

AGED CARE TODAY

Australia's aged care sector magazine
Autumn 2025 | ageingaustralia.asn.au

Ageing
Australia
launches

The 2025 federal
election – help
keep aged care
on the agenda

Small house
models lead
the way

CULTURALLY
APPROPRIATE
CARE FOR FIRST
NATIONS PEOPLE

Pets in
aged
care

How to
prepare for
home care
reform

The official magazine of



Ageing
Australia

health
generation

QUALITY
INDICATORS



QFR, NQIP, SIRS, Complaints,
Incidents, Accreditation, Surveys,
Food & Nutrition

Financial Acuity

High Quality Care

AssureTrend

Safe & Effective Service Delivery

FUNDING



AN-ACC

STAFF
CAPABILITY



Care Minutes

Discover Health Generation's AssureTrend: Confidence in trend prediction

Comprehensive Solutions for Funding, Staffing, and Quality Care

By focusing on these three areas and their interconnections, Health Generation offers unparalleled expertise in navigating the complexities of aged care funding, staffing capability to support ratios, and quality indicators.

Develop trust in your trending forecasts with AssureTrend

team@healthgen.io | 1300 909 913

From Audits to Continuous Improvement: A Smarter Approach to High Quality Care

Since the introduction of the current Standards in 2019, Health Generation has partnered with more than 268 organisations, supporting them in navigating compliance, workforce challenges, and quality assurance.

Now, in preparation for the introduction of the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards, providers must move beyond audits as a regulatory requirement and embed continuous improvement as the foundation for high quality care.

Health Generation offers confidence in trend prediction, underpinning proactive assurance and continuous improvement initiatives

Our tailored solutions help providers with:



Partner with Health Generation to embed assurance and conformance as the foundation for high quality care and lasting excellence.

Partner with
Health Generation

Our specialist experts are on hand to support your aged care facility today

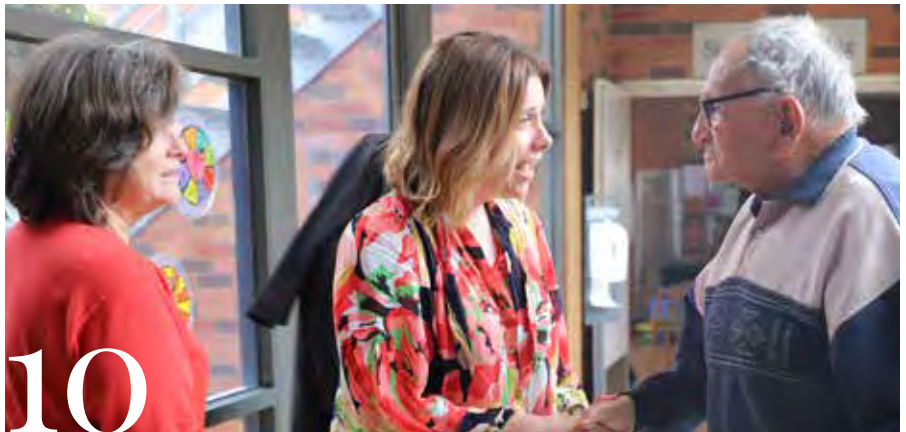


Contact us for Clinical, Funding & Quality Indicator support

team@healthgen.io | 1300 909 913



Contents

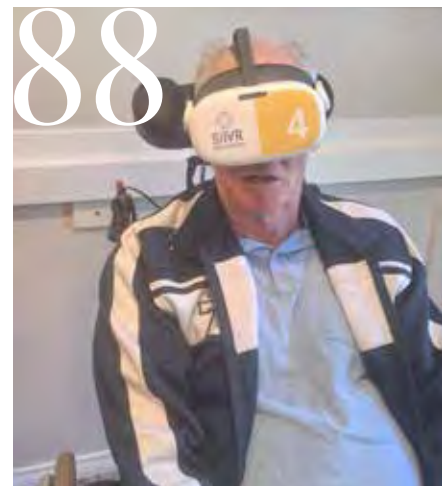


10

Opinion	
The next chapter for Ageing Australia	8
Reform is a marathon not a sprint	9
Government delivering on reform	10
A momentous year for aged care in Australia	12
Transforming aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	14
National Update	
Three budget priority areas	16
2025 federal election	18
Equip your board with confidence	20
Transforming the sector through innovation	22
Caring with old school values	24
Health & Wellbeing	
Southern Cross Care Tasmania leading on taste	26
A place you go to live	28
Innovative approaches to combat pressure injuries	30
Thicker is not always safer	32
Hearing loss a hidden epidemic	34
Culture & Diversity	
Help shape a pet-friendly future for aged care	36
Embedding sustainability into aged care	39
Advocates stand ready to help navigate reform	40
Spirituality, good health and wellbeing are intertwined	41
New cookbook celebrates memories	42
Residents recreate iconic moments	44
Culture of compassion at Carinity	46



26



88

Workforce & Training	
Three key workforce challenges for 2025	48
The impact of nurse-physio collaboration	50
Evidence-based protection against burnout	52
The right staff for culturally appropriate dementia care	53
How to improve staff retention	54
Training to deliver quality food and nutrition	56
When roster gaps aren't shortages	58
Governance & Finance	
Your guide to transitioning to the Support at Home program	60
Home care reform in 2025	62
Home care pricing adjustments	64
Would you like predictive analytics with that?	66
Thriving amid the pressure of unannounced audits	68
Fair Work Commission makes decision on wage increases and classification structure for aged care nurses	70
Infinite Care levelling up their financial systems	72
What you need to know about care minute changes	74
Innovation & Technology	
Why modern technology is no longer optional	76
Unpacking the value of clinical information systems	78
A proactive approach to risk and quality	80
Why providers must validate technology before committing for better outcomes in aged care	82
Government urged to supercharge technology funding for home care revolution	84
Groundbreaking project to improve care delivery	86
Transforming care with virtual reality	88
Smarter solutions for better care	90
Digital transformation in aged care	92
Enhancing aged care efficiency and quality through technology	93
Innovation reducing the physical impact of care work	94
Built Environment & Design	
2025 is the year of smarter solar	96
ACH Group's newest residential home empowering residents and staff	98
Learning from the household model	100
Stage 2 Burradoo expands award-winning aged care	102
The importance of a dementia enabling environment	104
Navigating changes in fire safety regulation	106





Editor's letter

Welcome to our autumn 2025 issue of *Aged Care Today* – the first issue under our new name, Ageing Australia. We've taken this opportunity to redesign the look of

our magazine, and I'd personally like to extend my gratitude to our in-house graphic designer Stephen Schwarz for his brilliant design skills, elevating *Aged Care Today* as a fitting tribute to the outstanding work that occurs in the sector every day.

With negative stories still circulating in the media about the care received by older people, we know the vast majority of care recipients are loved and respected by their wonderful carers – the aged care staff we entrust to look after our parents, grandparents and great grandparents in their twilight years. This magazine highlights the outstanding contributions of the many aged care providers and staff members who go the extra mile.

There are innovators, trailblazers and thought leaders who are changing the face of this sector, one brilliant idea at a time. But it isn't just a concept or a fresh perspective that will get us there, it's about collaboration and commitment to implement new techniques, technologies and models of care. Not to mention the effort required on new builds and refurbishments – from small house models to more intimate dining spaces – paving the way for a better way of living for our older people.

Through the stories we publish, we aim to celebrate these achievements, showcasing the fantastic work being done across Australia, and what best-practice looks like in various settings. In particular, we're delighted to highlight the work of our Ageing

Australia members – who comprise the vast majority of aged care providers across residential care, home care, seniors housing and retirement living.

Across the sector, providers are grappling with new regulations and shifting expectations, having to juggle excellent care within tight budgets and competing demands. This is why we invite meaningful and insightful contributions from the people who are supporting and guiding providers to innovate their operations and become sustainable – to share their expert opinion and sound insights with you, and give you a helping hand.

In this, the first issue of our new-look *Aged Care Today*, we're delighted to publish stories from recently appointed Ageing Australia independent chair Michael (Mick) Reid AM, as well as Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells MP who once again has been busy visiting aged care homes. The new commissioner of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Liz Hefren-Webb writes her first piece for our magazine, while Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner Andrea Kelly discusses the milestone report, Transforming Aged Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In everything we publish, we consider you, the reader. We reflect on the aged care provider experience, the issues affecting you today and how we can support you. If one idea sparks your interest and propels you to greatness, then our job is done. And if you have any feedback on what you have read, or a story lead about a fabulous initiative you know about (or maybe something you're doing), or a suggestion for content you'd like to read about, please email me at editor@ageingaustralia.asn.au

Linda

Linda Baracioli, Editor



On the cover: Lifeview Argyle Court resident Karen Meyer and her dog Pip. Find out how to help create a pet-friendly future in aged care on page 38.

Ageing Australia writers

A big thank you to our Ageing Australia writers and contributors for sharing your knowledge and expertise: Julie Anderson, Cathy Keane, Haley Kelleher, Anne Liddell, Jacqueline Nash, Jay Moran, Peter O'Dempsey, Tegan Roberts, Omeed Shahriari, Roald Versteeg and Sharon Wilkinson.

Editor: Linda Baracioli

T: 1300 222 721

e: editor@ageingaustralia.asn.au

Subeditor: Abderazzaq Noor

Designer: Stephen Schwarz

Advertising: Megan Leddin, Beth Watson

T: 1300 222 721

e: agedcareday@ageingaustralia.asn.au

Publisher: Ageing Australia

CEO: Tom Symondson

GM Marketing and Communications: Abderazzaq Noor

Level 2, 176 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne VIC 3002

Disclaimer

Aged Care Today is the regular publication of Ageing Australia. Unsolicited contributions are welcome but Ageing Australia reserves the right to edit, abridge, alter or reject material. Opinions expressed in *Aged Care Today* are not necessarily those of Ageing Australia and no responsibility is accepted by Ageing Australia for statements of fact or opinions expressed in signed contributions. *Aged Care Today* may be copied in whole or distributed among an organisation's staff. No part of *Aged Care Today* may be reproduced in any other form without written permission from the article's author.

There is no easier way to nip a complaint in the bud than by simply resolving it.



Free aged care information sessions

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) offers free, face-to-face education and information sessions for aged care staff and residents.

- sessions are tailored for providers' specific needs
- topics cover rights, responsibilities and advocacy in aged care
- sessions on how to identify and respond to abuse
- they are delivered in aged care homes by OPAN's national teams of aged care advocates.

Benefits:

- enables providers to listen to their residents
- issues can be resolved before they become complaints
- enables providers to uphold their legal obligations under the Charter of Aged Care Rights and Aged Care Quality Standards
- enables aged care residents to provide valuable feedback.

Book your session today

Call 1800 700 600
or scan the QR
code for our
booking form.



The next chapter for Ageing Australia

Policy principles and funding strategies key areas of focus



I am honoured to lead the Ageing Australia Board over the next three years as the aged care sector enters a transformative period. Since beginning my role in November 2024, I have been privileged to build on the outstanding work of my predecessor, Dr. Graeme Blackman AO, and to continue working with the highly skilled governing body that has greatly contributed to the aged care sector in Australia.

Our Board is committed to reflecting the diverse needs of our membership, representing both large and small operators across residential and home care, seniors housing and retirement living. By understanding the varying experiences and challenges our members face, we are better positioned to foster innovation and improve the quality of care.

Looking ahead to 2025, we are poised for significant reforms, including the new Aged Care Act and the launch of the Support at Home Program. While advocacy remains a key part of our role, our focus will broaden to include policy analysis and strategic debate that will shape the future of aged care.

Previously, our attention was directed toward securing adequate funding and workforce capacity to ensure high-quality person-centred care. We have made great strides in these areas, with significant contributions arising from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, but our efforts will continue.

Now, as we look to the future, we must also focus on broader policy principles and funding strategies that will guide our sector for the next decade and beyond.

As the complexity of care increases, especially with more frail individuals accessing residential aged care, we will focus on the interface between aged care and health sectors.

This is a critical area, as it is essential to create seamless care pathways between hospitals and residential aged care services while navigating the interactions between state and federal funding. Our goal will be to ensure that individuals with complex needs, particularly those with cognitive decline, receive the best care possible.

Another area of interest is the expanding role of independent care services in supporting older Australians who wish to remain living at home. We will continue to explore how to provide equitable access to support, ensuring that older people maintain their dignity, contribute to their families and remain active in their communities.

We can also learn from international approaches to elder care, bringing valuable insights into the Australian context. We will bring this

strategic objective to life for our members through a range of international partnerships with organisations such as Ageing Asia. Additionally, we recognise the need to better support Indigenous Australians in their care needs and will work to address these important challenges.

The Board values your perspectives on these key policy and strategy areas. As reforms continue, we will remain adaptable in supporting our members and maintaining their trust. A strong working relationship with stakeholders will be crucial in fostering informed discussions about the future of aged care. Our Board is committed to supporting the Ageing Australia team as we work together toward a shared vision.

I am excited to represent Ageing Australia, a respected peak body, and to help it continue to grow and make a lasting difference in the lives of all Australians. ■

“Now, as we look to the future, we must also focus on broader policy principles and funding strategies that will guide our sector for the next decade and beyond.”

Michael (Mick) Reid AM
Independent Chair, Ageing Australia
ageingaustralia.asn.au

Reform is a marathon not a sprint

Ageing Australia will remain at the advocacy table



If 2024 was anything to go by, we would all agree that aged care reform has come a long way in a very short time. But the road that lays ahead of us will be just as challenging – and it will once again demand strong leadership, resilience and a commitment to meaningful change. While we should always look ahead towards our shared goal, we mustn't forget the huge achievements we've made so far.

Securing bipartisan support for a new rights-based Aged Care Act, alongside critical financial reforms such as consumer co-contributions, marked a real turning point for aged care in Australia. These changes will shape the future of care for generations to come. But it was never a given. In fact, there were times when it felt like it might not happen at all.

The team at Ageing Australia was deeply engaged in this process from start to finish.

While we may not have been making headlines every day, we were, and are, consistently at the table – building trust, shaping reforms and advocating for practical, sustainable change. And with the myriad challenges of implementing the new legislation now looming large, particularly for our home and community care members, that couldn't be more important. Our engagement spanned the political spectrum, bringing together parliamentarians, the Department of Health and Aged Care, and the public to ensure the sector's voice – and the case for critical change – was heard.

Negotiations were not always smooth sailing. At times, we faced deadlocks, and with a federal election on the horizon, the risk of aged care becoming a political football loomed large. If bipartisan agreement had not been reached before the summer parliamentary break, the progress we fought for could have been lost in election turmoil. But we got there.

Now, the real challenge begins – implementing the extensive reforms brought by the new Aged Care Act. Our sector's leaders – our members – are prepared to step up once again, ensuring these changes translate into real, tangible improvements in care quality and accessibility.

And while we support the Act's rights-based approach, we fully acknowledge there are imperfections. Some of the

implementation timelines are so ambitious, they verge on impossible. After years of government inaction, we finally have solutions emerging for the financial crisis in residential aged care, yet the outlook for home care remains much less certain. Many critical implementation details are still missing, making it near impossible for providers to plan effectively.

And we know that the challenges of financial sustainability are growing ever larger for those moving into support at home, and those Commonwealth Home Support Programme providers who will be left behind until that program merges after 1 July 2027.

The worst-case scenario? Older Australians receiving worse care on 1 July than they did on 30 June because of rushed implementation. That is simply unacceptable. And no one in the sector wants this to play out – we're all here because we want to care for, support and improve the lives of older people.

We only get one chance to get this right. If we fail, the consequences for older Australians – now and in the future – will be dire. But I remain optimistic.

Our advocacy has already delivered results, including the Government's decision to delay price caps for the Support at Home scheme. This provides much-needed breathing space for providers and signals that our voice continues to be heard.

The establishment of a Transition Taskforce, with Ageing Australia as a key member, is another critical step forward. This platform gives us the opportunity to influence implementation and ensure reforms are practical, achievable and beneficial to older Australians.

This year, the wins may be less dramatic than those of the 2024 – but they will be no less important. Sustainable progress in aged care reform is a marathon, not a sprint.

With the unwavering dedication of our sector's leaders, we will continue to push forward, ensuring a stronger, fairer and more sustainable aged care system for all. ■

Tom Symondson
Chief Executive Officer, Ageing Australia
ageingaustralia.asn.au

Government delivering on reform

A message from the Minister for Aged Care



It is now four years since the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety released their report into Australia’s aged care system, revealing the depth of systemic changes required across 148 recommendations.

The Royal Commission found funding was uneven and woefully insufficient to address rising costs, especially amid chronic workforce shortages.

There simply wasn’t capital available to improve aged care homes, upgrade outdated infrastructure and fund high quality service delivery.

Many aged care providers have told me over the last few years that the report validated their own experience of a sector that was slowly failing despite their own best efforts.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese took his ambitious reform agenda to the 2022 election, and it resonated strongly with Australians who unfortunately had grown to fear aged care.

Our vision for aged care reform was not simply restorative – it was transformative.

Over the past three years we have made significant strides towards creating a world class aged care system for Australia.

The Albanese Government has taken action toward all 148 recommendations from the Royal Commission. We have finalised 54 recommendations and made substantial progress on the other 94 recommendations.

We have introduced reforms that change the way providers operate, the responsibilities they hold, the standards they must meet, and how transparent and accountable they must be for older people. These changes include 24/7 nursing in residential care, wage increases to attract and retain aged care staff, new data reporting to support transparency measures such as Dollars to Care, and more.

I commend providers for how they met each of these necessary and important changes.

The biggest change for providers is, of course, the new Aged Care Act 2024. The new Act takes effect from the 1 July 2025 and will be a seismic shift in how our aged care system works.

The new model will benefit providers by making clear what government expects – and will accept – from the businesses and not-for-profits that care for older people. It will also make it easier to operate by simplifying the registration process with new categories that reflect different types of care and different provider obligations.

Importantly, the new Act addresses funding viability, one of the most significant issues affecting providers today. We have taken strong action to ensure that our aged care system remains sustainable over the long term by introducing broader means tested contributions for new entrants into care, a higher maximum room price that is indexed over time

and allowing for the retention of a small portion of refundable accommodation deposits.

We have taken great care to ensure the feedback we received during the consultation period was heard.

We designed our new Act to strike the balance between giving older people the protections they deserve while addressing the fundamental weaknesses in the old system that were diminishing providers' ability to provide that care while remaining viable.

I am confident the right pieces are now being put in place to transform our aged care system into a source of pride for Australia.

I am also not ignorant of the fact that this implementing the new Act is hard – if it was easy, it would have been done years ago.

The government stood up the Aged Care Transition Taskforce, with representation from every corner of the sector, as a collaborative forum to troubleshoot concerns raised through the transition.

We are relying on the Taskforce for its expert advice on the progress of implementation alongside oversight and stewardship to the sector. So far, we have open discussions on issues like the digital maturity and readiness of providers to deliver reform, pricing for Support at Home and the impact of aged care reform on those living and working in thin markets.

The goal is to make sure there are no elephants left in the room, to work through providers frequently asked questions, and to help guide the sector through this intense period of change.

It's incumbent on all of us to work together to create a better way of caring for older people both today and into the future, and I look forward to seeing providers rise to meet the occasion. ■

The Hon Anika Wells MP
Minister for Aged Care
health.gov.au



Minister Wells visiting the residents and workers at St Paul's Hostel in Victoria with AM Kate Thwaites (not pictured) and AM Ged Kearney (left).

A momentous year for aged care in Australia

Whole-of-sector commitment needed



I am delighted to have taken up the role of Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner in January 2025, at such an important time for the aged care sector.

In my first contribution to Aged Care Today, I want to introduce myself and share with you some information about my background and early observations from my short time in the role.

I have worked in social policy and delivery roles for nearly 30 years across many Commonwealth agencies. And now, I am very pleased to now be able to contribute so significantly to the implementation of the regulatory reforms that will make such a difference for older people.

Since starting in the role, I have met many stakeholders including those on the Commission Consultative Forum, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council, National Aged Care Alliance and aged care providers. Of course, I have also been engaging with consumers' representative

groups and in coming months look forward to continuing these conversations.

Through each of these engagements the anticipation for the commencement of the new rights-based Aged Care Act from 1 July this year has been palpable. The new Act, and the Strengthened Standards that come with it, put older people firmly at the centre of their aged care experience for the first time.

“We have been hard at work realigning our regulatory approaches and internal systems and processes, and preparing our own people, to ensure we are ready for our broadened responsibilities under the new Act.”

It should come as no surprise to you that the Commission shares your eager anticipation! We have been hard at work realigning our regulatory approaches and internal systems and processes, and preparing our own people, to ensure we are ready for our

broadened responsibilities under the new Act.

I appreciate the challenges the reforms present to providers and the Commission alike, particularly while we all continue to maintain ‘business as usual’, ensuring that older people are receiving the quality and safe care and services they deserve.

With this in mind, the Commission is laser focussed on supporting the sector to be ready for 1 July 2025. I have heard that you are keen to have access to resources and information to help you prepare for the changes ahead.

