCC (WA) hosted two events: an Open Day at our Community Options home in Mt Claremont and a Client Community Expo at Centenary Community Centre in Belmont.

The Open Day was an opportunity for the community to learn more about our services, highlighting the inspiring work done by our staff and clients in their journey towards recovery. Later in the week, our clients hosted a Community Expo with art and craft stalls, interactive wellness activities, games and a sausage sizzle.

These events are an important part of our ongoing commitment to support the mental wellbeing of individuals and their families in our community.

Improving Resident Wellbeing With In-House Allied Health Teams



Chloe Fraser
Content and Marketing
Coordinator

SCC (WA) is improving the quality of life and continuity of care for our aged care home residents with the introduction of in-house allied health teams.

The transition from contractors to an in-house team of Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists (OT) marks a significant shift towards ensuring consistent care for our residents.

“Having an in-house allied health team supports a real understanding of individual residents, who they are, what’s important to them, how they like to spend their time and how we might be able to facilitate that,” General Manager Wellbeing Services Annette Brown said.

Physiotherapists in the team are committed to promoting resident independence and comfort, whether that involves providing equipment for outdoor activities or finding ways to reduce physical discomfort.

Occupational Therapists (OTs) take a broader view. They help residents maintain their psychosocial wellbeing by engaging them in a variety of activities that cater to their individual social, physical, cognitive, sensory and spiritual needs. These activities range from concerts, exercise groups, and gardening, to personalised programs for those who prefer privacy.



Senior Occupational Therapist Delbar joined the team at Frank Prendergast House (FPH) earlier this year. Despite the numerous tasks she undertakes, Delbar believes that enhancing the psychosocial wellbeing of residents is the most important aspect of her role.

“When residents first enter residential aged care, it can be a daunting experience. So as an OT, I do my very best to help them settle in,” she said.

“Among other things, I provide advice around seating and pressure care, which has a positive impact on their wellbeing and insight into any unmet needs of a resident that could be contributing to their low mood or agitation.



“I have the privilege of learning about someone’s life, their story, and supporting them, advocating for them, and providing comfort in the last years of their life.”

The Allied Health Team at SCC (WA) also collaborate closely with care staff to design personalised care plans for each resident.

“The multidisciplinary team approach is particularly important for our residents who are living with dementia. Being able to really understand them as an individual helps us to better identify what helps them have a good day,” Annette said.

The team are also focused on creating engaging and inviting environments to support psychosocial wellbeing. At Southern Plus East Fremantle, we have recently installed an open shelving

unit filled with interactive materials, creating a myriad of engagement options for residents living with dementia.

While traditional discussions can sometimes pose challenges for residents with dementia and their families, these activities can provide a soothing, inclusive alternative.

Further enhancing the atmosphere, Southern Plus East Fremantle has introduced a sunflower mural at the wing’s entrance and interspersed indoor plants throughout the home, creating an uplifting environment that positively affects residents’ moods.

“From this combined focus on the individual as well as the environment they’re in, we are already seeing positive outcomes for our residents and we are keen to build on this as a team in the coming year,” Annette said.

Personalised Support Transforming Lives of Caregivers



Chloe Fraser
Content and Marketing
Coordinator



Caring for a loved one living with mental illness is a challenging and often demanding responsibility, as Lorraine, a mother and a caregiver to her son with schizophrenia, has bravely shared.

Losing her husband to a heart attack following a traumatic event with their son, Lorraine has found herself navigating the caregiving role alone. Although she has support from her daughter, the fear of being a burden has prevented Lorraine from leaning on her further. However, Lorraine said her life has taken a turn for the better with the support of SCC (WA)'s Family and Carer Support Program.

Lorraine said the one-on-one support she receives from Family and Carer Recovery Partner Treacy has been crucial to her wellbeing, giving her the psychological support and coping strategies she needed.

"I think when you're on your own, you're trying to cope as best you can, but you don't know if you're doing the right thing. So, it's good to have a sounding board," Lorraine said.

"Treacy and I work together on setting goals, and they seem to be working well. My whole attitude to life is much better having Treacy around."

While Lorraine had previously participated in a support group, she found one-on-one support far more beneficial.

"I didn't feel comfortable talking about my problems there. But with Treacy, it is a lot easier," she said.

"I am sleeping a lot better now I've got Treacy because I know that she comes on Wednesday and if I've got a problem, I know that she will help me through it."

Having faced her own caring challenges, Treacy said caring for a loved one with mental health challenges was a role filled with dedication and love but could often lead to a life of isolation, financial stress, and mistreatment.