To that end, we have released a Sector Readiness Plan that outlines when you can expect to have access to key resources as part of the readiness pathway. The plan provides a summary of the key resources that we will be releasing over the coming months. These will include guidance materials, webinars, fact sheets, videos, training programs and more on topics including:

- strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards
- provider registration
- the Financial and Prudential Standards
- worker regulation
- compliance and enforcement
- complaints handling.

I encourage you to have a look at the plan published on our website. We will continue to add to this plan, which I hope will be a useful guide in preparing you for the new Act.

Also, make sure to keep an eye out on our website and social media channels for the full range of information and support that is available to you. Remember, if you are not able to attend any of our webinar events, you can always access them later via our website.

In February, we opened registration for our upcoming National Aged Care Providers Conference, ‘Navigating the change – Rights and regulation’, to be held in Melbourne on 29 and 30 July 2025.

As the theme for the conference suggests, much of the content will focus on embedding the new Act, which will have commenced just weeks prior to the conference.

In-person attendance at the conference is capped at 1,000 people, however, we will be opening virtual registrations once we have reached capacity. You can find the preliminary conference program and register via our website.

I look forward to engaging with more people from across the sector in the coming weeks and months and through what will be a truly momentous year for aged care in Australia.

The success of the transformation in aged care requires significant collaboration, cooperation and commitment, as we work towards our common goal to protect and enhance the safety, health and wellbeing of older people receiving care. It has been encouraging for me to see the sector embracing reform that will make such a difference for older people. ■

Liz Hefren-Webb
Commissioner
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
agedcarequality.gov.au

Training for busy leaders

Accelerated learning will take your team to the next level

Would you like to build capacity in your aged care leaders but don't have the time? Then choose an accelerated learning approach.

The Leadership Accelerator Program can be completed in just three months – with an investment of just 12 hours.

For leaders in operational, clinical and corporate roles, this practical program is delivered as two interactive two-hour workshops each month – or you can purchase modules individually.

Upon completion, your leaders will have a deeper knowledge of key criteria and skills outlined in the Australian Aged Care Leadership Capability Framework – along with a renewed mindset and fresh enthusiasm.

Don't wait until your leaders are overwhelmed and exhausted, give them a helping hand today.

The Leadership Accelerator Program has been developed by Ageing Australia specifically for the aged care sector.

Leadership Accelerator Program

- Six two-hour workshops
- Three months
- Optional CILCA360 analysis
- Option to ‘pick and pack’ or register for the set
- An exclusive program is available for organisations that would like to train groups of 18 or more leaders



📞 1300 222 721 ✉ training@ageingaustralia.asn.au

🌐 ageingaustralia.asn.au/leadership-and-professional-development

Transforming aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

A time for action

In February 2025, I released my report, Transforming Aged Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which represents an opportunity to both reflect on the systemic failures in the aged care system that have disadvantaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to commit to long-overdue reforms that place our people's needs, dignity and culture at the heart of aged care.

It is also a chance to consider what is needed to deliver on the new Aged Care Act 2024 Statement of Rights which includes the right to funded aged care services that are culturally safe, culturally appropriate, trauma-aware and healing-informed. Between February and June last year, I travelled over 70,000 kilometres to urban, regional, remote and very remote communities, listening to older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their families. I also listened to peak bodies, representative bodies, providers and advocacy organisations – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous.



“These insights and the stories shared with me underscore the urgent need for a transformative approach to aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. My report sets out recommendations to help drive this transformation.”

In the Kimberley region of Western Australia, and across the country, older Aboriginal people shared their deep connection to Country and the interconnected and reciprocal role it plays in their wellbeing where ageing on their lands, surrounded by landscapes, sea and community, is not just a preference but a necessity for our people’s spiritual and emotional health. They spoke of the struggle to access the aged care services they need to stay on their island home or homelands.

In urban settings, such as parts of Sydney and Perth, discussions highlighted the challenges of accessing culturally safe aged care services amid the hustle of city life. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people expressed feelings of isolation when placed in facilities that did not acknowledge or respect their cultural practices, leading to alienation and a denial of their cultural identities and what makes us strong.

Across the country, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people spoke about the complexity of the aged care system, where many are finding the processes for accessing services convoluted and laden with language that is hard to understand.

A persistent lack of trust in the aged care system was also highlighted. Historical injustices and ongoing experiences of discrimination have fostered a deep-seated mistrust towards government institutions and mainstream service providers.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are clear – the aged care system, as it stands, does not work for us. Currently, only 20 per cent of eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people access aged care, compared to 31 per cent of non-Indigenous Australians. This stark disparity

is not due to a lack of need. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders face a significantly higher burden of disease and earlier onset of age-related health conditions, yet they remain underrepresented in aged care services.

These insights and the stories shared with me underscore the urgent need for a transformative approach to aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. My report sets out recommendations to help drive this transformation.

Chief among my recommendations is the development of a 10-year plan to transform the aged care system so that it is culturally safe and responsive and delivers equitable outcomes. The plan should be designed in full partnership between government and our communities and organisations, and bring together aged care service providers, regulators and innovators.

The report also includes a set of urgent and time-sensitive recommendations to address the barriers that exacerbate inequity of access, including support for more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led aged care services; mandatory cultural safety training for all aged care providers and government staff; and increased flexible, home-based care options that enable connection to Country. I also recommend government establish a permanent, independent, statutory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Commissioner. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people told me that the position is critical to driving culturally safe and responsive aged care and increase accountability for change.

At its core, aged care should be about ensuring dignity in later life. During my engagements, I heard encouraging stories of change already underway and a commitment to do more.

By listening and responding to voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and implementing my recommendations, aged care providers can play a pivotal role in creating a system that honours and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, ensuring they receive culturally safe and responsive care and have the dignity they deserve. ■

Andrea Kelly
Interim First Nations Aged Care
Commissioner
health.gov.au

Andrea is a proud Warumungu and Larrakia woman. Andrea commenced as Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner in January 2024, tasked to lead public consultations about the design and functions of a permanent Commissioner and identify, promote and contribute to the changes needed to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s access to culturally safe aged care.

Three budget priority areas

What aged care needs from the Federal Government

Aged care services for older Australians have significantly improved since the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety put aged care on the national agenda – but the reform journey is far from over.

Ageing Australia members have played and will continue to play a key role in this – not only through the services they deliver, but also through their invaluable feedback that informs our policy and advocacy work.

Moving forward, we need further investment as part of this year's federal budget to achieve a sustainable aged care

sector and support the ongoing transformation of how we deliver aged care services in Australia.

In our Pre-Budget Submission 2025-26, published in January this year, we are calling on the Federal Government to address three priority areas, which were informed by our consultation with members and other stakeholders:

- provide additional funding to ensure quality care can be delivered in a sustainable manner into the future
- build the aged care workforce to meet demand
- support providers to implement reforms under the new Aged Care Act and invest in technology and innovation.



1. Funding

Chronic underfunding for aged care has led to an unsustainable sector, with most residential aged care homes operating at a loss. In home care, lack of clarity about the Support at Home program, including pricing for services, has created significant uncertainty for providers.

Our recommendations around funding are in line with the Aged Care Taskforce’s recommendations, many of which will be implemented through the new Aged Care Act and aim to ensure future funding arrangements are sustainable.

They also support the provision of quality care and more timely access to home care services for the increasing number of older people who prefer to remain in their homes.

2. Workforce

The aged care sector in Australia continues to face significant workforce shortages. This issue will become increasingly critical in the coming years, as demand for aged care services grows due to older people’s increasingly complex care needs and an ageing population.

In 2024-25, the Department of Health and Aged Care estimated there would be a shortage of approximately 5,900 registered nurses in residential aged care in 2024-25. An undersupply of around 17,550 nurses for the aged care sector by 2035 has also been forecast.

While we welcome the Government’s investment to support increased wages for many aged care workers through the Aged Care Work Value Case, shortages continue in positions that are crucial for meeting mandated workforce responsibilities.

Our recommendations aim to alleviate these shortages by supporting the attraction and retention of aged care workers, particularly in regional areas, and make it easier for providers to navigate the migration system to access migrant workers.

3. Reform

The new Aged Care Act, due to come into effect from 1 July 2025, will introduce a broad range of significant reforms, including changing the way aged care services are funded, establishing a new regulatory model and requiring compliance with the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards.

Home care is also undergoing fundamental reform, with the new Support at Home program replacing the existing Home Care Packages Program and Short-Term Restorative Care Programme from 1 July 2025 and the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) transitioning to the new program no earlier than 1 July 2027.

These reforms will require aged care providers to undertake a wide range of change management activities. Adequate time and support to transition will be critical for the successful implementation of the new Aged Care Act.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and innovation – such as telehealth, artificial intelligence and virtual reality – has the potential to play a key role in supporting the delivery of quality care to all older Australians. However, to date many providers have had limited ability to harness these opportunities due to the financial challenges being experienced by the sector.

Further exploration into innovative models of health and aged care service delivery is also needed to ensure the aged care system will be able to meet the changing needs and preferences of older Australians, including the growing preference to age in place. ■

Ageing Australia’s key budget asks

- Fund quality and sustainable aged care services.
- Adjust funding settings for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) to ensure the CHSP sector remains viable.
- Alleviate additional cost pressures on aged care from state-based taxes.
- Establish a taskforce to develop a National Aged Care Workforce Strategy.
- Boost the aged care workforce across Australia, particularly in regional areas.
- Improve access to migrant workers to build a sustainable workforce.
- Transition support to enable providers to implement the new Aged Care Act.
- Funding for providers to support Information and Communications Technology (ICT) change.
- Pilot hospital in the home in retirement villages.

Ageing Australia
ageingaustralia.asn.au

2025 federal election

Help keep ageing and aged care on the agenda

As the 2025 federal election draws closer, Ageing Australia is committed to ensuring aged care remains a national priority, no matter who forms government – and we are calling on providers to help. This election, Ageing Australia is focusing on three key priorities, related to workforce, home care reform and accessing care.

We believe working with the sector to develop solutions to the workforce crisis should be a top priority. In particular, there are gains to be achieved in streamlining immigration processes, supporting regional workforce incentives, and offering the best possible educational settings through higher education, TAFE and other training arrangements.

With the new Support at Home and rights-based Aged Care Act coming into effect in the near future, supporting transitions to these reforms will be vital to maximise their benefit to the community and enhance providers' ability to meet new regulations. This means working with the sector on sensible transition timelines, providing essential transition funding and supporting funding viability – including addressing challenges around care management fees.

But offering outstanding aged care services when people can't access them is shooting ourselves in the proverbial foot, so it's vital we focus on addressing waitlist and assessment times, designing strong safety nets and supporting innovative models of care, including in regional Australia.

These asks were developed through feedback from our Election Member Survey and our State of the Sector Report (2024). This is not an exhaustive list of Ageing Australia's advocacy priorities, but rather, the three most important issues we want all MPs, on all sides of politics, to prioritise in the first six months of the next parliament.

We know local MPs and candidates care about local issues. As a service provider, you can play an important role in

raising awareness about local services, telling the local story and promoting the value of aged care in your community.

You can engage your local MP and candidates by: formally inviting them to visit your service, to see the great work you do with their own eyes and meet with older Australians and frontline staff getting together with other similar providers in your electorate and inviting your local MP and candidates for a cup of tea and a chat about aged care writing to them about the issues that you want to see them prioritise in the next term of parliament.

The support of all aged care providers – from home and community care, residential care and seniors housing and retirement living – will be vital to help keep aged care on the national agenda and ensure we have the tools and resources to implement reform and achieve success.

Ultimately, ageing well is vital to all communities, and the aged care services you deliver play an essential role. It is quite clearly in the interest of every Australian that we get it right, and as a unified sector, we can ensure future governments remain focused on this task.

Together, let's use this campaign as an opportunity to showcase the care we can deliver, and continue to deliver, with the right system supports. The increasing numbers of older people deserve confidence that a well-designed, quality and safe aged care system will be there if they need it.

Ageing Australia
ageingaustralia.asn.au

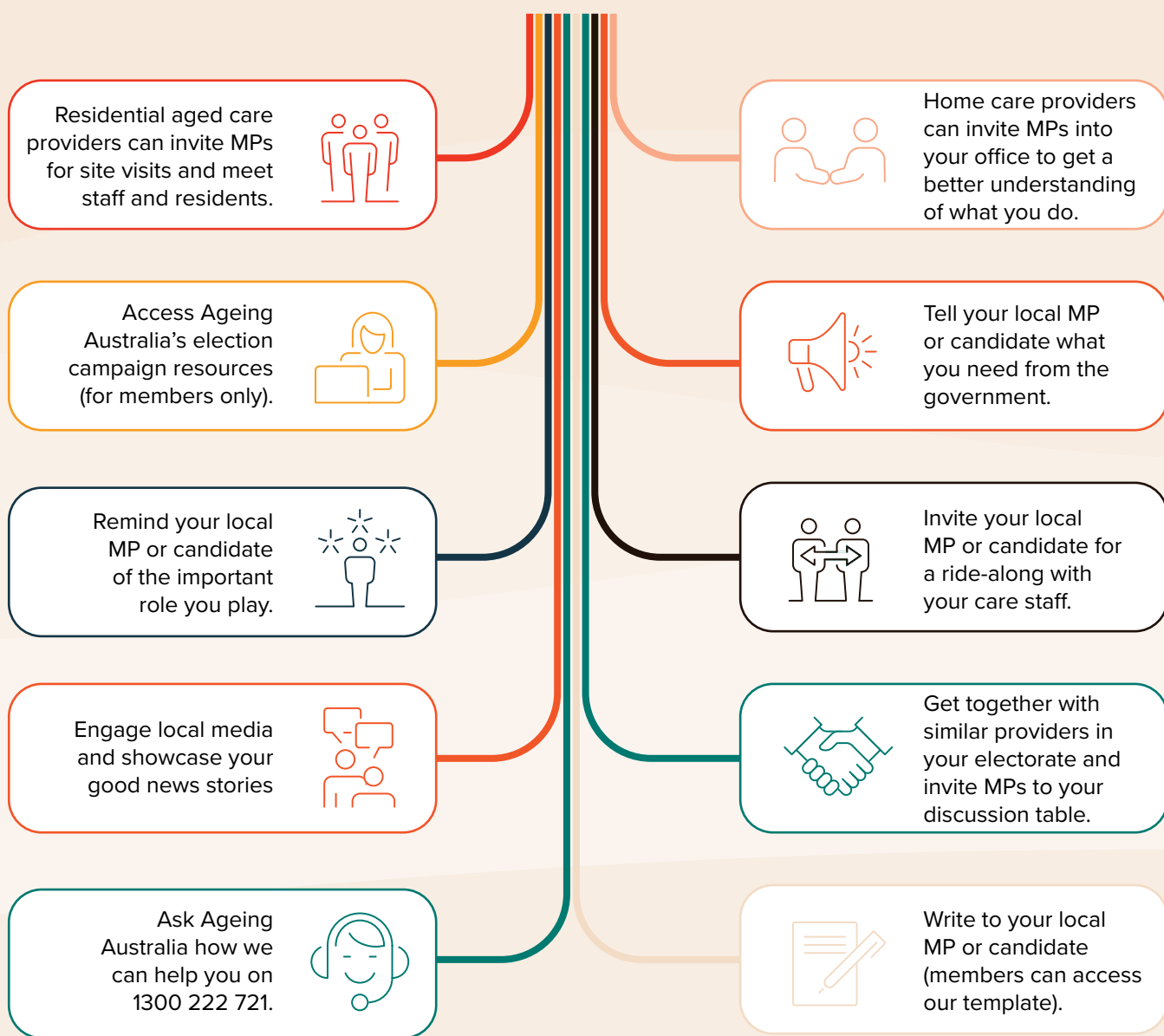
For more information
ageingaustralia.asn.au/2025-federal-election



What providers can do

Help keep aged care on the national agenda in the 2025 federal election campaign. Whether your action is big or small, you can help ensure we have the tools and resources we need to implement reform. In unity, we are stronger.

Have your voice heard



ageingaustralia.asn.au/2025-federal-election

Equip your board with confidence

Are you prepared for reform?



Confidence is the key to success. A confident board, clear on their responsibilities and accountability can illuminate pathways of sustainable growth for an organisation.

Confident boards don't wait; they synthesise data and take action. They begin the work with eager anticipation of bringing others into the fold. An ill-equipped board is hampered and can lead to organisational instability.

An aged care provider's governing body is responsible in the promotion of a culture of safe, inclusive and quality care and services and their delivery to older Australians – so getting it right is vital.

A shared responsibility

Good governance doesn't occur in a silo; it happens when a board takes ownership of sourcing the right information at the right time – and then extends this proactive approach to ensuring this information is effectively disseminated, understood and embraced across all job roles.

Confident boards reinforce the principle that compliance is a shared responsibility. When all members of an organisation are clear regarding individual roles and responsibilities, channels of communication are well defined and strategies are aligned, the governing body is empowered to deliver sound organisation-wide corporate governance.

To thrive, boards need to be equipped with members skilled a variety of capabilities including informed decision making. In the era of AI, it is essential that the collection of data identifies patterns, correlations and anomalies that support more informed decisions, reducing the risk of errors and ensuring optimal outcomes.

Key areas of reform

The aged care sector is complex and with the reform agenda protracted and delayed, it has left providers struggling to prepare in absence of finalisation of key elements.

While some boards are well equipped to address the requirements under the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards (February 2025) on the eve of the new Aged Care Act, due for release 1 July 2025, other boards are not quite ready, waiting in the wings for finalisation before acting.

However, the expectations for boards are well documented – and the time is now to be prepared for upcoming reforms.

Key areas for organisation-wide governance systems include information management, continuous improvement, financial governance, workforce governance, regulatory compliance and feedback and complaints management.

Where to get support

There is a wealth of resources available from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission via the Aged Care Learning Information Solution (Alis) platform. Ageing Australia provides free support to our members through the Member Support and Advisory Service, which includes mapping tools for transition planning, compliance assessment and reporting, as well as advice. Additional paid services are available for members and non-members. More information is available via membersupport@ageingaustralia.asn.au

Ageing Australia will continue to offer live online workshops to unpack key elements as reform unfolds, including Code of Conduct workshops and a Leaders Reform Bootcamp for Commonwealth Home Support Programme providers, to help with meeting obligations and to ensure older people have confidence and trust in the quality and safety of care they receive.

To help organisations master board governance, Ageing Australia offers organisations an exclusive Board Governance on Demand workshop, which provides an overview of governance compliance and enables boards to explore confidentially organisational areas of strength and determine where adjustments are required to ensure compliance and maintain business viability.

Kick-start 2025 by making sure your board is equipped for confidence and success. Email training@ageingaustralia.asn.au to find out how we can help. ■

Ageing Australia
ageingaustralia.asn.au/event



SANDWAI

HOME CARE SOFTWARE



SCAN TO BOOK
A DEMO AT
[SANDWAI.COM.AU](https://www.sandwai.com.au)

Is your software going to be **Support at Home** ready?

At Sandwai, we are not only building the features you will need to transition to Support at Home, we are ensuring our functionality will be as user friendly, seamless and as automated as possible.

A bit of what's coming:



NEW REAL TIME BUDGETING TOOL

Gain full visibility over income, expenses and balances in real-time. This seamless flow of information helps manage client budgets while ensuring **compliance** with all funding regulations.



STATEMENTS AND DATA MIGRATION

A tool to **simplify the migration of HCP** package client data and a new statement design to align with the new Support at Home requirements.



REPORTING, CLAIMING AND COMPLIANCE

Our smart algorithms handle operational considerations automatically, ensuring compliance with ease. With an **integration to PRODA**, claims will be submitted **directly** from Sandwai.



GAIN EFFICIENT WORKFLOWS

We're creating new database relationships between statements, purchase orders, schedules, product purchases and other transactions - **creating smarter and more efficient workflows.**



SMART CARE MANAGEMENT FUNDING TRACKING

Smart care management time tracking and funding drawdown to ensure you have visibility and can manage your time effectively.



If you want to hear more about our **Support at Home** functionality reach out to us today.

sales@sandwai.com.au | 1300 795 133 | www.sandwai.com.au



Transforming the sector through innovation

Two unique opportunities for aged care providers



Innovation is actively shaping the future of the aged care sector, providing new pathways for providers to enhance service delivery and improve the lives of older Australians, with InnovAGEING at the forefront of this movement. As the sector navigates change, including the upcoming Aged Care Act, the need for forward-thinking approaches has never been greater.

Ageing Australia's InnovAGEING initiative is a national network for innovation in the aged care sector, focused on driving positive change through collaboration, shared insights, technology, research and workforce empowerment.

Through this network, providers can access opportunities to strengthen their innovation capabilities. This year, we are encouraging providers with a keen interest in innovation to get involved with the InnovAGEING Strategic Innovation Program and this year's World Ageing Festival, hosted by Ageing Asia.

InnovAGEING has partnered with Crazy Might Work (CMW) to offer the Strategic Innovation Program as a boutique service designed to equip aged care leaders with the skills and frameworks needed to foster innovation at an organisational level. This custom service is tailored case-by-case to the unique needs of each provider, ensuring participants walk away with practical tools and a playbook they can use for ongoing, sustained innovation.

The program is particularly suited to senior leadership teams committed to embedding innovation into their organisations beyond regulatory compliance. By building these capabilities, providers can not only navigate the complexities of the evolving aged care landscape but also position themselves as leaders in developing new ways to support older Australians. The emphasis on practical application ensures that innovation is not just discussed but

actioned, creating lasting change that benefits both providers and the people they support.

Alongside strengthening innovation capabilities at home, there is also an opportunity to showcase Australian aged care innovation on a global stage at the 16th Ageing Asia Innovation Forum (part of the World Ageing Festival) in Singapore.

The forum will bring leaders and innovators together to share insights and collaborate on shaping the future of the sector. During the festival, the 13th Asia Pacific Eldercare Awards will be announced, which last year saw many providers in Australia being recognised.

Ageing Australia will be exhibiting at the event to highlight Australia's advancements in innovation, celebrating solutions that promote health, independence and quality of life for older adults – demonstrating how Australian providers are leading the way on innovation – and we welcome input from our members.

For those looking to engage in international collaboration, the festival provides an opportunity and a platform to connect with global thought leaders and accelerate new projects and be part of a global conversation on longevity and wellbeing. This is an opportunity to learn from global advancements and to contribute to the discussion.

By engaging with these opportunities, you can strengthen your organisation's innovation capabilities, gain valuable insights, and position yourself at the forefront of sector change and advancement.

To learn more about the InnovAGEING Strategic Innovation Program or how to showcase your innovation via the Ageing Australia stand at the World Ageing Festival, visit our website or email innovageing@ageingaustralia.asn.au. ■

Ageing Australia
ageingaustralia.asn.au/innovageing

Support at Home | eSAH

Pathway to Success



NEW SOFTWARE READY
APRIL 2025

e-Tools Support at Home

Home Care providers, win the race against time!

e-Tools Software offers a clear timeline & actions to take now, BEFORE 1 July 2025. These active steps will help lay the groundwork for a smoother HCP to SAH transition. For decades, we've guided hundreds of clients through Government-led changes - we have the IT experience to help you transition on time, successfully!

RELIABLE

CONSIDERED

COMPLIANCE

PROVEN SUCCESS

EARLY eSAH SOFTWARE LAUNCH **APRIL 2025**

eSAH will be released before the changeover date to allow time for clients to become familiar with the software, new setup requirements, and be ready for the 1 July transition. The ability to access the software early will ease the pressure during the changeover phase.

Enquire about getting on board early.

DATA TRANSFER MADE EASY

We have options available to import client data from e-Tools or other software to eSAH. Due to the enormity of the changeover, there will be a first in, first ready priority system, so please contact us asap.

NEW REPORTING & CARE DELIVERY OBLIGATIONS MANAGED IN ONE PLACE

eSAH is designed to drive quality personalised care delivery, while enhancing operational & financial efficiency! Key features & benefits:

- ✓ Seamless integration with Services Australia via bulk upload API, for claims submissions & downloads of care recipient data.
- ✓ Comprehensive consumer management
- ✓ Automated compliance & service agreements
- ✓ Client contribution & lifetime caps management
- ✓ Direct connection to mobile apps for carers, consumers & families
- ✓ Accountable audit trail

AN EXPERIENCED IT PARTNER MATTERS!

A systemic change of this size requires a partner with proven success. 20+ years' IT experience and 40+ years in aged care consulting enable e-Tools to guide providers through complex Government-led changes.

Prevent delays & compliance issues!

Contact e-Tools Software for important SAH timelines & actions & be the first to explore the new eSAH software.



CYBERSECURE SOLUTIONS

FEB 2025 | PUBLIC

Caring with old school values

Jodie goes the extra mile at North Coast Pearl Home Care

You are ACE!
Awards
Nominee



Jodie Lund with one of her clients Lynette Davis outside the Ballina office.

Jodie Lund is a senior care coordinator at Pearl Home Care, established in 2021 to service a large regional area on the north coast of New South Wales. One of this year's nominees in the Ageing Australia You are ACE! Awards, Jodie is passionate about helping older people maintain their independence. "When I was invited to join the team at Pearl Home Care, I jumped at the opportunity because the values of the organisation align with my own," said Jodie.

"The business owners Peter and Jen Frendin are committed to a face-to-face approach to care, where clients and families have input into the service we provide.

"We have a Client Advisory & Support Committee that meets monthly, and an open-door policy where clients or family members pop into the office every day, because we make them feel welcome and heard. To me it's very important that older people feel seen."

Jodie was the first senior care coordinator to be appointed and has set a very high standard. She is now one of four senior care coordinators who work across the regions of Ballina, Lismore, Grafton and the Tweed, managing care for about 150 clients, many of whom live in isolated areas or without a lot of social interaction, particularly after COVID-19.

"One thing I noticed is older people can feel very lonely, so I started a Picnic in the Park group for our clients to get out of the house and meet one another," said Jodie.

The monthly event, which she developed with her assistant care coordinator Natalie Curran, proved very popular and despite bad weather moving it to the Green Coast Café, which is next door to Pearl Home Care's Ballina office, clients have kept coming. Even better, they are exchanging phone numbers and meeting up at other times, too.

"Jodie has a huge heart for older people," said Terri Irwin, human resources manager at Pearl Home Care. "She goes above and beyond to provide support, even putting out the garbage for clients on her way home or assisting them with pets.

"Nothing is a problem for Jodie, if there is a job that needs to be done, she is happy to do it, whether that fits in with her role as manager, or not."

Rick Eggins, Pearl Home Care's director of service operations, agrees.

"If staff members call in sick and there are not enough people to carry out the day's client services, Jodie will pitch in to help," said Rick.

"We want to have the personal, friendly approach that you only get with regular face-to-face contact."

"It's rare that we don't meet our service commitments in Ballina, largely due to Jodie's commitment to ensure we meet the needs of every client, every day."

This enthusiasm is reflected in Pearl Home Care's culture of open communication, with old fashioned values meaning no one waits too long for a call back and client input is valued.

"We employ people who care, because caring for others is why we exist," said Rick. "We avoid use of contract staff and even our gardener travels across the entire region, performing not just gardening services but also being a second set of eyes on our clients."

For Jodie, being part of a team that cares is why she loves her job. "We want to have the personal, friendly approach that you only get with regular face-to-face contact," she said.



Picnic in the Park Christmas gathering 2024, with Jodie Lund (front, far right) and Natalie Curran (front, second from left).

“I’m in regular contact with all my staff, so I know how our clients are going, and if there are any concerns then I can act on them straight away.

“Communication with staff, clients and families is key to a successful service, particularly in regional and rural areas such as ours where isolation can be a real issue. The people I pick to be on my team share my commitment to our clients.”

For Peter, Jodie reflects the ethos of the business. “Jodie’s nomination through You Are ACE! is well deserved. Her commitment and passion has been an integral part of our success and we are very lucky to have her in our team,” he said. ■

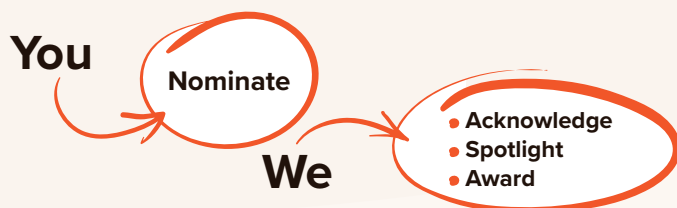
Ageing Australia
ageingaustralia.asn.au/sector-recognition-programs/awards



Celebrate excellence *in* aged care

Put a spotlight on the individuals, teams, and organisations making a difference in the lives of older Australians.

Nominate your ACE superstars today!



Nominations received by **30 June 2025** will be considered for the **Ageing Australia You are ACE! Awards**, with winners announced on **Aged Care Employee Day, 7 August**.

Visit ageingaustralia.asn.au/you-are-ace



You *are* ACE!

You *are* ACE!
Awards

Southern Cross Care Tasmania leading on taste

Resident engagement is key

When it comes to a great aged care experience, the way you do things is vital – and so are the people you employ. At Southern Cross Care Tasmania, their person-centred and resident-directed approach to meals and menu planning speaks to the passion of their executive chef and his team.

With extensive experience working in hotels, Southern Cross Care Tasmania's General Manager Hospitality and Catering Gehan Wadigasinghe has injected his customer service experience into the aged care setting.

"When I started in aged care eight years ago, it seemed there was a mentality that the residents would eat whatever they were served; it was a very institutionalised approach which I'm glad is changing today," said Gehan,

who also worked as head chef at Parliament House in Canberra.

"I was inspired to work in the sector after learning about Maggie Beer's advocacy for better quality food for older people in residential aged care; I felt I could make a difference," he said.

Starting in his role with Southern Cross Care Tasmania 18 months ago, his focus has been on resident engagement, as well as building capacity in his team.

The aged care provider has nine homes around Tasmania, with commercial kitchens in each one. All kitchens are visible to residents in the dining rooms, which are nicely dressed with quality furniture and an inviting atmosphere.

"Having a kitchen on-site is important not just because the quality of meals is usually better, but also because it changes the atmosphere of a home when residents get to smell the food



Gourmet night dishes at Sandown.



Southern Cross Care Tasmania aims to create a restaurant atmosphere, like this dining room at Sandown.

being cooked and are able to speak with the chefs who made it," said Gehan.

"I carefully select head chefs who are good communicators, because residents like to talk, and their opinion matters." I tell all my chefs to go into the dining room after a meal, to speak with residents and get their feedback, which encourages them to continue to improve.



The residents of Yaraandoo love their fish.



"Working in hotels, chefs are always tweaking recipes and menus based on customer feedback; that's an important part of the job.

"As a team we share images of the food in an online forum, and have regular meetings to discuss any concerns, ideas for improving cooking techniques, and passing on feedback to ensure we are maintaining consistent quality.

"I really enjoy mentoring my chefs and watching them develop their skills."

On a day-to-day basis, residents can choose from one of three options for lunch and two options for dinner, with tailor-made menus and texture-modified foods created for people with dietary requirements.

For anyone who needs extra support, the head chef meets with them, their family members, a speech pathologist and a dietician, to determine how to accommodate their wishes while still offering food in a safe way.

Southern Cross Care Tasmania runs formal monthly focus group meetings with residents in each home to discuss meals, and with menus changing twice-yearly, there is an engagement process for that too.

Twenty randomly selected residents are invited to an evening where they taste at least five mains, five sides and five deserts, to sample the new menu. The event is set up in each home with a long table and a restaurant-like atmosphere, with feedback incorporated into a revised menu which is reviewed by a dietician prior to finalising.

While every effort is made to engage residents to share a meal in the dining room, about 30 per cent still opt to take their meals in their room, ordering from a paper menu which contains photographs of meals. Southern Cross Care Tasmania plans to introduce an enhanced system where residents will view an electronic menu on a tablet that will include videos of chefs preparing the meals, to help bring the dining experience to everyone.

"For us, it's all about engaging with our residents, hearing what they want, and continually finding new ways to provide good service," said Gehan.

"I once had a resident always complaining to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission about the food.



So I went to speak with him and asked him about his concerns. He said he had been asking for ice cream cones but never got them.

"If I ask a resident 'what can we do for you' then the solution is usually simple. People just want to feel heard and respected. Aged care can be hard but if you love what you do, things become easy." ■

Southern Cross Care Tasmania
scctas.org.au



Gehan Wadigasinghe, pictured at the Glenara Lakes kitchen, is passionate about resident engagement and quality food.

A place you go to live

Resort-style seniors living creating connected communities with a person-centred approach

At Odyssey, residents enjoy a high-end lifestyle with restaurant quality meals.

You might be aware of Odyssey's three core pillars and not even know it. It's because they are in the name, Odyssey Lifestyle Care Communities, and these values are at the forefront of its vision and upheld every day. For Odyssey, resident engagement is key and positive resident feedback is not only what they strive for, but also their most valuable marketing asset.

Meeting consumer demand for luxury seniors living with optional care, Odyssey operates a seniors lifestyle community at Robina with another currently under construction on Chevron Island in Queensland.

These communities and apartments have been thoughtfully designed with inclusions people would expect from a high-end hotel. The spaces feel so luxurious, residents say it's like stepping aboard a stationary cruise ship.

Rather than a place to live out your final years, Odyssey ensures it's a place to live – where care, lifestyle and community blend seamlessly into a desirable way of life.

Creating a better model of ageing has been Odyssey founder and chief executive officer Phil Usher's life's work. Odyssey's entire ethos revolves around one commitment – a heart-centred approach – meaning people always come first.

Their consumer-centric model is all about listening to residents, hearing what they are saying and adapting to their needs.

For people who have been used to a certain lifestyle throughout their lives, Odyssey believes they shouldn't have to compromise when choosing a seniors living home.

With a unique blend of resort-style living, professional and comprehensive 24/7 on-site care, and a heart-centred approach, Odyssey has positioned itself to meet consumer demand in a changing market.

"Odyssey is different to some other aged care or retirement alternatives because of our three pillars – 'lifestyle', 'care' and 'community'," says Phil.

"We are passionate about giving the power back to residents. Here, couples stay together if they wish, pets are welcome and families are encouraged to visit or even stay over.

"Most importantly, we offer our residents the support they need to live a beautiful and independent life."

Offering a hybrid model that combines retirement and resort-style living with higher levels of care, Odyssey's point of difference is creating connected communities.

With over 140 different events held every month, including themed luncheons, live entertainment and more, Odyssey provides opportunities for meaningful interactions in lively, engaging settings.

Here, community is more than just a buzzword – it's the very essence of Odyssey's identity. Every aspect of life is designed to foster connection, ensuring residents thrive in a vibrant and supportive environment.

When it comes to care, Phil says Odyssey is committed to providing tailored care solutions that are just as unique as each resident.

"At the very core of our philosophy is our wish for every resident to access the care they need, when they need it and at a fair and competitive price," he says. "We want to put the emphasis on living a life you truly love, where your independence is celebrated and supported by our team.

"At Odyssey, we want residents to feel it's their home with care built in." ■

Odyssey Lifestyle Care Communities
odysseycommunities.com.au

Supporting Healthy Independence for Older Australians

With over 235 expertly crafted, dietitian-designed meals, Lite n' Easy continues to lead the way in providing high quality, delicious meal options that promote independence, health and choice for older Australians.

Our My Choice range is tailored to meet the unique nutritional needs of seniors, ensuring they receive essential energy and protein in portions that are both enjoyable and easy to consume. Lite n' Easy partners with Home Care Package providers, enabling eligible seniors to access nutritious meals with savings of up to 70%.

Our extensive menu provides flexibility and variety to suit individual tastes and preferences. With no lock-in contracts, customers can enjoy the convenience of week-to-week ordering, ensuring accessibility and ease for those who need it most.

Lite n' Easy also supports the broader Aged Care community by providing bulk meal solutions for respite care centres, aged care facilities, hospitals and other organisations seeking a reliable, nutritious meal partner. For an affordable meal solution, reach out to Lite n' Easy at agedcare@liteneasy.com.au.

Learn more at www.liteneasy.com.au/hcp or call 13 15 12 today.



“We’re really impressed with the quality and portion sizes of the meals. They’ve got a good amount of meat, chicken, or fish, plus plenty of vegetables that actually taste great—so much better than most frozen veggies.”

Lyn & Ron, Happy Valley Retirement Village residents



Levande Hillsview, Happy Valley Retirement Village, Retirement Home, SA

Independence | Choice | Happiness

My Choice
by Lite n' Easy

Innovative approaches to combat pressure injuries

A study by Lenexa Medical and the University of Canberra



Innovations like LenexaCARE® are small but powerful tools creating better outcomes for people with pressure injuries.

Pressure injuries (PIs), also known as pressure ulcers or bedsores, remain a persistent and costly challenge in aged care. These injuries not only diminish quality of life but also strain healthcare resources, with global treatment costs estimated in the billions. In Australia, it is estimated that pressure injuries cost the healthcare system over \$9 billion per annum, with 36 to 49 per cent of hospital patients and 91 per cent of aged care residents deemed 'at-risk' of pressure injury. On average, a facility will incur an average incremental cost of over \$13,000 to \$32,000 per pressure injury.

The growing acuity of residents, staffing shortages and evolving compliance standards have pushed aged care facilities to seek smarter, data-driven solutions. Traditional methods, such as timed repositioning schedules, often fall short in personalising care or adapting to individual resident needs. This gap has spurred innovation, with providers exploring technologies that enhance preventive care while easing staff burdens.

Collaboration and evidence-based solutions

The fight against preventable pressure injuries is gaining momentum through partnerships between industry and academia. Recent trials, such as a collaboration between Lenexa Medical and the University of Canberra (UC), highlight the importance of grounding solutions in rigorous research.

The study assessed the effectiveness of LenexaCARE® – a system that undertakes pressure areas mapping and identifies the most appropriate turn regime developed by B2B medical equipment and service provider Lenexa Medical.

Early findings from their study demonstrate a significant reduction in key PI risk factors, underscoring the potential of data-driven approaches to complement traditional care practices.

“Partnering with Lenexa in this research provides an exciting opportunity to understand how individualised pressure data can support appropriate and timely repositioning, reduce risks and improve outcomes. Importantly, the project will provide valuable information from staff perspectives about how the system drives clinical decision making and optimises patient care,” says Associate Professor Ash Smyth from the UC Centre for Ageing Research & Translation.

A data-driven shift in care delivery

These evidence-based approaches are now translating into practical tools for providers. Real-time monitoring systems, such as LenexaCARE®, exemplify this shift. By tracking resident positioning and pressure points, caregivers receive actionable insights to intervene proactively, replacing rigid schedules with individualised care.

These systems also streamline compliance with international pressure injury guidelines, a growing priority as regulators demand higher standards.

By integrating real-time data with proven practices, providers can address both resident well-being and operational requirements—proving that innovation, when grounded in evidence, can turn preventable challenges into solvable ones.

ValleyView is an aged care provider that has begun using LenexaCARE®, with their experience underscoring the potential of solutions that prioritise prevention through real-time risk monitoring.

Valley View Chief Executive Officer Mark Sheldon-Stemm says, “To date, we have had nobody develop pressure injuries who have been on LenexaCARE®.”

The road ahead

For providers, the message is clear: proactive, personalised care is no longer optional. With PI treatment costs soaring and resident expectations rising, investing in scalable solutions is key to sustainable care.

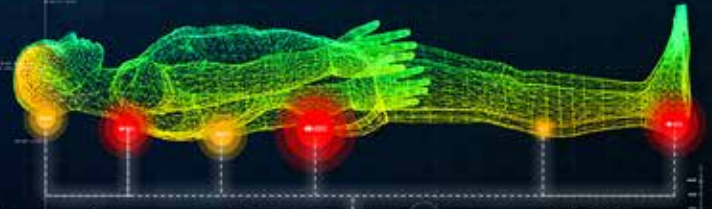
While technology like LenexaCARE® is a powerful tool, its success hinges on integration with staff training and compassionate care.

The future of aged care lies in blending human expertise with innovation – ensuring every resident receives the right care at the right time. ■

Lenexa Medical
lenexamedical.com



AI Powered Pressure Injury Prevention



LenexaCARE® | The proven path to **ZERO** Pressure Injuries



Mark, Chief Executive Officer



Uniting AgeWell



Ian, Director of Operations



Emma, Facility Manager

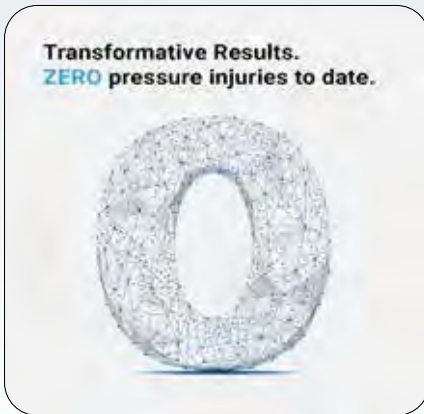
Continuous Pressure & Position Monitoring

The LenexaCARE® smart sensors knitted into the fabric of the mattress, notify staff when a turn is required to reduce the risk of pressure injuries for residents.

Data-driven Care

Compliance To Best-practice

Improved Staff Efficiency



Why wait for a Pressure Injury? Stay ahead with LenexaCARE®:

contactus@lenexamedical.com | 1300 536 392

Visit us at www.lenexamedical.com

LenexaCARE® – Always Caring, Always There.

SCAN NOW



Thicker is not always safer

The role of thickened fluids for people with dysphagia

Thickened fluids play a key role in the management of swallowing difficulties, clinically known as dysphagia, but are they the best solution? While there are clear benefits of thickened liquids for someone with dysphagia, there are also several disadvantages that should be considered.

What are thickened fluids?

Thickened fluids are fluids that are of a thicker consistency than thin fluids (which have the same consistency as water). There are products available, such as powders and liquids, which can thicken thin fluids when added to them. These products use starches and gums as the thickening agent and typically have little to no taste. Additionally, there are fluids that are naturally thick, such as fruit nectar juices and milkshakes.

Who needs thickened fluids?