Treacy visits her clients weekly, aiming to empower them through their recovery journeys. She provides a variety of

supports from learning mindfulness techniques for stress management to setting exercise goals or providing guidance on potential funding services, such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Importantly, the program also focuses on helping clients to find joy beyond their caring role.

"Caring for a loved one with mental illness can be all-consuming, with carers often losing sight of the things that bring joy to their lives. So, exploring hobbies, such as creativity-based activities, or finding a purpose beyond the caring role is really important."

Referrals for the program can come via mental health clinics or community organisations, with self-referrals and word-of-mouth recommendations also welcomed.

Small Gestures Making a Big Impact

Transitioning to aged care can be challenging, so understanding residents' individual needs and establishing meaningful connections is crucial in ensuring residents feel settled and at home.

In conversations with the therapy team, Jeremiah Donovan House (JDH) resident Edna had previously shared her old recipe book with her favourite dish, Lemon Delicious.

One day, she was feeling particularly homesick, so our team at JDH decided to surprise her by cooking it for her.

"When we presented her with the dish, she was so happy. She called us her angels and said how special we had made her feel," Therapy Assistant Swamini Dandekar said.

Edna reflected warmly on the team's efforts, highlighting how these seemingly small gestures greatly enhance her experience at the home.

"It was a time when I was feeling a little crook, and that little gesture really brightened my day," she said.



An Uplifting Journey for Villa Pelletier Resident



Chloe Fraser
Content and Marketing
Coordinator



Former Villa Pelletier resident and helicopter engineer Stewart recently had the chance to relive his past, taking to the skies on his first helicopter ride in over 10 years.

Before his retirement, Stewart, 71, spent much of his career maintaining and repairing helicopters, a job that often granted him the thrill of soaring through the skies. He spent time working in Karratha, Broome and Germany and has travelled to many places around the world with his father, a colonel in the British Army Air Corp.

After retirement, Stewart longed to experience the feeling of flying once again, something he often shared with our Pastoral Care Team.

With help from gift-giving platform Connect the 40% and an incredibly generous public donor, we were able to make Stewart's dream come true. SCC (WA) is the first provider in WA to have partnered with the platform, which allows members of the public to donate personalised gifts and experiences to residents in aged care homes to remind them they are thought of.

In October, Stewart was overcome with excitement as he took off from Jandakot Airport and travelled along the coast from Fremantle to City Beach.

Stewart said the experience transported him back to his days as an engineer, reviving old memories and igniting a spark he hadn't felt in a while.

"I've always loved helicopters; they have always been my fascination. Once I came down from Karratha, I thought I'd never see a helicopter again never mind go up in one," Stewart said.

"When he started taking off, I just felt so elated. It was so wonderful to be back up in a helicopter again. I was looking everywhere at once."

"I want to thank (the donor) from the bottom of my heart."



Scan QR code to
view Connect 40%
Helicopter video.

Written in loving memory of Stewart, who has sadly passed away since writing this article. Our thoughts are with his family and friends, and they have given permission for his story to be published.

Five Helpful Tips for Managing Arthritis



Mary-Ann Monteath
Physiotherapist and Health and
Wellness Centre Manager

Arthritis is a leading cause of pain and dysfunction worldwide. Living with arthritis can present unique challenges, but it's entirely possible to lead a fulfilling and active life with the right management strategies. Here are some essential tips to help you manage and relieve arthritis symptoms.

1. Understand your condition

Knowledge is power, particularly when it comes to managing a health condition like arthritis. Familiarise yourself with the specifics of your arthritis type, its symptoms and the potential impacts on your lifestyle. The more you understand, the better equipped you'll be to manage your condition effectively.

2. Stay active

Regular exercise is a crucial part of arthritis treatment. It not only strengthens the supporting muscles around your joints but also enhances your flexibility and endurance. Work with a physical therapist or specialist to establish a safe and beneficial exercise routine.

3. Embrace lifestyle changes

Optimising your health often requires a holistic approach. Consider necessary lifestyle and behaviour such as a balanced diet, maintaining a healthy weight, quitting smoking, and reducing alcohol intake. These changes can significantly help in alleviating arthritis symptoms.

4. Know your limits

While regular physical activity is vital, it's equally important to respect your body's need for rest. Learn to pace yourself: engage in activities when your energy levels are high and allow yourself periods of rest to recuperate.

5. Learn pain management techniques

Pain is an inevitable aspect of arthritis, but there are numerous strategies to manage it. Techniques might range from medications and physical therapy to relaxation techniques and alternative therapies. Work with your healthcare team to find the most suitable methods for you.

Southern Plus Health and Wellness Centre can help you manage your arthritis. We have a team of dedicated allied health professionals, including Physiotherapists, Exercise Physiologists and Occupational Therapists, who can provide comprehensive assessments, individualised exercise programs, hydrotherapy and education. Our centre is fully equipped with a gym and hydrotherapy pool facilities and is located at 15 Wolseley Road, East Fremantle (free parking available in the lower cark).