Thickened fluids are often recommended for those who have dysphagia. Drinking thickened fluids can assist in preventing fluid entering the airway and lungs. Thickened fluids move slower than thin fluids, therefore allowing the body more time to move the muscles in the throat and close and protect the airway as the fluid moves down into the oesophagus.

What's so good about thickened fluids?

There are numerous benefits of consuming thickened liquids for someone with dysphagia. Some of these include:

- reduced risk of aspiration and aspiration pneumonia (which is an infection caused by bacteria from saliva, food or fluid travelling into the lungs)
- increased hydration
- improved timing, control and sensation involved when swallowing fluids
- improved swallow safety and airway protection
- reduced hospitalisation risk
- reduced anxiety and embarrassment during fluid intake
- improved quality of life.

What could go wrong with thickened fluids?

While there are many advantages of thickened fluids, we also need to consider the cons. Some examples of this include:

- change in texture can be unappealing to consume
- dehydration due to reduced fluid intake from texture being unappealing



- time needed for preparation
- increased risk of silent aspiration
- non-compliance with recommended thickened fluid
- increased fatigue when drinking
- increased feeling of fullness when drinking
- affecting the way the body processes medication.

It is also important to note that some commercial supplements should not be thickened. For example, 'Resource Fruit and Arginaid Extra' (tetra pack) cannot be thickened safely and should not be provided to anyone requiring thickened fluids.

To thicken or not to thicken?

Thickened fluids can be a valuable tool, and arguably essential for some people with dysphagia to improve the safety of their swallow. However, it is not the only solution for dysphagia.

There are many things that need to be considered before thickened fluids can be recommended, and it is essential to have a discussion with residents and their families about the pros and cons of consuming them.

Picture this: someone has been given thickened fluids, but the taste and texture is off-putting to them, and they refuse to drink fluids. Isn't the risk of dehydration much greater than the risk of aspiration?

Involving a speech pathologist, dietician or GP is important when someone chooses not to have thickened fluids, despite the recommendation they have been given. There are many safe swallowing strategies that someone with dysphagia can follow to reduce their risk of aspiration, aside from thickening fluids.

To manage dysphagia safely, it is important to work with a health professional like one of our team at OSCAR Care Group, to make sure every individual gets personalised care and a solution they feel comfortable with and that keeps them safe. ■

OSCAR Care Group
oscarcaregroup.com.au

Laundry Equipment Company

Change for the Better

**Half of the
floor area**

**Significant
Reductions of
WP Injury Risk**

**Yamamoto
COMBO
WASHER DRYER**



**Stand alone
washers and dryers
Available
JAPANESE MADE**

www.laundryeq.com.au info@laundryeq.com.au 03-85228566

Hearing loss a hidden epidemic

Breaking the silence for a better quality of life

The World Health Organization has estimated that by 2050 over 700 million people, or one in every 10 people, will have disabling hearing loss. Yet, it remains one of the most neglected areas of aged care.

Unlike mobility issues or memory decline, hearing loss doesn't always present itself in obvious ways. Instead, it quietly chips away at a person's confidence, independence and ability to connect with others.

We see it every day in aged care – residents who gradually withdraw from conversations, who stop engaging in group activities, who seem more isolated than they used to be.

Residential aged care providers have an important role to play in proactively addressing hearing difficulties, before they reach crisis point.



Carmen's story

Carmen Van Den Brink migrated to Australia from Peru, facing the challenge of learning English later in life. With the help of her multilingual husband, she adjusted well. But as the years passed, something changed. She started withdrawing from social settings, avoiding group conversations, and even limiting phone calls with her beloved sisters overseas.

Her family, like many others, initially misunderstood. They assumed she was simply growing quieter with age or that she preferred one-on-one conversations. But in reality, Carmen was battling untreated hearing loss. The world around her was fading into a frustrating blur of half-heard sentences and missed moments.

It wasn't until her husband passed away that she realised how isolated she had become. In a time of grief, she found herself struggling even more, unable to hear the comforting words of her family and friends.

That's when her daughter encouraged her to visit an Audika clinic for a hearing check. In an instant, everything changed. Carmen could hear again; the smile on her face said it all. She had regained something she didn't even realise she had lost.

Normalise hearing checks

In most aged care homes, there are routine checks for eyesight and mobility, but what about hearing? Providers should integrate hearing assessments into their residents' care plans. A simple annual check could mean the difference between a resident feeling engaged or feeling invisible.

Create a culture of hearing awareness

Hearing loss can lead to more than just communication issues; it can impact confidence, cognitive function and even the ability to participate in life's joys, like music and conversation. Its impact on quality of life means hearing assistance should be a standard part of aged care and embedded into your culture of caring. This includes:

- training staff to recognise the subtle signs of hearing loss
- encouraging residents to speak openly about hearing challenges
- designing quieter communal spaces to reduce background noise
- ensuring proper lighting so residents can lip-read more easily.

Help residents access the right support

Many Australians are eligible for subsidised hearing loss treatment under the Government Hearing Services Program, but navigating these options can be overwhelming, and many continue to fall through the cracks.

Aged care providers can help by connecting residents with trusted hearing care providers that offer:

- personalised hearing solutions tailored to individual needs
- flexible payment plans for those worried about affordability
- online hearing tests and nearby clinics for easy access to support.

Start the conversation

One of the biggest barriers to treatment is the belief that hearing loss is just something people have to live with, so it is important to help older people understand they can do something about it.

Aged care providers have the power to ensure residents don't suffer in silence. By making hearing care a priority, we can give back independence, dignity and joy to those we care for.

Start the conversation by encouraging residents and families to prioritise hearing checks, training staff to recognise the signs of hearing loss and working with trusted providers like Audika, which offers free hearing checks for Australians over 26. As we step into a new era of support for older people, hearing health must be considered a standard part of quality care. ■

Audika
audika.com

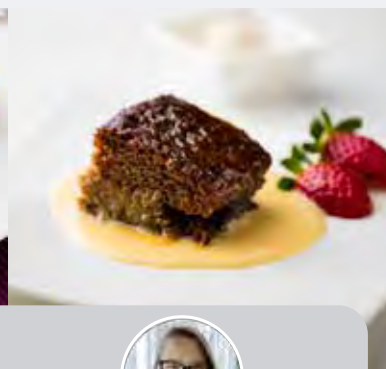


TLC Meals setting the standard in quality home delivered meals.

You'll love the homemade taste!

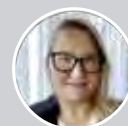
TLC has been a leader in homestyle, nutritious home-delivered meals for over 30 years. Our extensive menu caters to a range of dietary needs, with specialised options and high-care delivery services for those who need it most.

Plus, with our split payment options, your clients only cover the cost of ingredients (30%) while we handle the cost of preparation & delivery payments (70%) directly with providers.



We'd love to chat.

If you would like to know more about how TLC meals could partner with your organisation and provide our delicious range of meals to your clients, please reach out to us.



Katherine Harding
Business Development Manager
katherine.harding@tlcmeals.com.au
0431 338 240



VIEW MENU



TLC meals is a Registered Provider of delivered meals for Home Care Packages, NDIS & CHSP, delivering to over 3,200 suburbs across NSW, ACT, VIC and QLD

Your residents deserve a great night sleep



Hi/Lo Zenith, 3-in-1 Beds

Cutting-edge technology to enhance the quality of life.

Mattresses, AUS Made

Alternate, pumpless and static. An advanced care support.

Custom Made Furniture



www.soularchhealthcare.com.au

Help shape a pet-friendly future for aged care

Take the survey



SereneCare Diversional Therapist Jenny Puxley
with Pauline Freeman and her dog Daisy.

Australia has one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world, with millions of people benefiting from the companionship, physical activity and emotional support that animals provide. Yet, for many older adults – whether living at home, in a retirement village or in an aged care home – access to pet companionship remains a challenge.

According to Companion Animal Network Australia’s (CANA) 2023 Aged Care Survey: Status of Pets in Aged Care, while 86 per cent of older adults reported enhanced wellbeing due to pet companionship, only 18 per cent of aged care homes allow residents to keep a pet.

The gap is even wider for those receiving in-home support. An alarming 91 per cent of older adults with pets who rely on government-funded Home Care Packages (HCPs) receive no assistance with their pet’s care. As a result, many are forced to surrender their beloved animals to shelters, adding distress to an already difficult transition in life.

“Older adults often face loneliness and isolation and rely on their furry, finned or feathered friends to thrive.”

“Older adults often face loneliness and isolation and rely on their furry, finned or feathered friends to thrive,” says Trish Ennis, chief executive officer of Companion Animal Network Australia (CANA), which represents companion animal welfare organisations across Australia.

“Through our Pet Friendly Aged Care program, we work to preserve this critical bond, keeping people and pets together for as long as it benefits people’s health and wellbeing.”

Benefits of pets in aged care

For many older adults, the ability to bring a beloved pet into their residential aged care home is life changing.

Karen Meyer, a resident at Lifeview Argyle Court in Victoria, knows this firsthand through the companionship provided by her six-year-old dog, Pip. Since moving to the residential aged care home mid last year, Pip has been her constant companion, bringing joy to the entire Lifeview community.

“Pip has truly enriched my life – she’s a beautiful little gem,” Karen says. “She gets me out walking and loves all the pats she gets from residents and staff. The moment someone approaches her, she flops onto her back, ready for a tummy tickle!”

Karen firmly believes in the importance of allowing pets in aged care. “Pets become part of the family, and it’s wonderful to have the opportunity to bring them with you,” she explains. “I love Pip to bits, and I can’t imagine life without her.”

The support pets provide their owners living at home is also important.

After a long illness, Pauline Freeman and her husband John adopted Daisy in the last months of her John’s life. Pauline’s family was concerned that after nearly 63 years of marriage, John’s passing would prove too much for her. Two years later, the comfort that Daisy has bought to Pauline’s life has been wide reaching.

“I feel that I need my dog, Daisy, for emotional support, fitness and a sense of purpose. Having her is so significant in my life – I’d be a much sadder and incomplete person without her. Daisy brings me joy and happiness. She’s with me all day, loving me as much as I love her. The sensory comfort I gain from patting and cuddling Daisy helps me enormously,” says home care recipient Pauline.

More support needed

Numerous studies highlight how pet ownership and animal-assisted therapy reduce loneliness, stress, pain and anxiety in older adults. Animals encourage physical activity and social engagement, significantly enhancing quality of life.

Yet, despite these proven benefits, the aged care sector remains largely unequipped to support older adults in caring for their pets.

Amanda Grimmer, client relationship manager with home care provider SereneCare says, “We know that people prefer to remain in their homes, and to do so successfully, they often need help with their beloved pets.

“The Support at Home program can be a game-changer, if it enables older adults to continue caring for their pets while receiving the support they need.”

Get involved

CANA is calling on aged care providers, policymakers and community members to take part in the 2025 Pet Friendly Aged Care Survey, to help inform their advocacy on policy reform.

Your input will help shape a future where older adults – whether in residential care, retirement villages or receiving in-home support – can continue to experience the companionship of their beloved pets.

By participating in the survey, you are advocating for policies and programs that keep people and pets together, improving the mental and physical wellbeing of older Australians

We are also calling for people to sign our petition calling on Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler and Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells to increase the number of pet-friendly aged care support services. ■

Trish Ennis, Chief Executive Officer, Companion Animal Network Australia
australiacan.org.au

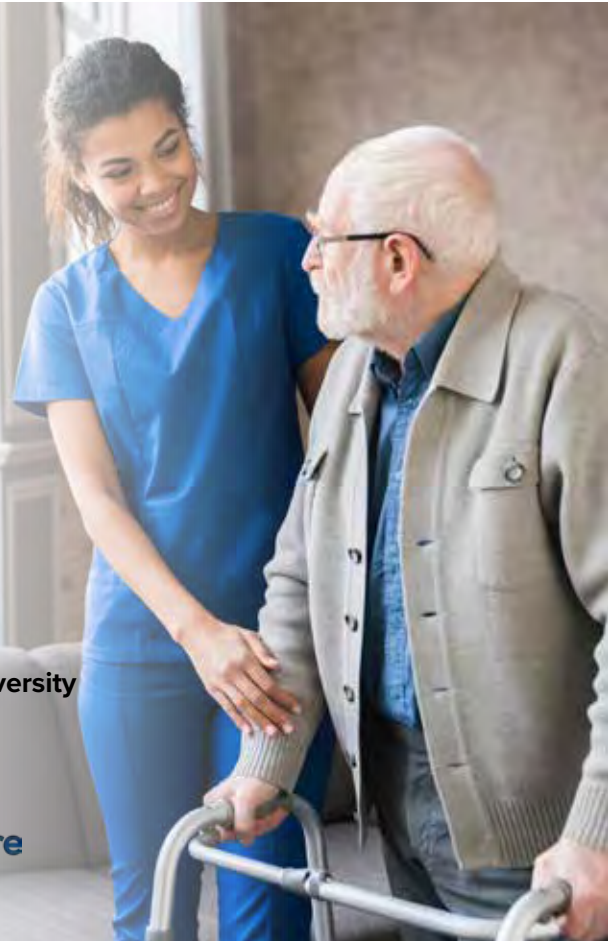
Take the survey: petfriendlyagedcare.com.au/surveys/
Sign the petition: change.org/p/demand-for-the-australian-government-to-support-older-pet-owners-in-home

Celebrating diversity in aged care

Access a range of resources and tools including practical guides, checklists, tips and roadmaps to help prevent discrimination and encourage inclusivity.

Available on Ageing Australia's Workforce Hub, these resources aim to support workers experiencing discrimination, empower providers to tackle this issue and foster a positive work environment, and educate older Australians and their families.

Find out more:
employment.agedservicesworkforce.com.au/culturaldiversity



Nursing transition to practice program

Ageing Australia is committed to providing expert education and support for nurses in the aged care sector. Our nursing program provides nurse learners with a comprehensive learning experience, combining online professional development sessions, mentorship and portfolio development.

The nursing program is for:

- newly graduated registered nurses (including nurse practitioners)
- newly graduated enrolled nurses

First intake commencing on 12 May 2025.

Limited places available.

Find out more: employment.agedservicesworkforce.com.au



This program is proudly funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care.

Embedding sustainability into aged care

Takeaways from Fronditha Care's new ESG approach

Older Australians are disproportionately affected by increasing extreme weather events, like heatwaves, bushfires and flooding, with providers like Fronditha Care committed to mitigating the impacts of climate change on their staff and the older people in their care. Fronditha Care has already taken meaningful steps by installing solar, and they're stepping things up even further by launching a comprehensive three-year strategy, developed in collaboration with KPMG, which puts them at the forefront of the sector's sustainability vision.

Faye Spiteri OAM, chief executive officer of Fronditha Care, believes that the environmental, social and governance (ESG) lens needs to become one of the industry's top priorities.

"Even though providers are facing significant aged care reforms, ESG plans are vital and organisations need to make room for them. All aged care providers need to consider developing an ESG plan to ensure continuity of care and business resilience," she said.

The benefits of focusing on sustainability are clear for businesses:

- Three in five CEOs (58 per cent) report increased demand for transparency on ESG issues reflecting a shift in consumer preferences.
- Higher ESG performance scores correlate with higher employee satisfaction and retention, which could be an important differentiator in the market.
- Many sustainability actions, particularly those involving efficiency improvements, can reduce costs.

Fronditha Care has a 10-year strategic framework (2022-32), with their ESG strategy a priority for 2025 to be implemented across a three-year horizon. There are some key takeaways from the Fronditha Care experience that will benefit other aged care providers hoping to embark on their own ESG journey.

Takeaway 1 – Understand current practices

By getting a clearer picture of work already underway, you can consolidate efforts, identify gaps and build on existing initiatives. This involves conducting assessments to establish a baseline of energy and water consumption, waste management, vehicle use and other environmental factors.

Fronditha Care undertook a baseline assessment across all facilities and, as a result, will be completing water audits to further understand and improve water usage efficiency. It was found that two sites consumed approximately 167 per cent more water on average compared to the other sites.



Chief Executive Officer of Fronditha Care, Faye Spiteri OAM, believes a focus on ESG is vital for aged care providers.

Takeaway 2 – Develop an action plan

When integrated into the broader business strategy, sustainability can improve the implementation and efficiency of operations. An action plan should include a mix of quick wins like switching to energy efficient lighting and more ambitious actions like investing in renewable energy sources.

Establishing governance structures ensures that sustainability goals are monitored, and progress can be tracked effectively with existing governance mechanisms.

Roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined, with clear accountabilities for each action in the plan.

One of the priorities in the first year of Fronditha Care's ESG strategy is to develop a roadmap for uplifting their in-house sustainability data capability to support tracking and measuring of sustainability efforts as part of a broader IT uplift and strategic framework priorities for 2025.

Takeaway 3 – Engage with staff

Staff are often best placed to identify how daily operations can be improved for better environmental outcomes, leading to innovative solutions that may not be apparent to management alone.

Staff engagement can include surveys, working groups for employees to voice their suggestions and formal recognition of staff who have contributed to the implementation of the strategy.

The Fronditha Care team is already onboard. A recent staff survey revealed an overwhelming 92 per cent of respondents viewed sustainability as important and 96 per cent were willing to actively participate in sustainability efforts.

Evan Rawstron, Partner and National Lead for Health and Human Services, KPMG Australia and Lauren Frost, Director of Aged Care, KPMG Australia
kpmg.com

Advocates stand ready to help navigate reform

OPAN offers support for individuals and providers

An aged care advocate's ultimate goal, when supporting an older person, is to make themselves redundant, according to Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) CEO Craig Gear OAM.

"The results of a recent evaluation of the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP), which OPAN manages, suggests we are having a startling degree of success," said Craig.

Through the NACAP, the Department of Health and Aged Care funds 235 advocates and support staff across OPAN's national nine-member network to support older people to access the care and services they need.

Australian Healthcare Associates (AHA) were commissioned to conduct an independent evaluation of the program's effectiveness and efficiency between August 2023 and June 2024.

Ninety per cent of the NACAP recipients surveyed reported being satisfied with the services they received due to the professionalism of advocates and the quality of support.

Seventy-four per cent also felt more confident about discussing their needs with their provider after speaking to an advocate. Those results didn't come as much of a surprise to Kate Dalton, an advocate with Elder Rights Australia (ERA), one of OPAN's network members.

"For me, a magic moment happens when an older person says, 'I'm not going to say a word in that meeting', and then we go in, and I don't have to say anything at all," she said. "When someone is beside you, it gives you the confidence to self-advocate."

Craig said the relationship between advocates and providers was often portrayed as adversarial, when in fact we are working towards the same common goal – safe, high-quality aged care.

"Advocates' independence from both the government and service providers enables them to build a trusted relationship with older people," he said.

"By providing older people with a safe environment in which to speak up, advocates can help to resolve issues and concerns before they escalate to complaints." Since early intervention is a key component in any complaint resolution process, advocates support the work of aged care staff, too, by engaging with them before issues escalate.

Craig believes the role of independent advocates will become even more crucial under the new rights-based Aged Care Act, when it commences on 1 July 2025. The new Act enshrines advocacy in the primary legislation and includes an obligation on providers to grant advocates access to their services when supporting a client.

"OPAN is already playing a key role in informing older people, their families and other representatives about what they can expect from these once-in-a-generation aged care reforms," said Craig.

"We anticipate a significant increase in demand for our services during the implementation phase, due to both the rate of the reform and its complexity.

"The face-to-face information sessions delivered by our advocates in



community and residential aged care settings will be an important part of helping older people understand what the changes mean for them.

"Our specialist financial officers can also provide targeted information and support."

As the national peak body for individual aged care advocacy, OPAN is also developing resources to support aged care providers in the move to rights-based aged care.

"Reform of this scale will be challenging, but by working together, I believe we can create the sort of cultural shift the Aged Care Royal Commission envisioned when it put a new, rights-based Act at the top of its list of recommendations," said Craig.

"The new legislation places a positive duty on providers to understand and deliver services to older people in line with the Statement of Rights.

"OPAN is well placed to assist providers in this area. We can also support providers to meet the strengthened quality standards, particularly around supported decision-making and open disclosure.

"If aged care staff are confident about their responsibilities in relation to the new Act, that's a win for providers and a win for older people."

OPAN provides free, independent and confidential advocacy support for older people and their families via the Aged Care Advocacy Line 1800 700 600. ■

Older Persons Advocacy Network
opan.org.au

Spirituality, good health and wellbeing are intertwined

Creating a culturally safe space for First Nations people

Dr Bruce Rumbold, an adjunct professor at La Trobe University, once said, “The recent revival of interest in spirituality in later life marks a significant step forward in the person-centred care of ageing people. The benefits will, however, be of limited value if we do not attend to the settings in which spirituality is to be lived.”

This observation is particularly relevant when considering biculturalism as experienced by Australia and New Zealand, where it is situated within a multicultural context in which many cultures and ethnicities coexist.

Associate Professor Richard Egan from the University of Otago recently spoke in Australia about this topic. He noted that the great spiritual challenge is to understand more about the legacy of colonisation and how spiritual care can help address some of the spiritual distress and dysfunction brought about by intergenerational and ongoing trauma.

While some of the research and learnings in this area are specific to New Zealand (especially those related to the Waitangi Treaty), much of it mirrors and amplifies the Australian context.

A main theme emerges from this rich research – spirit, good health and wellbeing are intertwined.

First Nations people hold a holistic worldview of interconnectedness that respects all living beings across time and traditionally prioritises ‘we’ over ‘me’.

Spirit is the foundation of First Nations’ culture and community. Emeritus Professor Dr Len Collard, a Whadjuk Nyungar elder, and others define spirit as a deep sense of knowing and being; the source of interconnection between a person, their family, community, land and culture, which provides a sense of purpose and meaning.

In Australia, there is a quality-of-life assessment tool and package for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples called Good Spirit, Good Life.

Developed through community-based research with older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by Professor Dawn Bessarab, Associate Professor Kate Smith and Lianne Gilchrist from the University of Western Australia’s Centre for



Aboriginal Medical & Dental Health, the Good Spirit, Good Life model comprises twelve factors that strengthen and protect an older person’s inner spirit.

Beyond basic needs, health and respectful supports and services, these twelve factors include spirituality, family and friends, safety and security, country and elder role.

It is significant that the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety found that the Australian aged care system has fallen short of being culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Good Spirit, Good Life model could be an important framework for providing conditions and care that are relevant and positive for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – both the older people actively receiving care and our workforce.

Andrea Kelly, Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner, notes that if your aged care site or at-home care does not have any First Nations clients, it will not be long before you do, and that First Nations people will also be represented in the workforce. The time for change is now.

Richard Egan reminds us that spiritual care is important ‘midstream and upstream, not just at the bedside’.

From the holistic approach of First Nations people – Good Spirit, Good Life in Australia and Te Whare Tapa Whā in New Zealand (a Māori model taught in every school) – we can infer that acknowledging spirituality alongside health and emotional wellbeing is a necessary part of a shift towards a truly culturally appropriate aged care system. ■

Jacquie Molloy, Communications Specialist, Meaningful Ageing Australia
meaningfulageing.org.au

With thanks to the research shared by Associate Professor Richard Egan (University of Otago) and the stories told by Interim First Nations Aged Care Commissioner Andrea Kelly at Meaningful Ageing Australia’s Breakfast Symposium, with NATSIIAAC, Spiritual Care: Learning from bicultural NZ research and First Nations models of care, November 2024. You can view the recording of that session at meaningfulageing.org.au/product/breakfast-symposium

New cookbook celebrates memories

Lifeline giving residents' passion for baking a boost



Lifeline Argyle Court resident Jo preparing her steamed pudding for the cookbook.

culinary expertise. “Dad used to cook Chinese, Japanese, all sorts of different cooking,” she says. “He probably learnt in the army. He taught me. He was in World War I and World War II. He just loved cooking and so do I. He taught me the special fried rice. How to cook pork and get the crackling just perfect. The secret is the salt.”

Carmel goes into more detail – but you’ll have to buy the book to find out the rest for the best pork crackle ever! (It’s available from Lifeline’s website.) Or there’s Corry and her recipe for jam drops. Corry spoke about her friendship with former prime minister of Australia, Bob Hawke, whose picture with Corry appears in the cookbook. “That pen (Bob is holding) is my pen! He took that off me to do an autograph for someone,” Corry says. Another former prime minister gets a mention on the page celebrating Jenny and her jelly slice recipe.

“During one of my previous roles we did Gough Whitlam’s testimonial at the St Kilda Town Hall,” Jenny recalls. “I danced with him, too. He’s very tall! I was a waitress. I’m five-foot-three but I was able to wear heels.”

The cookbook is another example of Lifeline celebrating and empowering residents to continue their passions.

Melbourne residential aged care provider Lifeline has published its second resident cookbook in two years. Following the success of its first foray into resident recipe books in 2023, with *Resident Recipes – From Our Homes to Yours*, Lifeline took a slightly different direction in 2024 by showcasing residents’ favourite baking recipes.

The cookbook, aptly titled *Baking Traditions – Recipes and Recollections from Lifeline Residents*, is more than just a collection of quality recipes that have stood the test of time. The book celebrates every resident’s history and personality, with anecdotes and a selection of photos from the residents and their families – past and present.

“This cookbook was all about desserts, cakes, pies, scones, biscuits and puddings and the response was extremely positive. The stories and photos were a major focus this year. We wanted to make this cookbook as much a celebration of each resident and their personality as their recipe,” said Cody Winnell, Lifeline’s executive manager – marketing and communications.

For example, Carmel, who provides her recipe for chocolate crackles, talks about her dad’s influence on her



Lifeline Willow Wood resident Corry, pictured with former Australian prime minister Bob Hawke.

“All the recipes were cooked and tested by our chefs alongside the residents, and it became a communal activity, with all residents enjoying the final dishes,” Cody said.

“You will see in the photographs of each dish just how much effort was put into getting them absolutely picture perfect for publishing.”

Lifeline is selling the cookbooks at its website. ■

Lifeline
lifeline.com.au



AGED CARE ADVISORY SERVICE

SUPPORTING AGED CARE PROVIDERS



AGED CARE ADVISORY SERVICE HAS A RANGE OF SKILLS AND EXPERTISE TO SUPPORT APPROVED PROVIDERS WHEN THEY NEED IT MOST

ADVISORY SERVICES

- Our experienced Advisory Team has been appointed to multiple aged care providers.
- Extensive experience in consulting and senior operational roles ensures we are well positioned to support residential aged care providers who are required (often at short notice) to appoint an Eligible Advisor and/or Administrator.
- Together with resolving Sanctions and Notices to Agree, we have resolved some of the largest COVID-19 outbreaks in Australia.
- All consultants are experienced and insured as appropriate, are resident focussed, and experienced in mitigating serious risk.
- Consultants and Assessors experienced in both Residential and Home and Community services, can provide Independent Audits against the Aged Care Quality Standards for Residential and Community Care providers.
- Our service is inclusive of upskilling your existing team to create sustainability and develop skills across the team from the board room to the floor.

INTERIM MANAGEMENT – CLINICAL, OPERATIONAL AND SENIOR ROLES

- Aged Care Advisory Service can support aged care providers with unforeseen vacancies. Vacancies often cause significant disruption to business, leaving your home vulnerable to compliance issues, increased unresolved issues including funding gaps, complaints and human resource issues.
- Our interim management and clinical management services provides a solution that allows providers to focus on recruitment without pressure to “fill a role”.
- Care Planning and Assessment services can provide you with experienced RN resources to rectify identified gaps, whilst transferring sustainable skills and processes to your team.
- Additionally, these services can be used to provide coaching, and mentoring should you identify a team member who needs support to step into a more senior role, or who has skills gained in a non-aged care setting.



Phone 1300 413 911
www.agedcareadvisoryservice.com.au

Residents recreate iconic moments

Uniting NSW.ACT keeping it fun



Margaret Scholz as Olivia Newton-John playing Sandy in the movie Grease.

Uniting NSW.ACT's Starrett Lodge residents are at it again. This year they've reached new heights with a calendar that captures some of their favourite pop stars and singers!

For the last 15 years, the residents at the Hamlyn Terrace residential aged care home have put their heads together to come up with a fun calendar photoshoot that really lifts their spirits and allows them to make a little magic.

Last year they delved into the movie archives and recreated their favourite moments from films such as *The Shining*, *The Sound of Music*, *Grumpy Old Men* and lots more.

One resident from 2024's calendar Margaret Scholz, who featured as Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* said, "It was so exciting to be a part of the calendar, dressing up and being photographed like an actual star."

This year, Margaret is back as Olivia Newton-John! Service Manager Tracey Chapman said, "This is a great opportunity to show the community a different side to residential aged care and let them see how we encourage our residents to do things they thought they'd never do. "It is so exciting to be able to lift the spirits of our residents and for them to be able to engage with something creative and work together on a common goal. "Residents are always keen to be a part of the calendar, and collaborate with staff on ideas, which we are always happy to embrace in the lead up to the photo shoot."

The theme of this year's calendar is Famous Singers, however, even the staff were surprised when they picked the Spice Girls. Other months feature Elvis, Tina Turner, Dolly Parton, ABBA, The Beach Boys, Barbara Streisand and our very own Jessica Mauboy gets a run in October.



Erna as a Tina Turner look-alike.



Raymond Toohill shaking a tail feather as Elvis.

“The hardest part is coming up with the costumes. We look online and scour our local op shops and party shops, and our fantastic staff and volunteers also donate items for us. This year it took several weeks to source everything we needed,” said Tracey.

“The residents have had so much fun participating in the 2025 calendar. Some are returning for more fun, and we have others who are first timers – but everyone loves the whole experience and especially the photo shoot.”

Another resident who has come back for more is David Baines, who featured as Jack Nicholson’s character in the horror movie *The Shining* for last year’s calendar. For this year he has teamed up with some fellow residents to feature as one of the Beach Boys.

“It is all a bit of fun and something enjoyable to do. I am happy to be a part of it, especially if it gives us a chance to raise money to get out and about more,” he said.

Sales of the 2025 calendar raised almost \$2,000 which will be used to fund resident activities like trips to museums, a Skywalk at Sydney Tower and even a visit to Fighter World in Newcastle – some of the residents’ bucket list activities.

Who knows what the staff and residents will come up with for their 2026 calendar, however, one thing is for sure, it adds to a culture of fun at Starrett Lodge and the funds will help the good times keep coming throughout the year. ■

Uniting NSW.ACT
uniting.org



Uniting NSW.ACT staff played an important role in getting residents ready for the photo shoot.



(Left to right) Alfred, Elizabeth 90, Chris and Patsy channelling ABBA.

Culture of compassion at Carinity

Client testimonials offer outstanding ProductReview.com.au rating

Residents come first in aged care – and a carer’s motivation should be to help seniors live well. At Carinity Aged Care, the team empowers residents to find purpose every day. It’s part of a culture of care fostered over the 75-year history of the Queensland not-for-profit.

“Our philosophy of ‘living with purpose’ underpins our approach to residential aged care and is fundamental to the creation of a sense of belonging for the seniors we support,” said Executive Manager of Residential Aged Care, Heidi Wiebe.

“An important part of our work is helping staff, residents and families understand that what matters is the resident’s quality of life; doing what brings them enjoyment.

“Increasingly, conversations around care will become, ‘How do you want to live?’ instead of, ‘How can we care for you?’ It’s a really important shift in focus, and it’s our responsibility to shift that mindset around care delivery and how we achieve the right balance.”

Supporting each resident’s own experience when transitioning into aged care – and making that transition as easy and as smooth as possible – are an important part of Carinity’s philosophy.

That positive customer experience begins with streamlined online applications making the first steps of accessing permanent residential, respite and dementia-specific care easier for seniors and their loved ones.

Moving somewhere new isn’t always easy, so Carinity makes new residents feel right at home by presenting them with welcome gift boxes.

In-house chefs and cooks, who prepare meals on-site using fresh local produce, regularly seek feedback from residents to ensure they love the food they’re served. A resident’s choice and control over almost every aspect of their day-to-day life is a welcome evolution from the ‘nursing home’ approach of decades past – where seniors were expected to fit into the schedules and services that suited providers.

Leti Asi, the longest-serving staff member at Carinity Clifford House in Brisbane, has had the opportunity to observe how the approach to care has evolved over the 40 years she has worked in aged care.

The activities officer says modern care spans well beyond just the physical health of residents – and seniors have benefited from this evolution within the sector.

“Modern approaches to aged care are focused on maintaining each resident’s right to live their life the way they choose,” Leti said.

“The understanding of holistic care for our residents has really improved. Residents’ preferences, tastes and lifestyles are accommodated as much as possible.

“Over the decades we’ve discovered that the difference between residents really living, and just enduring, lies in the richness and variety of meaningful experiences.”

Carinity Chief Executive Officer, Kevin Griffiths, said the organisation’s faith-based origins underpin the desire of employees to “positively impact the lives of so many special people in our communities”.

“Compassion and caring for others were key components of Jesus’ love for humankind. Following this example, Carinity exists to support people in need,” Kevin said.

“Our passion is working with and through people to make a difference to others. Our people aim to make a real difference to others each and every day.

“When we are at our best this is what we do – making a real difference in the lives of those we serve and those we serve alongside.”

Residents of Carinity’s eleven residential aged care communities – and their family members – have voiced their appreciation for this model of care.

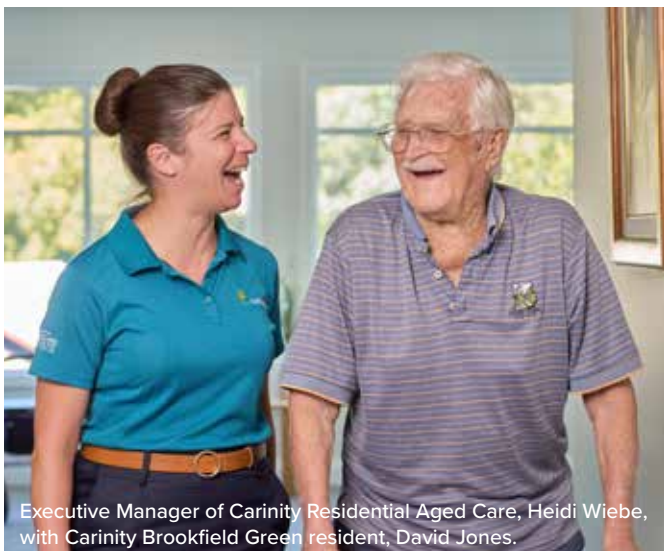
For the second year in a row, client testimonials have seen Carinity top the Health Services category in the ProductReview.com.au awards.

Satisfied users of both Carinity’s residential aged care and home care services delivered the organisation an average rating of 4.8 stars out of five.

Kevin said the award is an acknowledgement of the lengths Carinity staff go to when providing care.

“Our reason for being is to make a real difference to the lives of the people we are called to care for,” Kevin said.

“To have those people recognise our efforts through their kind reviews, and to receive an award as a result, is special to us.” ■




Executive Manager of Carinity Residential Aged Care, Heidi Wiebe, with Carinity Brookfield Green resident, David Jones.

Carinity Aged Care
carinity.org.au



The Ageing Australia difference *for* retirement living *and* seniors housing operators


Discover the benefits of membership



Comprehensive member support
Accessible member support and advice available Monday to Friday.



Informed and impactful advocacy
A voice at federal, state and territory government.




Specialised leadership and policy expertise
A dedicated team with direct lines to state government, regulators and influencers.


Ageing Australia proudly represents the majority of Australia’s retirement living and seniors housing operators in every state and territory.

Our dedicated retirement living and seniors housing team provides operators with tailored support for every aspect of your business – helping you thrive in a changing market.

Get in touch today, to find out what we can do for you.

 1300 222 721

 members@ageingaustralia.asn.au

 ageingaustralia.asn.au

Quality *and* compliance made easy

Prepare your organisation for the new Aged Care Act with Ageing Australia's suite of quality and governance services tailored for the aged and community care sector.

Schedule a free demo today to learn more.

Ageing Australia Quality Manage System (QMS)

A customisable solution providing compliant policies, processes and resources to guide staff in residential care, home care, retirement living and disability services.

- Policies and processes aligned to the Aged Care Standards
- Targeted audits for practice validation
- Centralised incident and feedback management

Ageing Australia Compliance Hub


Self-assessment tools to check readiness for the Aged Care Quality Standards, Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards and NDIS Practice Standards.


- Compliance Hub Lite – a free and practical tool for Ageing Australia members
- Supports accreditation preparation
- Policy template and resource library
- Automated Improvement Plan generation


Ageing Australia Governance Portal

Supports good governance through effective and secure meeting management whether inperson or online with tools for file collaboration and high level encryption.

- Conflict checker and drag and-drop agenda creation
- Real-time voting with E-signature
- Auto-generated minutes and actions with update alerts

 1300 222 721

 quality@ageingaustralia.asn.au

 ageingaustralia.asn.au/quality-and-compliance-platforms/

Three key workforce challenges for 2025

How technology can help

More than 3.8 million Australians, or 15 per cent of the total population, are currently aged over 65. By 2057, that will rise to 8.8 million, or 22 per cent of the population. As our population ages, demand for aged care services will escalate, creating unique workforce pressure points for already stretched providers.

These pain points are multifaceted and there are no easy fixes. However, the right technology can help providers overcome the three key workforce challenges for 2025 and into the future: compliance overwhelm, staff retention and labour costs.

Challenge 1 – Compliance overwhelm

Compliance is a ‘necessary evil’ for organisations operating in aged care; however, it’s more than a box ticking exercise. It helps ensure society’s most vulnerable people can access quality care.

Whether tracking mandatory care minutes, ensuring qualifications are up-to-date, or producing reports for government authorities, the compliance burden often falls upon frontline workers and managers.

In the 2024 report, *State of the Sector: Aged Care*, 23 per cent of respondents said ‘compliance requirements’ were the biggest challenge for meeting reforms introduced since the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. This challenge was second only to concerns over funding.

Automating non-essential people management tasks (such as roster

creation) and using technology to streamline data analysis and reporting is one way to get ahead. Humanforce’s AN-ACC Real-Time Dashboard offers users visibility of adherence to resident care minute and registered nurse care minute targets in a single report to help maintain star ratings.

Challenge 2 – Talent attraction and retention

Evidence suggests there simply aren’t enough workers in aged care to provide the services required. The Royal Commission found Australia requires a 20 per cent increase in direct-care staffing to reach ‘acceptable’ staffing, equivalent to at least 41,000 workers.

In addition, employee burnout and high turnover sparked by the physical, mental and emotional burden placed on aged care workers are ongoing threats. A report by CompliSpace, *A Perfect Storm: What’s Driving Australia’s Aged Care Staffing Crisis* (2021), found 40 per cent of workers intended to leave the industry within the next three years.

Stress, poor remuneration and “too much paperwork” were cited as the top three reasons for leaving the industry altogether.

An appealing employee experience (EX) is key to talent attraction and retention, with technology playing a role by simplifying pathways to engage staff, build connection and also offer easy access to employee benefits.

Humanforce’s EX solution helps managers understand employee motivators and challenges by using customised survey forms, collecting feedback and measuring engagement across their business. In addition,

Humanforce’s Thrive Wellbeing app offers a range of tools and benefits to help employees with their financial health, including access to earned wages and cashback discounts on everyday purchases.

Challenge 3 – Labour costs and agency usage

A workforce deficit means the work burden falls to remaining staff, who may be asked to take on additional shifts with penalty rates, which can increase the possibility of burnout as well as increase costs for the business.

To plug gaps in shifts, many organisations rely on agency staff from third-party agencies. Research published in the *Australasian Journal on Ageing* in 2022 found that approximately 9 per cent of all registered nurses, enrolled nurses and personal care workers in residential aged care facilities are external contractors.

These workers are often working for multiple employers and may not have the time or inclination to build meaningful relationships with residents, which can undermine the continuity of care.






Agency staff are also expensive. Aged care accountancy firm StewartBrown’s *Aged Care Financial Performance Report* (2023) found spend on agency staff had more than doubled in the past year. The same report also revealed 64 per cent of aged care homes in Australia are operating at a loss.

Humanforce’s Talent solution reduces reliance on agency staff and acts as a one-stop talent destination that helps organisations build pools of qualified candidates, contractors, internal staff and alumni. It helps to strengthen employer brands via the creation of talent communities and enables unbiased screening and smoother candidate management.

The strength of any organisation – but especially those in aged care – lies in its people. A well-executed human resources strategy supported by technology can give your business the edge in turbulent times. ■

Humanforce
humanforce.com

The best-in-one HCM suite for the Aged Care industry

Workforce Management  intelliHR  Talent  Payroll  Thrive Wellbeing 



Trusted by Aged Care customers including: Estia Health, Bolton Clarke, Regis Aged Care, Southern Cross Care QLD and more

Download our eBook:
Strategic HRM in Aged Care workplaces

How innovative HR technology can enhance business performance



The impact of nurse-physio collaboration

Why a multidisciplinary approach supports better health outcomes



Inter-professional collaboration is essential in aged care, ensuring older adults receive well-rounded, high-quality support. Nurses and physiotherapists play a key role in this teamwork, working together to improve mobility, prevent decline and enhance overall wellbeing.

It is well understood in the literature that the benefits of collaboration allow participants to achieve together more than they can individually, serve larger groups of people, and grow on individual and organisational levels.

It is generally believed that collaborative efforts yield better health services and outcomes for the populations that are served, leading to improved efficiency, improved skills mix, greater levels of responsiveness, more holistic services, innovation and creativity, and a more personalised approach to care.

In particular, collaboration between nurses and physiotherapists ensures holistic, patient-centred care, addressing all aspects of a resident's health.

For example, when a physiotherapist develops a rehabilitation plan, nurses play a key role in monitoring progress, managing pain and assessing medication side effects. This ongoing exchange of information helps prevent hospital readmissions and ensures comprehensive care.

In cases of post-surgical recovery, arthritis, and other chronic conditions, this teamwork creates a more effective care pathway, leading to better health outcomes for residents. Additionally, this

can ease the burden on providers and the healthcare system.

Nurses provide essential daily care for residents, including administering medications, monitoring vital signs, managing wounds, not to mention offering emotional support. Their continuous overview ensures residents' needs are met, and any health changes are quickly addressed.