For more information visit our website
[scrosswa.org.au/our-services/
health-wellness/](https://scrosswa.org.au/our-services/health-wellness/)



Emotional Support at Home



Ian Simms
Head of Pastoral Care
& Volunteer Services

Mary* sits at the kitchen table, holding a warm cup of tea in her arthritic hands. Her dog keeps a loose eye on her, ready to be a food taster whenever called upon to assist. There is not much else going on in the house. Mary's memories of her husband, Bob, are all that keep her company. He passed away a year ago to the day and there's hardly a day that goes by without Mary thinking about him.

Mary's situation is not uncommon. As we age, the chances increase that partners pass away, kids move out and friends just seem harder to find. Our basic needs might be met by various services supplied by our home care provider, but there is still so much that we feel we need to square away or come to terms with.

For Southern Plus home care clients, there is a unique service called Pastoral Care that is available free of charge. Our Community Pastoral Carers spend time with clients, sharing stories and memories. They offer emotional and spiritual support for those times when life needs a little adjusting. For those facing a health challenge, a loss, or are worried about something more private, our Community Pastoral Carers are available to call for support.



Pastoral Care is not religious care or therapy. Though it is sensitive to people's religious persuasions, it does not represent any religious group. It is about having conversations with someone who likes to listen and support. And it's our way of saying that our people are not alone with their challenges and memories.

If you would like someone from Pastoral Care to call on you, please let your Wellness Partner, Support Worker or Village Manager know, and it can be arranged for you.

** Name changed to protect her identity.*

Our Oldest Resident Turns 107



Born in 1916, Southern Plus East Fremantle resident Lillian is our oldest resident at Southern Cross Care (WA). On 7 August, she celebrated her 107th birthday.

Lillian grew up in England and immigrated to Melbourne with her husband in the early 1950s before relocating to Perth in the 1980s.

Lillian lived independently until recent years, when she moved into residential aged care at Southern Plus East Fremantle (SPEF) in June 2022. She has one daughter, one granddaughter and two great grandchildren, who she adores.

Her granddaughter Sarah said her grandmother would often share many stories about her move to Australia, describing her many adventures in great detail.

"The first time they immigrated to Australia, they came over by ship," Sarah said.

"They moved back to England for a while and then eventually settled in Australia. So, when they decided to come back the second time, they came by plane.

"Up until not that long ago, she could still describe the interior of that aircraft, even down to the blue seats."

Sarah said Lillian was always in good spirits despite developing difficulties with her hearing and memory in recent years.

"She's always been very stoic and dependable, and she's helped out with the family a lot. She's great," Sarah said.

SPEF Lifestyle Coordinator Kayne said despite her age, Lillian is still an active member of the home and is always an enthusiastic participant in daily activities and events.

"Lillian particularly likes to go to our pamper afternoons and have her nails painted and she also enjoys the exercise group," Kayne said.

"She is one of our residents who will come along and take part in pretty much all of the activities."

Kayne said Lillian's presence never fails to light up a room.

"I have a large armchair in front of my office that Lillian sits in every day," he said.

"It's nice to see her when I look over the top of my computer screens. She always looks at me and smiles. If I'm having a bad day her little smile always makes me feel better."

Supporting You to Stay at Home

Do you want to continue to live independently in your own home but find you need a little extra help to do so?

For some, in-home support might mean help with everyday activities, but for others, it may involve a higher level of care. We will tailor an approach in partnership with you, to support you to continue living well at home.

Southern Plus is an accredited provider offering a range of support services through Government-funded care via Home Care Packages (HCP), the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP), Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC) and the Transitional Care Program (TCP).

We offer home care to people living in the Perth metropolitan area as well as regional areas, including Broome and the Southwest.

Our Clinical Team, Allied Health Team and Support Workers can help you with everyday activities, including*:



Clinical Care



Shopping



Medication Management



Domestic Assistance



Personal Care



Allied Health Support



Specialised Aids and Equipment



Meals and Nutrition



Social Support and Companionship



Respite Care



Dementia Care

* Dependent on eligibility for Government-subsidised aged care services.



To contact our Home Care teams email homecare@scrosswa.org.au or to speak with one of our client engagement officers call 1300 669 189 and follow the prompts.

If you are a **current client** and need to speak to the Scheduling Team about your services or to **change your booking**:

Please call 1300 669 189 during business office hours (7am – 4.30pm weekdays)

Select Option 1 – Home Care



Select Option 1 – Scheduling

For queries about your **home care statement** or **invoices**:

Please call the Accounts Team on 1300 669 189 during business office hours (8.30am – 5pm weekdays)

Select Option 1 – Home Care



Select Option 2 – Accounts

For **general home care queries**, you can speak to our Client Engagement Team during business office hours (8.30am – 5pm weekdays) by calling 1300 669 189.

Select Option 1 – Home Care



Select Option 3 – Client Engagement Team

For weekends, public holidays and after-hours services, call 1300 669 189 and select **Option 1 – Home Care**.



“Southern Plus helps me with domestic services on Thursdays, such as vacuuming, washing the floors and doing the bathroom. If I do too much housework or bending over it really hurts quite a bit, so Southern Plus has been a blessing in so many ways. I feel very thankful and very lucky for the help.”

- Home Care client Portia

The Social Impact of Respite Care



With an aging population and people choosing to stay at home for longer, respite care is becoming increasingly important in providing support and engagement opportunities for our aging community.

Our two respite centres in Forrestfield and Hilton continue to be invaluable for many local families, offering a warm and inviting environment where older people can socialise and take part in activities that greatly improve their quality of life. They also give caregivers a chance to take a much-needed break and make sure they look after their own health too.

Renato, whose mother Smiljana attends Donovan Respite Centre in Forrestfield, shared his happiness and relief in seeing his mother return home every day full of joy.

"I really wanted Mum to get out socially and interact more because she's always at home with me."

"She's usually a quiet person and is quite introverted, but she has opened up a lot since going there."

Renato praised the team at Donovan Respite for creating an environment that is community-centered and full of laughter.

"Everyone there has been great; they make her laugh, and it doesn't feel overly clinical. It's more like a community centre.

They play bingo, do their little exercises, have meals, and do puzzles and stuff like that. Mum comes home at the end of the day happy, which makes me happy."

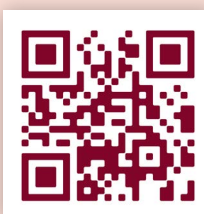
Renato said caregiving can be a stressful full-time role, and respite centres provide the necessary relief to help them recharge.

"Mum has balance problems so, whenever she moves, I'm always alert. When she's at respite that part just disappears, and I can go and do my thing and not be on edge all the time," he said.

"If you're a carer and haven't considered respite, you've got to do it to give yourself that break to recharge. If you don't look after yourself, you can't look after others."

Donovan Respite Centre caters for up to 20 clients daily, operating from 9am to 3pm on weekdays. The centre offers pick up and drop off transfers to and from the centre within a 5km radius.

For more information, visit scrosswa.org.au/respite



Scan QR code to view Smiljana's video.

A Prosperous Year for Retirement Villages



Adam Green
Licensee & Sales Manager

How quickly time flies when you are having fun. It feels like only last week we were unpacking all the Winter clothes and hunkering down for the season. Now, here we are enjoying Summer and all the social aspects it has to offer.

Over the Winter period, we welcomed a number of new residents into our villages, which has been exciting both for the resident starting their new journey and the village themselves, with new people to get to know. From 1 July 2023 to the time of writing, we have welcomed 25 new residents across our villages, with more selling their homes or waiting to settle.

In terms of numbers and what this means from a sales perspective, the benchmark has traditionally been 12-14% of the village being vacant at any one time, either on the market or being refurbished for the market. At the time of writing, we had under 1% of our villas available for purchase and a total of less than 4% vacant, including those currently being refurbished. This is an exciting time for the villages and the residents, as full villages mean there is a lot of activity, lots of new faces, and most importantly, new friends to connect with.

We are now navigating waitlists for all our villages and trying to assist people to get the timing right with the sale of their home when the availability of a

home in their village of choice becomes available. This can be challenging when there is a low stock level and potential residents are waiting for their new forever home.

The Sales Team is working hard to match our client's expectations with our ability to deliver in the shortest possible time and the Admin Team are doing a great job ensuring the incoming and outgoing experience for our residents is as smooth and stress-free as possible. Full villages mean Village Managers are busier than ever, working with our new residents as they find their feet, along with the multitude of removal trucks coming into the villages. The Marketing Team is working hard to keep the villages in the public eye so we can maintain the waitlist and continue to grow. Thank you to all residents who have been involved in photo and video shoots, and we look forward to being able to continue to show off our wonderful villages to West Australia.

2023 looks as though it will finish in the same incredible way it started, full of demand and prosperity. We will continue to assist people to find their dream homes and assist families to close the chapter as they go on their next journey.

On behalf of the Sales Team, we would like to wish you a Happy and Safe Festive period and hope you have an opportunity to connect with your family and community during this wonderful time of year.



**Southern
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Southern Plus⁺

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