Physiotherapists, meanwhile, focus on rehabilitation and mobility, helping residents recover from injuries or surgeries, manage chronic conditions like arthritis, and prevent falls—the leading cause of injury deaths. Every year in Australia, approximately 30 per cent of adults older than 65 experience at least one fall.

It's been proved that correctly applied physiotherapy interventions can prevent falls. Expertise in movement and body mechanics complements nursing care, enhancing residents' overall wellbeing and quality of life.

As a treating physiotherapist within aged care and community settings, Michael Zoumaras, Altaira's Allied Health and Wellness Operations Manager, works closely with nurses and other health professionals.

"By collaborating closely with other healthcare professionals, we incorporate the benefits and best healthcare to our residents. Not just in aged care, but in all settings as part of a person's holistic healthcare management plan," he said.

"One of the significant benefits is that we don't just address physical

recovery and prevention, we strongly contribute to the resident's overall wellbeing and emotional health."

Implementing and establishing clear communication paths, regular meetings and a strong emphasis on defining professional roles is key to ensuring inter-professional collaboration is as effective as possible without creating excessive workload.

As aged care continues to evolve, there's a growing focus on mental health and overall wellbeing. Nurses and physiotherapists working together can make a real difference, not just in physical recovery but also in supporting residents emotionally. While physiotherapists help improve mobility and function, nurses provide emotional support and monitor mental health, making sure residents feel cared for on all levels.

Their combined expertise leads to better health outcomes and a more seamless care experience, and the onus is on organisations to take advantage of these fruitful collaborations.

Where there is insufficient expertise in the staffing team, it is worthwhile for providers to look for external support. Altaira operates nationally, providing a speciality service of physiotherapy, occupational therapy, exercise physiology and podiatry on-site visits (both in the community and within aged care homes), as well as high-quality training and guidance for the aged care workforce. ■

Altaira
altaira.com.au



ALTAIRA

Your solution for all your aged care staffing needs



Altaira is a national labour hire and recruitment agency providing staffing solutions to the Aged Care and Community sector since 2008.

Altaira can provide:



HEALTHCARE & NURSING

ALLIED HEALTH

HOSPITALITY

CLEANING SERVICES

We provide

- 24/7 phone lines
- Strong Clinical Team
- Focus on Innovative Solutions
- Strong Commitment to Ongoing Staff Training

"We keep working with Altaira because they're the best in the industry. With Altaira, my problem is their problem. My educational needs are their educational needs. We address workforce concerns in a collaborative way, and they want the best quality outcomes, as I do for our residents."

Jo Boylan,
CEO, Clayton Church Homes

Stronger together.



Scan here for more information



When they put their trust in you, **it's vital to have information you can trust.**



Be up to date with the AMH 2025

- **TRUSTED AUSTRALIAN MEDICINES REFERENCE**
Independent and evidence-based drug information to support informed decision making.
- **CONCISE FOR BUSY PRACTITIONERS**
Delivers essential and practical details to facilitate medication management at the point of care.
- **UNIQUE COMPARATIVE INSIGHTS**
Comparative drug information supports users to make rational decisions.



Available online, desktop app or in print
Shop today at amh.net.au



SCAN THE QR CODE TO FIND OUT MORE



Evidence-based protection against burnout

In support of self-care for an aged care sector under reform

At a time when the aged care sector is undergoing continuous reform, self-care may provide protection against burnout from change fatigue.

The ongoing impact of environmental and political change on burnout has been highlighted by the voices of aged care staff in a recent study investigating the protective impact of self-care.

The study, recently published in *Geriatrics* journal, was co-authored by End of Life Directions for Aged Care (ELDAC) Self-Care Room developers Dr Anna Lane and Professor Jennifer Tieman, and was designed to understand aged care workers' views of self-care.

Aged care staff who were interviewed for the study in 2021 shared self-identified reasons for workplace burnout and fatigue, reflecting on how the pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic, Royal Commission and pending aged care reforms created an ever-changing and demanding work environment that provided fertile ground for burnout.

"On top of COVID-19, post the Royal Commission is just change after change after change. That's fatiguing," said a registered nurse and chief executive who participated in the study.

Burnout was defined in the study as a "psychological syndrome emerging

as a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job", while workplace challenges were listed as a reason that would "lead aged care workers to cut back on their hours or leave the workforce completely".

Aside from the toll on workers' own health and wellbeing, burnout is harmful to the aged care sector because it causes high staff turnover and workforce shortages, and lower quality patient care.

In contrast, self-care was highlighted by the study as a strategy to protect aged care workers against burnout and compassion fatigue due to occupational stress. This was raised in interviews with aged care staff as essential to their ability to provide high-quality care for others.

"Participants felt self-care was important but something they often overlooked or let slip because the core business of aged care is to care for others. They frequently described how the nature of the job made it difficult for them to care for themselves," the study said. As one participant shared, "We work in an industry where we're here to care for others and often forget to take care of ourselves."

While self-care is often viewed as an individual responsibility, the study suggested that promotion of staff wellbeing requires a "whole-of-system approach" facilitated by aged care organisations supporting staff, since

many of the factors that affect aged care workers are beyond their control.

"There are implications for organisations and how they create conditions in which self-care practice may be normalised and enabled," the study said.

"Organisational responses (such as supervisor support and development of adaptive coping skills) can facilitate the recognition of workplace pressures and enhance self-care."

Furthermore, the study found that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to supporting self-care, as the aged care workers interviewed for the study listed a diverse array of practices and behaviours that they participate in (at home and at work) for self-care.

"In a multicultural workforce, there are likely to be considerable differences between people in their attitudes and behaviours towards self-care," the study found.

"For self-care to be effective and to have an impact, people will benefit from having access to a range of resources that they can personalise."

For more information on the role of self-care for aged care and downloadable resources for individuals and organisations, visit the Self-Care Room on the ELDAC website. ■

ELDAC

eldac.com.au/our-products/self-care-room

The right staff for culturally appropriate dementia care

How keeping your workforce diverse can help

The requirements of Australia's increasingly diverse cultural demographics must be factored into dementia care in Australia, with workforce diversity a key enabler.

As Australia's population ages, so does the number of individuals living with dementia. According to Dementia Australia, in 2024 there were more than 421,000 Australians with the condition. Unless there is a medical breakthrough, this number is expected to increase to more than 812,500 by 2054.

Among this demographic, many individuals present the additional challenge of being from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, with studies showing more than one in five people living with dementia in residential care are immigrants from non-English speaking countries.

Recent research found over 31 per cent of aged care residents were born overseas, while 9.2 per cent of people using aged care services preferred to speak in a language other than English.

The research, part of a study released by Edith Cowan University, found language barriers can potentially contribute to higher aggression in people with dementia. Researchers explained how "loneliness, boredom, language barriers, and cultural considerations significantly contributed to behaviours and psychological symptoms of dementia for non-English-speaking immigrants compared with non-immigrants".

The study noted how the higher severity of agitation or aggression is likely driven by communication difficulties, and called for increased awareness and education on the impact culture and language have on people receiving residential care and exhibiting signs of dementia.

A separate study conducted in the United States found dementia can also cause regression to a primary language, so individuals may lose the ability to speak English with the onset and development of dementia.

This highlights how a lack of culturally appropriate dementia care can make life difficult for carers as well as residents. Nobody likes to feel misunderstood or unable to

communicate and it is easy to understand how tempers can flare as a result.

Some aged care homes in Australia have adapted to this need by being language-specific; for example, by focusing on supporting members of the Italian, Greek, Indian or Chinese diaspora. This way, residents can communicate with each other, find common ground and feel more at home.

Having the right staff to support these individuals is also important. The good news is Australia is a multicultural country with many individuals who have a CALD background. This means it can be possible to recruit people with the right skills and background from within the community.

If CALD care workers aren't available, the next step is to cast a wider net and draw from international candidates who are qualified to work in the aged care sector. These individuals will find it easier to fit in at their new workplace because their native language is an asset.

The benefit of hiring from overseas to deliver more culturally appropriate dementia support is having care workers who naturally use the same terms as the people in their care would at home. Having clearer, more nuanced communication may mean these workers also find it easier to establish a rapport.

Of course, the challenge can be helping these individuals to fit in with the Australian community, which is why quality placement providers also offer a service to help new immigrants feel at home.

The reality is it is simply not possible to rapidly train English-speaking workers to have an in-depth understanding of the cultural needs of every resident in their care. Looking overseas and using internationally skilled candidates can be a better strategy to fill specific gaps and improve quality of living for dementia patients. ■

The Migration Agency
themigrationagency.com.au

How to improve staff retention



Why employee feedback is important, and the role of AI

Australia's aged care workforce is facing mounting pressure with high turnover, increasing regulatory demands and ongoing skills shortages – but a proactive, strategic approach to workforce planning can break this cycle. Recent reports show that 30 per cent of aged care workers intend to leave within two years. As a result, remaining employees are likely to face increased stress and burnout, impacting their own wellbeing and the quality of care for older Australians. If unaddressed, this will only exacerbate staff shortages, disrupt quality of care and hinder the sector's ability to meet growing demand.

The real cost of high staff turnover

The costs of workforce challenges impact every area of the business, demonstrating why prioritising staff retention is vital.

- **Continuity of care:** Frequent staff changes disrupt relationships between staff and residents, leading to diminished personalised care and increasing stress for residents and families.
- **Financial impact:** Replacing staff costs approximately 1.5 times their annual salary, factoring in recruitment, onboarding and lost productivity. The constant hiring cycle drains resources and reduces operational efficiency.
- **Workforce strain:** Staffing shortages place additional pressures on remaining employees, increasing burnout risk and prompting further resignations.

- **Reputation risks:** High turnover can damage organisational reputation. Inconsistent care, negative reviews and difficulty attracting quality staff creates a cycle that undermines stability and sustainability.
- **Future planning challenges:** High turnover forces providers into reactive workforce decisions, limiting the ability to plan for the future, implement long-term improvements that align to strategy, or build a cohesive culture.

The power of a retention strategy

It takes an evidence-based approach to assess current workforce capabilities against needs, enabling leaders to implement targeted strategies and initiatives to address gaps.

An effective retention strategy informs action, is iterative and agile to changes and curveballs, and must be evaluated regularly and adjusted accordingly.

The evidence you need to best inform your strategy is a combination of internal current workforce data (skills assessments, turnover and vacancy rates), objectively obtained staff feedback, and external considerations such as labour and market forces, and industry trends.

The employee experience is crucial

Research highlights key reasons why workers leave, including stress, excessive expectations, lack of career development and better opportunities elsewhere – but what is your workforce saying?

The most effective retention plans must be informed by feedback from your own staff, which will provide valuable information about what's working and what needs improvement. Remember staff will only provide honest input if they feel safe to do so and know their feedback will be heard and acted upon.

Rather than a one-and-done survey, this requires a proactive and consistent approach, with mechanisms throughout the employee's lifecycle that lean into the detail (such as pulse surveys).

Capturing and analysing feedback at key stages, from onboarding to offboarding, means organisations can identify issues before they escalate, and implement meaningful solutions that improve the employee experience and retention of desired talent.

Leveraging AI for smarter workforce decisions

Advanced AI-driven analytics can transform how organisations respond to core workforce challenges.

By leveraging employee insights maximised with AI technology, providers can move beyond reactive staffing decisions to create sustainable workforce solutions.

A sophisticated employee feedback platform can analyse workforce trends and uncover the precise factors impacting employee turnover and employee engagement. This enables providers to make informed decisions that directly impact retention.

From insights to action

While workforce data is essential, translating it into action is what truly drives change. Organisations that embrace this data-driven action demonstrate they are listening to feedback from staff, which helps build more engaged, capable teams that want to go above and beyond, and stay with you.

To achieve this, organisations must shift from short-term fixes and firefighting to a proactive, forward-thinking, data-driven approach that is beyond what any one human resources individual has the time to do on their own.

The experts can help

If you want to create sustainable workforce solutions in your organisation, reaching out to the workforce experts is an ideal step forward.

At Above & Beyond, we have developed an employee experience software program that integrates employee feedback with AI and understanding of the aged care sector. This allows organisations to identify priority workforce initiatives to help drive employee engagement and your employee net promoter score.

Having the right information and external support is the key to removing guesswork and costly mistakes, and provides clarity to make informed, impactful workforce decisions. ■

Laura Sutherland, Founder & Director, Above & Beyond Group
aboveandbeyondgroup.com.au



Fire Building Compliance Specialist is your first choice when it comes to compliant fire safety training in NSW. We offer high quality, engaging training to not only ensure compliance, but to instill staff with the skills and confidence they need when faced with unexpected emergencies.

Some training services offered include:

- *First Attack Fire Training (practical use of fire fighting equipment)
- *ECO and Evacuation Training
- *Fire Safety Officer Qualifications (in conjunction with Allans Training)

All members receive a FREE compliance consultation, as well as 10% off all Fire Safety Training services.

Contact us today to discuss your training needs.

All training complies with AS3745 & AS4083

 0452 221224  Firebcs.com.au

 info@fireBCS.com.au

Accredited Fire Safety Officer and Refresher Courses

Contact us for upcoming dates

Training to deliver quality food and nutrition

Prepare for the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards

With the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards coming into effect, now is the time for residential aged care providers to review their food and nutrition policies and invest in workforce training.

Among the critical updates for enhanced quality and safety in aged care, ‘Standard 6: Food and Nutrition’ holds particular significance. This standard reinforces the expectation that aged care homes provide nutritious, high-quality meals that meet residents’ needs, preferences and cultural considerations.

To ensure compliance, providers must implement appropriate training for staff, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to support optimal nutrition and hydration for residents.

This will ensure you are not only meeting the new standards but also enhancing the health, wellbeing and dining experience of residents.

Investing in training today will pave the way for a healthier and more person-centred aged care system in the future.

Why Standard 6 matters

Standard 6 focuses on the right of residents to receive nutritious meals that promote health and wellbeing, and providers must demonstrate a commitment to delivering quality meals that align with dietary guidelines and individual resident needs.

Not just about compliance, Standard 6 is about fostering a culture where food is recognised as a cornerstone of quality care. While it is clear meals should be balanced, nourishing and

mindful of allergens, there will be a greater focus on a person-centred approach.

Meals should be personalised according to people’s preferences and dietary needs, there should be a sufficient variety of food offered, and culturally appropriate food should be incorporated.

Resident engagement will be critical and having trained staff to support this will help.

The key elements of training

Achieving compliance with Standard 6 requires providers to go beyond menu planning; it demands a well-trained workforce that understands the importance of nutrition, food safety and resident preferences.

Key training initiatives should include the following elements.

- **Nutrition and meal planning.** Staff should be trained to recognise the nutritional needs of older adults, including how to provide meals that are energy-dense, protein-rich and hydrating. Training should also focus on adapting meals for those with swallowing difficulties or other therapeutic dietary requirements.
- **Safe food handling and allergen management.** Understanding food safety protocols is essential for preventing foodborne illnesses. Staff must be educated on proper food handling, storage and allergen management to ensure meals are safe and suitable for all residents.
- **Resident-centred meal service.** Providing meals that reflect individual preferences and cultural

backgrounds enhances the dining experience. Training should focus on resident centred meal service approaches, encouraging engagement with residents to understand their likes and dislikes.

- **Hydration and supplementation.** Dehydration is a common risk in aged care. Staff should be trained to monitor fluid intake and offer alternative food and fluids to increase resident hydration. Examples include offering fortified drinks, supplements, watermelon, soups, yoghurts, custards, jellies or icy poles.
- **A positive dining environment.** A well-presented and pleasant dining experience can enhance meal enjoyment and encourage an improved intake. Training should include strategies for creating a welcoming and supportive dining environment that fosters social engagement.

The benefits of training

While implementing comprehensive training requires an investment of time and resources, the long-term benefits are substantial.


Providers that prioritise training in Standard 6 will see a range of benefits for residents, staff and your business. Higher levels of resident engagement and reduced risk of malnutrition and dehydration will positively impact overall resident health and wellbeing – as well as satisfaction.

Appropriately trained staff will feel a greater level of confidence, as they feel better equipped to provide more tailored nutritional care, which can lead to a better connection with residents and the workplace, and improved staff retention.

Overall, the effort to maximise compliance with Standard 6 is likely to translate to better feedback, higher star ratings and an enhanced reputation for your business.

At Food Solutions, we understand the critical role nutrition plays in aged care, and our expert team of accredited dietitians and speech pathologists looks forward to helping providers achieve compliance and excellence in aged care nutrition. ■

Food Solutions
foodsolutions.com.au



Explore how people with dementia may express their needs through behaviour, rather than words.

Dementia Training Australia offers a range of training options that focus on the topic of Changed Behaviour and dementia.

Our training can help you to improve the wellbeing of people living with dementia by:

- Building capacity in the aged care workforce to respond to Changed Behaviour.
- Increasing the knowledge of people caring for a person experiencing dementia-related Changed Behaviour.
- Helping to identify and address the issues related to wandering for people living with dementia in the community.

Whether you need an online course, trainer resource, face-to-face workshop or an in-depth consultancy, we have a level and format to suit your education needs.

For more information visit dta.com.au/changed-behaviour or call 1300 229 092.



Scan this code for more information about Changed Behaviour training and resources.



Dementia Training Australia®

When roster gaps aren't shortages

Providers can transform results by revealing roster inefficiencies

Aged care providers work hard to deliver quality services to their customers, meet AN-ACC minutes, attain star ratings and avoid over-working their staff, but overlooking workforce inefficiencies can be costly.

In residential aged care, workforce inefficiencies result in around 20 per cent ineffectiveness and are costing between five and 15 dollars a day per customer.

According to the developers of Effort Management Analysis (EMA), most roster gaps and agency costs are avoidable.

Analysis approach

A workforce is 100 per cent effective, or optimised, when the number of people an organisation will 'need', 'have' and 'use' are the same.

For an EMA, data describing how many staff a facility will 'need', 'have' and 'use' commonly relates to shift demand (often AN-ACC minutes), staff availability, and draft rosters.

This data is analysed as a service, and once uploaded to the EMA, is immediately returned as roster effectiveness, with improvement steps and financial results.

An EMA forecasts workforce inefficiencies and links these back to practical steps that roster clerks and frontline managers can take to reduce problems at the planning, or rostering stage.

By linking to real world actions, providers participating in the analysis were empowered to make immediate improvements, supported by ongoing EMA monitoring.

Issues identified

CENTRI, with the support of G5Strategic, conducted an EMA across multiple residential aged care sites from three different providers.

While planning and rostering for care staff should be straightforward, as care minute demand changes quarterly, our results showed that this is not the case, for the following reasons:

1. roster clerks have most of the information they need, but rosters were compromised because of the complexity of workforce-shift information, factors beyond the clerks' control (e.g. shortages, turnover, lack of training and limited time)

2. when compromised rosters are assumed to be inevitable, 'close enough is good enough' becomes the accepted standard
3. managers have limited time to dive into the detail of roster issues, nor evidence to drive accountability.

Inefficiencies avoidable

Once known, there are many opportunities to find solutions for the inefficiencies identified by an EMA. Our EMAs proved workforce inefficiencies are common, yet avoidable. Astonishingly, more than half of the gaps in shifts could have been filled by available workers who were not contacted.

Other findings included allocating too many staff, extreme overtime and rostering unavailable staff. True capacity shortages were rarer than what was being reported to senior management. Despite using modern rostering tools, similar issues were identified at all sites and could be prevalent across the sector. Ultimately, to ease the roster challenge, clerks and frontline managers need support, including simple steps to take - before the roster is published - to close gaps, cut excess and focus their recruitment efforts. Senior managers need to know what steps were taken, and that value has not been left on the table.

The power of an EMA

With EMA tools, planning and rostering is now simpler because roster clerks will know when, where, and why the roster is inefficient, and how to self-correct the roster before management review it.

Managers and executives can monitor effectiveness against organisational targets, drill down to know when, where and why the workforce is not effective, and recruit with confidence, because they have the right information around workforce shortfalls.

The outcome is a more optimised workforce where staff receive consistent rosters with fewer excess hours, providers have fewer financial and compliance worries, and customers receive consistent quality care. ■

Alex James, Founder, CENTRI Effort Management
centri.com.au; g5strategic.com.au



KINNECTA

Employees Available Under The Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement


(TSS 482 LABOUR STREAM VISA)

Finding Quality Staff

Kinnecta has a pool of qualified individuals currently residing in Australia, ready for employment under the TSS 482 (Labour Agreement Stream) Visa. These candidates hold a Certificate III in Individual Support (CHC33021).

For all enquiries, contact:

 **Louise Reyes**

 **1300 933 524**

 **louise@kinnecta.com.au**

 **kinnecta.com.au**

◆ About Kinnecta

Kinnecta delivers personalised, high-quality care by matching caregivers who align with your values, fostering a sustainable care environment and community. We prioritise delivering care with empathy and dignity. Our advanced platform leverages AI technology to more effectively match caregivers with care recipients, ensuring the highest standards of service.

Ensuring Required Qualifications

Our Global Reach

We have established Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with educational partners in the following countries to deliver the Certificate III in Individual Support:

- Nepal
- Philippines
- Timor Leste
- Vietnam
- India
- Sri Lanka

Thousands of individuals, including qualified nurses, are eager to enroll in this program to fulfill the educational requirements for the TSS 482 Visa.

Your guide to transitioning to the Support at Home program

A five-step plan for providers ahead of July 2025

The transition to the Support at Home program will require significant organisational investment of time and resources to ensure a successful transition on 1 July 2025.

Coinciding with the start of the new Aged Care Act, providers will need to navigate regulatory as well as funding model changes.

The Department of Health and Ageing has recently published the Support at Home Program Provider Transition Guide, which provides guidance on the actions Providers should take to be ready for the Support at Home program.

While the transition guide helps outline the actions providers should take to be operationally prepared, below is a framework we recommend for effectively managing these actions and changes. Key changes include:

- a tiered provider registration model
- government-set price caps (from July 2026)
- care management funding reduced to 10 per cent of package funding
- a shift to quarterly budget management
- new funding pathways
- expansion of support levels from four to eight
- a 'no worse off' principle for current recipients
- introduction of participant contributions.

Step 1 – Identify

The most effective way to begin any transition is by assessing your current position and identifying your desired end goal. By proactively evaluating your current situation, you will be well-prepared to take timely and informed action when further details are released.

Identify key business priorities that can be addressed immediately, outlining necessary resources – personnel, training, technology and funding – to

effectively execute these initiatives as part of the transition:

- assess your current business model, understand major sources of income and expenditure and their impact on the profitability of the business
- evaluate your operating model and resources required to deliver under the Home Care Package program
- examine how well you are using the service delivery staff from a scheduling perspective and identify if there room for improvement
- review systems capability for reporting on services and time spent on specific tasks
- conduct 'time in motion' studies to identify efficiency opportunities.

Step 2 – Plan

Planning for change should be an iterative process, revisiting it regularly as new information becomes available to ensure your priorities remain aligned with evolving requirements. Your transition plan should:

- prioritise key business initiatives, such as pricing models, client communications, technology changes and training
- outline key points of focus and key dates
- highlight current gaps in knowledge that the industry is waiting on information from the government.

Step 3 – Action

Remember that the change is happening to people who are impacted by the unknown, so take your clients on the journey:

- keep clients informed of changes by taking action where you can and listening to their feedback
- begin implementing identified initiatives early to allow for fine-tuning
- project manage the initiatives to ensure changes are made within required timeframes so no one gets left behind.

Step 4 – Review

The need to review your plan is a continuous process that will extend throughout the initial change period and into 2026 as more changes are implemented. You will need to:

- ensure implemented changes continue to align with your business strategy and are helping achieve your business goals
- check that initiatives are achieving their targeted outcomes
- confirm initiatives continually align to the new Aged Care Act and provide client-centred outcomes.

Step 5 – Maintain and monitor

Tracking your progress allows you to make adjustments to ensure your readiness for the new program, specifically you should:

- develop key performance indicators to track the progress of initiatives against their targeted outcomes and identify opportunities for adjustment
- continue to monitor announcements from the government and make adjustments as required
- monitor progress and adjust plans
- ensure changes are embedded into the organisation.

Do you need help to start?

Many providers don't have the internal capacity to manage a transition alone and would benefit from additional support throughout the process. At Provider Assist we use our proven Prepare Well Transition Well methodology to support providers through change by learning about your business, identifying areas of focus and helping you prioritise actions for the greatest chance at success. Whether you consult us or someone else, make sure your external team has the right qualifications and experience to help you succeed through this significant reform. ■

Peter Morley, CEO, Provider Assist
providerassist.com.au

July 1 Changes got you feeling nervous?



We've got your back.



- ✓ Strengthened Standards Transition
- ✓ Fees, Funding & Billing
- ✓ Support at Home Transition

Your Transition Partner in:



Strengthened Standards Transition

With less than six months until the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards take effect, providers must act now – regardless of their Accreditation/Registration cycle. This is more than compliance; it's a chance to enhance care and strengthen your organisation. We'll help you develop a **Strategic Transition Plan**, identifying gaps, outlining actions, and supporting you every step of the way. Provider Assist clients also gain access to our **Strengthened Standards Transition Community**, featuring exclusive webinars and insights from other providers navigating the same journey.



Fees, Funding & Billing

Major changes to fees, contributions, and means testing are coming from 1 July 2025, requiring providers to manage two funding systems while ensuring compliance and revenue integrity. We help by:

- Educating teams on both current and future funding models
- Reconciling billed amounts against fee letters and payment statements
- Automating data processes for accuracy and efficiency
- Updating resident documentation and information packs

Let's future-proof your processes before these changes take effect.



Support at Home Transition

Home Care is undergoing a major transformation, and we help providers optimise profitability and operations while ensuring a smooth transition. Our tailored support includes:

- Profitability Analysis – Identify revenue growth & cost-saving strategies
- Scorecard & Recommendations – Clear action plan with impact projections
- Strategic Pricing Transition Support – Optimising pricing & funding strategies
- Project Support – Customised transition planning
- Digital Transformation – Streamlining tech & automation for efficiency

Let's chat about how we can help you stay ahead.

There are lots of changes coming...But no matter what area of change may be challenging for your Organisation, we've got you covered.

Get in touch to get your strategy.

📞 1300 419 119

✉ team@providerassist.com.au

💻 providerassist.com.au



SCAN ME

Home care reform in 2025

What will it mean for providers?



The Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells announced in parliament in early December 2024 the passing of the Aged Care Bill 2024, meaning the new Aged Care Act (including the Support at Home program) will commence on 1 July 2025.

Support at Home will consolidate funding streams from the Home Care Packages program and Short-Term Restorative Care Programme and leverage a single assessment tool to determine the eligibility, care needs and financial capacity of recipients to contribute to the cost of their own care.

The Support at Home Program is a transformative development for the aged care sector and it is important providers are prepared for the changes. Around 1.4 million people are expected to utilise the new program by 2035, which includes:

- eight levels of funding for ongoing care (initially up to around \$78,000 per year per client)
- improved short-term supports under the new Assistive Technology and Home Modifications (AT-HM) scheme and new restorative care pathway
- a new end-of-life pathway that provides a higher level of funding accessible by older Australians with

less than three months to live via a high-priority assessment system.

Consider your clients

Ahead of 1 July 2025, providers must consider how the new program may impact their existing and future home care clients. Understanding how the new program may impact customer experience too, is a critical step.

As more Australians enter the aged care system for the first time and the grandfathering arrangements taper off, the proportion of clients adopting the new co-funding model will progressively increase.

Providers must plan for changes to their business models and processes and enhance their communication strategies to support clients through this potentially confusing transition.

Providers should also assess their clients' budgets under the new funding model, to identify any potential opportunities or adverse impacts and ensure wellbeing outcomes are maximised.

Plan for funding changes

Home care provider remuneration will see a significant reduction in fixed fees from 1 July 2025, as well as new pricing caps for services set by the Independent Health and Aged Care

Pricing Authority (IHACPA) each year. With increased emphasis on service delivery and funding utilisation, providers will need strong financial and operational discipline to identify opportunities to improve performance and address inefficient or non-sustainable activities. Many of the processes relating to assessment, claims, payment and accumulation of government subsidies are expected to change, including the introduction of a new payment platform for recurring services.

Providers may also need to prepare for events outside of their control, including unexpected delays in delivery of specialised support, goods, equipment, assistive technologies and home modifications, or other factors impacting cash flow (e.g. system related issues and non-payment of co-contribution accounts).

There will be significant funding model changes, including a new funding pool for minor additional services, supplementary grants as part of ongoing funding for providers operating in thin or niche markets (e.g. rural and remote areas), grant funding for specialised support services and separate funding for goods, equipment and assistive technology and home modification. Providers will need to evaluate these changes and identify any shortfalls, or opportunities to secure further funding, to support business operations and client service.

Stay competitive

A new tiered registration model will also reduce requirements for new market entrants to provide some low-care services such as domestic assistance and transport services, and some advisory services such as basic care management. Providers may find increased competition in these service areas and as a result, may need to adapt their business models to a changing competitive environment.

As the industry adapts to the new model for home care, it is important providers strategically assess and forecast the expected impacts of implementation to ensure a successful transition and minimise business risk. ■

Nathan Baird, Partner at McGrathNicol
mcgrathnicol.com



Accountable & actionable advice

from complexity to opportunity

McGrathNicol is a specialist Advisory and Restructuring firm, committed to helping businesses improve performance, manage risk, and achieve stability and growth.

We work with the aged care industry to make an impact. From large investors and independent providers to government and not-for-profits, we have helped organisations achieve financial stability and navigate regulatory conditions. Our clients trust us to guide them through their most critical challenges and to find the opportunity.



McGrathNicol

Home care pricing adjustments

Getting it right the first time

December 2024 saw much-awaited details on the Support at Home program, but more information is needed to help home care providers prepare financially.

We now have confirmation of reduced care management caps and the absorption of package management fees into hourly rates. There's also confirmation of the variable fee structure, where consumers pay more for everyday living services than clinical services.

However, how this plays out in practice remains unknown. The system, in its entirety, has not had any level of consultation. The lack of opportunity to debate its merits increases risks for providers planning their response. The unknowns include:

- changes to demand patterns due to incentives in the new pricing structure
- how the payment system will function
- the level of bad debt providers will need to absorb
- the extent of adjustments as we learn through the implementation and transition process.

Potential challenges

We believe the system is workable; however, potential challenges may arise, including possible negative impacts on all stakeholders compared to the current system.

Consumers could face higher costs in a more commoditised environment, while providers may experience greater pressure on margins.

The structure's incentives and inflexibilities might also lead to increased service hours, ultimately resulting in higher costs for the government.

Delay on price caps

One surprising upside is the delay in implementing price caps on hourly services. Since the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety,

I've argued that regulating hourly service rates is unnecessary and counterproductive. It reduces innovation, commoditises services, squeezes margins and increases service hours.

Home care providers currently operate at an average 3.5 per cent profitability. Deregulated pricing and competition have delivered low average profitability as expected while still allowing top-quartile organisations to achieve margins exceeding 15 per cent.

Our performance review work consistently supports this, showing potential for improved sector-wide profitability. With better overall performance, prices would decline naturally. While we haven't seen formal advice from the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA) on pricing, the government is likely aware of this dynamic.

Health economists and industry accountants widely acknowledge that market-based pricing has not led to excessive margins, as confirmed in the Department of Health and Aged Care's quarterly and annual updates.

The delay allows IHACPA to observe the relationship between pricing and margins in a real-world setting, strengthening arguments that price capping will unnecessarily deliver significant downside with little upside.

What this means for providers

Ultimately, organisations face a complex project before mid-year. Prices will certainly have to change as package management and half the care management fees absorb into the hourly service rates.

StewartBrown published a helpful paper regarding the impact of this changing revenue mix. We agree regarding the overall market impact and the work needed on pricing. There is little room to cut margins across the sector, and it will be impossible to cut costs significantly in the next

few months to absorb an overall price decline. I have encountered very few organisations identifying this as a significant strategic priority in response to the Support at Home reform program.

Getting it right

The only conclusion is that organisations must maintain their revenue per hour of service measure across their client cohort. We expect to see hourly rates increase significantly to absorb the loss of revenue from package management and care management.

Pride Aged Living's basket approach to comparing pricing across the sector provides significant insight into the likely increases in service hour rates.

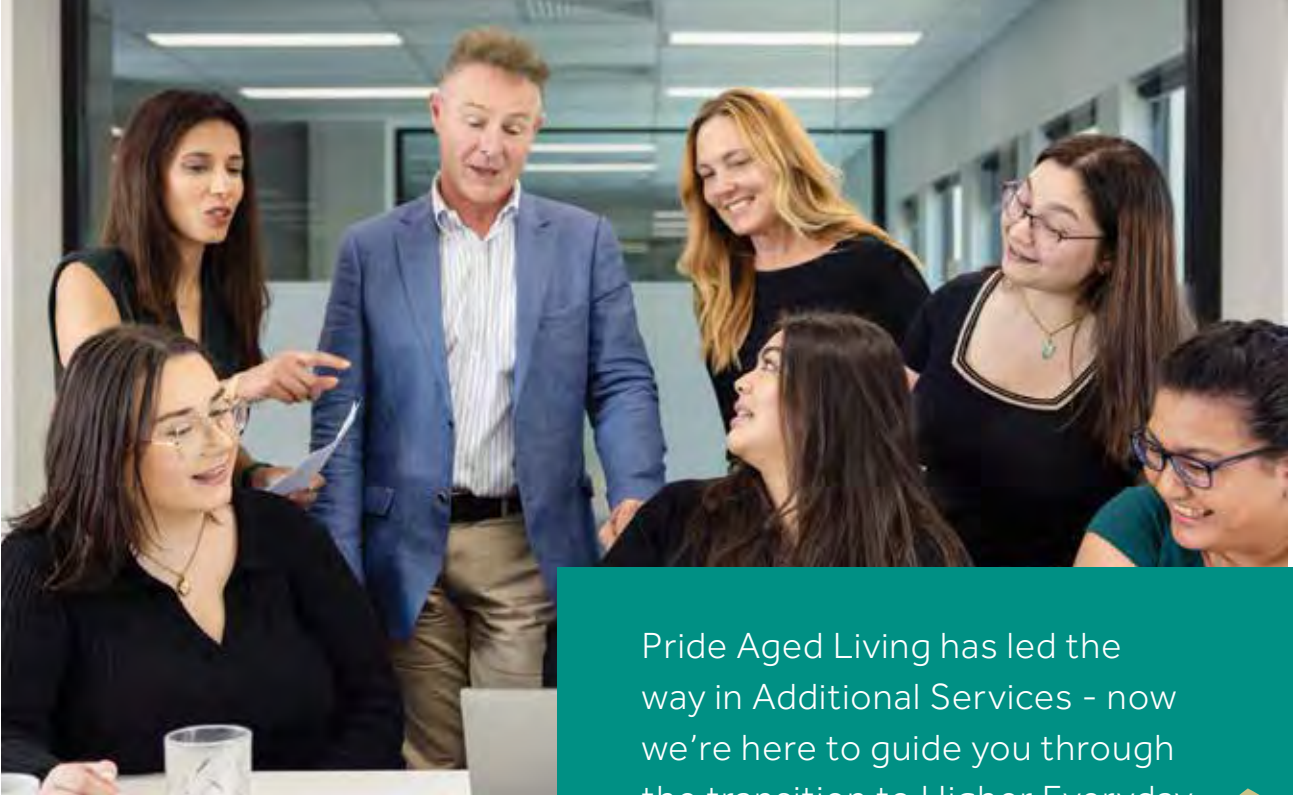
By way of example, using our standard basket, we would expect the median 'customer' price of around \$82 for personal care services and \$143 for nursing services (based on the Government's Home Care Package published pricing schedule December quarter 2024) to need to increase to around \$113 and \$197 respectively, an increase of around 38 per cent. These prices will likely be even higher when increases driven by wage rates are considered in January and July.

Many organisations are not well set up for these adjustments, and we've had numerous conversations with smaller organisations navigating concerns about the pricing levels indicated by this analysis.

Evidence from the Living Longer Living Better reform program suggests pricing decisions remain complex. Some organisations still under-price compared to competitors, even seven years after market pricing was introduced. From an economic perspective, pricing remains the most impactful lever as we transition into this new environment. ■

Jason Howie, Partner, Pride Aged Living
prideagedliving.com.au

From Additional Services to HELF: Trust the Experts



Pride Aged Living has led the way in Additional Services - now we're here to guide you through the transition to Higher Everyday Living Fees.

Pride Aged Living

Pride Aged Living has supported providers of over 25,000 places to successfully implement additional services programs, offering consumers more choice and better quality of life while improving provider viability.

- ✓✓ Person-centred
- ✓✓ HELF compliant
- ✓✓ Implemented on time

The shift is happening - partner with the industry leaders to get it right. **Talk to our experts today.**

Take pride in your success

Visit us to learn how at
PrideAgedLiving.com.au



Would you like predictive analytics with that?

Predicting the future is your new superpower

Imagine if you could predict the future? Thanks to advancements in technology, predictive analytics is no longer a distant dream.

By leveraging statistical techniques from data mining, predictive modelling with smart algorithms and machine learning can analyse current and historical facts to make future predictions. Predictive analytics can transform aged care by shifting the focus from reactive problem-solving to proactive decision-making. In an industry where compliance, cost efficiency, and quality of care are paramount, leveraging predictive insights helps providers stay ahead of challenges.

Why predictive analytics matters

Australia's aged care sector operates in a complex environment shaped by stringent governance, risk management, compliance, accreditation and quality standards. With an ageing population and heightened public scrutiny following the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, providers must consistently demonstrate accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.

The penalties for non-compliance can be significant, ranging from reputational damage to loss of accreditation or funding. Additionally, aged care providers must navigate workforce challenges, rising operational costs and evolving client expectations.

By anticipating trends and potential risks, predictive reporting empowers providers to move beyond reactive management to proactive decision-making, supporting business objectives and ultimately enhancing outcomes for residents and clients.

The value of predictive reporting

Reporting has been a key requirement in the aged care sector for decades and typically has consumed significant time away from care hours.

Traditional reporting focuses on past performance, which naturally has had and will continue to have some value, and also supports trend analysis reporting, which provides some predictive value.

However, predictive reporting leaps a few steps ahead by leveraging that historical data, combined with machine learning to make generalisations from the data, drawing inferences across all related datasets and scenarios, and applying statistical algorithms to forecast future outcomes more quickly and with greater accuracy.

As a result, predictive reporting can identify potential risks, trends and opportunities in advance. For example, a predictive model might highlight emerging workforce shortages, increased client fall risks, or trends in non-compliance before they manifest as critical incidents. Predictive reporting can support:

- quality of care by identifying trends in adverse clinical events, such as falls or medication errors, to implement targeted interventions
- risk management by forecasting high-risk periods for staffing shortages or identifying residents more likely to require hospitalisation
- compliance monitoring by anticipating areas of potential non-compliance, enabling corrective actions ahead of audits.

How to implement predictive reporting

Implementing predictive analytics doesn't have to mean significant investment in new technology.

By first evaluating existing systems, you can assess whether your existing software platforms support predictive reporting or have upcoming AI-driven enhancements.

Many systems already have analytics capabilities that are underutilised, so upgrading or optimising current tools can often be a more cost-effective approach.

Also remember high-quality data is the foundation of effective predictive analytics, so you need to ensure your dataset is the best you can get.

Consider a phased approach, starting with pilot projects in specific areas like falls prevention or risk management. This helps identify data gaps or integration challenges early, to give you the best outcomes. ■

Top four benefits of predictive analysis and reporting

1. **Cost savings and efficiency**
Predictive reporting reduces expensive reactive measures by identifying risks early. For example, detecting residents at high risk of hospitalisation enables early intervention, cutting hospital admissions and costs. It also optimises resource allocation, minimising waste and improving financial sustainability.
2. **Better decision-making**
By providing forward-looking insights, predictive analytics help organisations allocate resources effectively, prioritise risks and optimise service delivery. For instance, predictive models can forecast peak resident dependency, allowing for timely staffing adjustments.
3. **Proactive risk mitigation**
Identifying high-risk areas allows providers to take preventative action. If data predicts an increase in falls, organisations can enhance staff training or invest in assistive technologies before issues escalate.
4. **Stronger compliance and accreditation**
Predictive reporting streamlines compliance by continuously monitoring performance against standards. Early detection of gaps helps providers address issues proactively, reducing the risk of adverse audit outcomes.

Sonja Bernhardt OAM, Chief Executive Officer, ThoughtWare/ionMy
thoughtware.com.au; ionmy.info



Revolutionise Compliance – Exclusive Ageing Australia Member Discounts!

Stay ahead of regulatory changes and streamline governance, risk, and compliance with ionMy— Australia’s most advanced compliance management platform, designed specifically for **care providers**. Whether you’re a **small home care operator** or a **large enterprise provider**, ionMy offers scalable solutions to simplify compliance, reduce risk, and enhance operational efficiency.

Exclusive Ageing Australia Member Offer – Autumn 2025 (*Conditions apply)

- **10% OFF** ionMy LITE – Perfect for small providers
- **15% OFF** ionMy PRO – Ideal for growing organisations
- **20% OFF** ionMy ENTERPRISE – Built for large-scale compliance management

Plus! An **Additional 5% OFF** for **Rural & Remote Members**

Join the future of compliance today and take advantage of this **limited-time member-only offer!**

Offer ends June 30, 2025 | Email sales@ionmy.com.au to learn more



linktr.ee/ionmy

*Conditions: discount applied to the first year license fee of ionMy Core software.



protechtgroup.com



Understanding what the Aged Care Act means for you.

The Aged Care Act 2024, coming into effect on 1 July 2025, introduces a major regulatory transformation for Australia’s aged care sector. This eBook provides essential insights into what the Act means for aged care providers and how to prepare.

Download the eBook today to get ahead of the changes and build a more resilient aged care organisation.

Download the eBook:



Thriving amid the pressure of unannounced audits

Quirindi embracing the opportunities



Kim Riley

Running an aged care home in rural Australia is no small task. Balancing the need to provide high-quality, resident-focused care with the challenge of meeting shifting regulatory standards can feel like a constant juggling act. And when you add the reality of unannounced audits by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, it's easy to see why many in our sector feel under pressure. At Quirindi Care Services (QCS), we're learning to embrace both the opportunities and challenges of working in a rural setting. Over time, I've seen our team adapt and grow, moving beyond just managing challenges to building genuine strength and resilience. It's been rewarding to shift our focus from simply aiming for compliance to actively striving to exceed expectations – for our residents, their families and our staff.

Let's be honest – compliance audits can be stressful. Unannounced visits create uncertainty and remain a significant pressure point for aged care providers. However,

I believe we can choose how we respond. We can let fear drive our response, or we can see these audits as opportunities to showcase what's working well.

As a team, our approach is to focus on what we do best – trusting in our model of care and backing the work of our incredible team. While audits are undeniably challenging, we aim to treat them as an opportunity to validate our efforts and demonstrate our focus on continuous improvement.

Our approach isn't about simply ticking compliance boxes; it's about delivering meaningful care that truly meets the needs of our residents.

Operating in a rural area has its challenges, from workforce shortages to limited access to services. But these obstacles have pushed us to think creatively and find solutions we might not have considered otherwise.

When efforts to recruit locally didn't yield enough staff, we looked further afield and successfully brought in skilled registered nurses and care staff from overseas. Many of these new team members, particularly from the Pacific Islands, brought a culture of warmth and dedication to caring for older people, which has been a wonderful addition to our care environment. It's been an unexpected outcome for which we're truly grateful.

Similarly, when a local general practice withdrew its services, we pivoted and established a nurse practitioner model of care. The benefits have been immediate and far-reaching – not just for our residents, but for their families and staff as well.

Like other providers, we have had to absorb the financial costs associated with overseas recruitment and agency staff, not just to meet compliance targets but to ensure we provide quality care.

QCS, located in regional New South Wales, have embraced the opportunities and challenges of providing aged care in a rural setting.



With an accreditation assessment on the horizon, we're focused on showcasing the best of what we do. Maintaining rigorous internal standards and staying ahead of government reforms has been a priority. We keep focused on our processes and outcomes because our residents deserve this high standard, and our staff feel supported and confident when well-prepared.

We acknowledge that unannounced compliance audits are a significant part of the regulatory framework, and they come with inherent stress. However, our goal is to approach these assessments from a place of preparation and positivity, ensuring we are equipped to meet challenges head-on. Reforms are also an opportunity for improving our level of service and building connections in our community. This year, we've placed a significant focus on improving the resident experience, including a complete refresh of our dining services, which recently received great feedback during a spot check. Our dining overhaul is about more than just the meals; it's about creating an experience residents look forward to every day. From menu choices to

personalised service, we are reimagining what mealtimes can mean for well-being and community connection.

We're keeping the community informed every step of the way through updates, visuals and stories. Our residents are such an integral part of this community, and we want them and

their families to feel proud of what's happening at QCS.

Receiving feedback can be challenging and it's natural to feel protective of our work, especially when it's under review. However, we're focused on shifting this perspective – retraining the team's mindset to see opportunities instead of setbacks. This effort starts with our management team

and board, who lead by example in fostering a culture of openness and continuous improvement. By embracing this approach, we aim to build an environment where our staff feel supported and empowered, and where the care we provide continues to evolve to meet the needs of our residents and community. ■

Kim Riley, General Manager, Quirindi Care Services
quirindicareservices.com.au

“As a team, our approach is to focus on what we do best – trusting in our model of care and backing the work of our incredible team. While audits are undeniably challenging, we aim to treat them as an opportunity to validate our efforts and demonstrate our focus on continuous improvement.”



Empowering Excellence in Aged Care

- Cloud Based Quality Management Systems
- Aligned with New Strengthened Standards
- Effortless Updates & Ease of Access



For over 20 years Leapfrog has provided comprehensive, best practice and evidence-based Policies, Processes, Procedures and Tools for the Aged Care Industry.

- Customisable content based on comprehensive templates
- Seamless navigation using real-time hyperlinks to all referenced documents
- Version Management to assist with document control.
- Collaboration and authorisation functions.
- Permissions and access control based on user roles.

Contact us today to arrange a comprehensive demonstration and discover how Leapfrog can streamline your Quality Management.

enquiries@leapfrogconcepts.com.au
www.leapfrogconcepts.com.au
 1300 192 931



Fair Work Commission makes decision on wage increases and classification structure for aged care nurses

Are you prepared?

Aged care employers need to prepare for upcoming changes to the pay and classification structure for their nurses, with some changes to take effect from as early as March 2025.

On 6 December 2024, the Fair Work Commission handed down its decision in respect of pay increases for aged care nurses. This decision follows a series of decisions delivered by the Commission since November 2022, in response to separate applications by unions to vary minimum rates of pay for employees in the aged care sector.

Collectively known as the Aged Care Work Value Case, these decisions have resulted in changes to the Aged Care Award 2010, Nurses Award 2020 and Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010.

In particular, the Commission has implemented substantial pay increases for several roles across the sector, including for registered and enrolled nurses, as well as changes to classification structures.

While this article is focused on nurses, pay increases have also been implemented for other direct and indirect care workers, most recently with changes to pay and classification for home care workers coming into effect on 1 January 2025.

In its December 2024 decision, the Commission stated that wage increases of up to 25.5 per cent for registered and enrolled nurses were justified for work value reasons. This increase incorporates the interim 15 per cent increase in the Stage 1 Decision in November 2022.

The additional wage increases will be phased-in over three tranches, with the first to take effect from 1 March 2025, the second on 1 October 2025, and the final tranche on 1 August 2026.

The Commission initially proposed making the first tranche payable from 1 January 2025, but after considering submissions from employers and the Commonwealth Government, it determined that this operative date would not allow sufficient time for employers to prepare for the changes or for government funding to be implemented.

Despite objection from the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, the Commission upheld its provisional views regarding classification structures and pay rates. It decided to replace the existing table of pay rates for enrolled nurses with a single classification and pay rate of \$1,442.20, after acknowledging that enrolled nurses across

all experience levels are required to supervise personal care workers in some capacity. The Commission also flagged the potential for further changes to the classification structure of enrolled nurses.

The Commission also set a new benchmark rate of \$1,525.90 for registered nurses holding 'any degree qualification which permits registration as a nurse'. It found there was no clear historical reason for the pay disparity between three-year and four-year nursing degree holders, as there was no discernible difference in course content.

It did, however, introduce a separate entry-level rate at 95 per cent of the benchmark, on the basis that a registered nurse in their first year of employment could not be expected to be fully capable of exercising their skills and discharging their responsibilities.

The Commission further decided to replace the current pay point structure for Levels 1–3 of the registered nurse classifications. The rationale was that the existing pay point structure, which provided for yearly incremental progression, did not necessarily reflect any increase in the work value of employees. The Commission concluded that incremental progression over longer periods – after three or four years of experience, depending on the employee's level – better reflected an increase in work value based on acquired skills and experience.

The determination outlining the changes to the Nurses Award 2020 was published by the Commission on 20 December 2024.

Aged care employers are encouraged to review this determination to prepare for these changes, particularly the changes to classification structures.

We also envisage that, as with the Stage 1 pay increases, there will be some complexities around the funding for the increases and the impact of the changes on employees on over-award wages.

Libby Pallot, Principal; Anthony Massaro, Principal; Abbey Burns, Special Counsel; Kelly Ralph, Special Counsel; Harrison Gray, Associate, Russell Kennedy
russellkennedy.com.au

Disclaimer: The information contained in this article is intended as general commentary only and should not be regarded as legal advice. Should you require specific advice on the topics discussed, please contact Russell Kennedy directly.

Prepare for Success

Get your board and leadership team ready for governance reform

Are you equipped to meet the updated governance compliance requirements under the new Aged Care Act? Do you need to build capability in your team to ensure success?

Our exclusive board governance workshop is designed to give board members, executive leaders, and quality and risk managers the latest information about the Australian Government reforms that will impact you and how you operate.

The expert-led workshop can be delivered exclusively for your organisation, online or face-to-face, at a time and date of your choosing – making it easy for you to meet new compliance obligations.

“The presentation to the board on the role of the governing body and the requirements surrounding aged care reform was informative and well received. The facilitator’s expertise and ability to distil complex policies into accountable insights has equipped the board with the knowledge needed to navigate the evolving regulatory landscape.” – Amanda Birkin – CEO - St Anna’s Residential Care Facility and Home Care Packages.



- 📞 1300 222 721
- 🌐 ageingaustralia.asn.au/leadership-and-professional-development/
- ✉ training@ageingaustralia.asn.au

Topics covered

Role of the governing body:

- consumer engagement
- leadership and culture
- organisational governance
- risk management
- clinical governance
- incident management.

Governing for reform in aged care:

- membership of governing bodies
- advisory bodies – quality care and consumer advisory
- oversight of staff qualifications, skills and experience
- suitability of key personnel
- provider’s operations statement
- residential, home care and transition care provider transparency.

Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards (February 2025):

- overview of key changes
- priority areas
- compliance implications.



Helping you find your rhythm of retirement

Starting to think about a change in tempo? Even if retirement’s still a while away, we can help you start planning today.

Check out our digital Retirement Guide which offers plenty of tips, advice and real member stories, plus a super helpful checklist to guide you every step of the way.

aware.com.au/retirementguide

super helpful

Consider if Aware Super is right for you and read the PDS and TMD at aware.com.au/pds before deciding. Issued by Aware Super Pty Ltd (ABN 11 118 202 672, AFSL 293340), trustee of Aware Super (ABN 53 226 460 365). AS233 02/25



Infinite Care levelling up their financial systems

A case study on how to build financial sustainability

Residential aged care provider Infinite Care was looking for a cloud-based solution to undertake detailed financial modelling for its 17 facilities.

They wanted to build financial sustainability and level up their financial systems to propel their growth strategies by moving to a system with faster budgeting and forecasting, more efficient reporting and smarter scenario planning.

The solution they chose was Workday Adaptive Planning, working with QMetrix as their implementation partner to achieve outstanding results.

Automated data flows

One of the first actions was to integrate data. A 'data warehouse' now integrates directly with Workday Adaptive Planning, with two-way data flow. This has saved time, effort and risk of error, while freeing up the team to do more value-adding activities.

Streamlined budget processes

With Workday Adaptive Planning, Infinite Care can see how numbers are impacted – in real time. This helps the finance team as well as budget managers be more efficient and make clear, data-backed decisions.

When questions come up at leadership meetings, the finance team can answer, slice and dice, and drill up and down to get information on the spot.

The efficiencies also led to the budget being delivered to the board two months earlier than previously.

Better forecasting and scenario planning

Infinite Care brings in actuals every month and re-forecasts for the next five years, on a monthly basis. Previously this was a lengthy process which took

two people two whole days to process every month.

Now with Workday Adaptive Planning, it takes just one person half a day to roll over the numbers and conduct data checks, with the program quickly producing a three-way forecasted balance sheet, cashflow, and profit and loss statement.

Furthermore, it has become easier to run 'what-if' modelling so they can quickly evaluate the financial impacts of various scenarios, pull levers and adopt the preferred or likely option.

Expense modelling made easier

Residential aged care can be challenging to model financially and forecast, with complexities in many areas. Expense models are complicated, with labour being a significant component.

To streamline this, QMetrix built a master roster model which includes assumptions such as pay rate, care minutes, loading shift hours and custom calendars, which is much easier to administer than before.

It loads in mere seconds, and there is greater transparency and traceability allowing Infinite Care to explore any data point and answer where every number has come from or goes to.

Easy to use, for everyone

Zane Ali, chief financial officer at Infinite Care, tells us he was impressed with how quickly the finance team jumped on board. They found Workday Adaptive Planning to be intuitive and easy to navigate.

"I have been happy with the Workday Adaptive Planning solution, and QMetrix has been exceptional to work with. From project management,

to implementation, to hyper-care, they have always been on time, delivered on scope and within budget," he said.

"I set high expectations for this project. QMetrix understood the business and were able to design, build and improve on our process to ensure significant value-add within Workday Adaptive Planning."

To explore technology which can help you do better at budgeting, forecasting and planning, jump onto our website and find out about QMetrix's solutions for aged care. ■

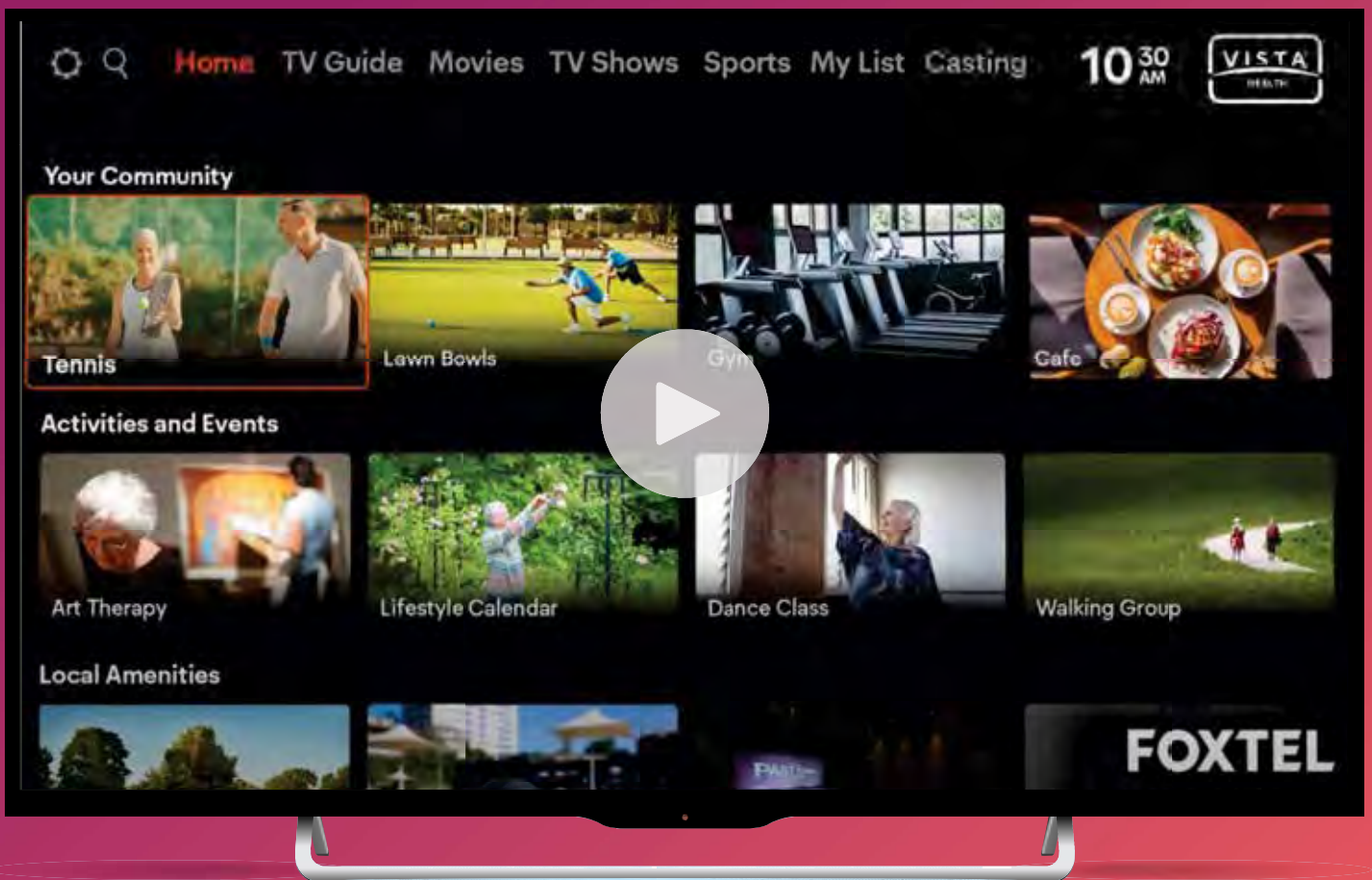
David Huynh, Director, QMetrix
qmetrix.com.au/industries/aged-care

Zane Ali says the partnership with QMetrix has created numerous efficiencies and benefits for Infinite Care.



Our latest Business iQ upgrade brings 'resident-friendly' to a new level

Scan the QR code below and watch our short video, showcasing how Business iQ can delight your residents and improve your operations.



Scan QR to play video



Easy-to-use layout



Resident engagement platform



Cloud technology



Lifetime value



Premium entertainment

Call 1300 659 466

Book an in-person or online demo today.

Or feel free to send any questions to business.iq@foxtel.com.au

* Requires internet connection. Some channels not available in public viewing areas. Business subscribers only. Requires minimum purchase of 10 screens or 10% of screens within the facility (whichever is greater). Foxtel marks are used under licence by Foxtel Management Pty Ltd, ACN 068671938, 5 Thomas Holt Drive, North Ryde NSW 2113

FOXTEL
Business

What you need to know about care minute changes

And why you need to prepare now

The Department of Health and Aged Care's recent announcement on care minute changes presents significant challenges for residential aged care providers. From April 2026, residential aged care homes that do not meet the mandated 215 care minute target will face reductions in their Base Care Tariff. This shift is expected to impact more than 850 homes nationwide.

While 2026 may seem far away, the compliance calculation period runs from June to August 2025, giving providers less than six months to ensure they meet the new requirements.

Proactive planning and collaboration will be critical to mitigating funding reductions and maintaining quality care.

Key changes

From April 2026, homes that fail to meet care minute targets will see reductions in their Base Care Tariff, applied on a sliding scale.

The maximum reduction could be as high as \$31.64 per resident per day, significantly impacting financial viability. Compliance will require meeting both total care minute and registered nurse (RN) minute targets.

A new Care Minute Supplement will also be introduced, available only to homes that successfully meet the mandated care minute requirements.

Financial and operational impacts

For tight budgets, a reduction of up to \$31.64 per resident per day presents a substantial financial challenge. This shortfall could directly affect staffing levels and the ability to deliver high-quality care. Additionally, balancing total care minutes and RN minutes introduces

operational complexities, making it essential for providers to plan ahead.

Six months to prepare

Although April 2026 may seem far off, the six-month preparation window leading up to the compliance period is relatively short. To avoid financial penalties and ensure seamless operations, providers should:

- assess current care minute performance against targets
- strategically allocate resources to close any gaps
- implement workflows to support ongoing compliance.

Delays in planning could lead to last-minute adjustments, increasing the risk of financial strain and potential disruptions to care quality.

Collaboration and communication

Meeting the care minute requirements will require coordination across multiple teams, particularly funding and rostering. Aligning staffing levels with resident needs will be crucial. Steps to achieve this include:

- understanding the impact of resident AN-ACC classifications and new admissions on care minute requirements, and making data-driven decisions
- evaluating various staffing models in scenario planning to determine the most effective approach
- tracking performance with real-time reporting to allow for timely adjustments.

Preparing for the change

To position a residential aged care home for success, providers should take a proactive approach by:

- auditing current performance by reviewing historical data to identify trends and gaps
- enhancing team collaboration by strengthening communication between funding and rostering teams
- leveraging technology using tools that support planning, forecasting and compliance tracking
- staying up-to-date with resident classifications by monitoring changes in resident needs to anticipating adjustments
- developing contingency plans to prepare for unexpected changes by exploring multiple staffing and funding scenarios.

Looking ahead

The upcoming care minute changes represent both a challenge and an opportunity for residential aged care providers. Those who take early action will be better positioned to adapt, maintain compliance, and safeguard financial sustainability. While the timeline is pressing, thoughtful planning and strategic adjustments can help providers navigate this transition successfully.

By focusing on collaboration, data-driven decision-making and operational efficiency, providers can not only meet the new requirements but also enhance the overall quality of care offered to residents. ■

Timeline

- **June-August 2025:** Compliance calculation period to assess performance
- **September 2025:** Release of care minute targets
- **October-December 2025:** Targets finalised based on June–August calculations
- **February 2026:** Submission of the Quarterly Financial Report
- **April 2026:** Implementation of adjusted subsidies, including reductions in the Base Care Tariff and introduction of the Care Minute Supplement

Andrew Farmer, CEO and Managing Partner, Mirus Australia
mirusaustralia.com

Total Entry Intelligence

Finally, one platform designed
for Aged Care



LoopSafe

LoopSafe puts you in control

- ✓ TRACK visitor experience
- ✓ SYNC staff timesheets
- ✓ VALIDATE contractor credentials
- ✓ REPORT resident visitation



Staff



Visitors



Residents



Contractors



Agency Staff

The LoopSafe Advantage

Australian-designed, LoopSafe integrates with your existing systems to deliver a fast, efficient, entry process that maintains compliance without the paperwork. Talk to us about your challenges before July 1st regulatory changes.



www.loopsafe.net

03 9381 7897

info@loopsafe.net

Why modern technology is no longer optional

Enabling quality care in a changing environment

As Australia faces an unprecedented demographic shift, with projections showing 22 per cent of our population will be over 65 by 2058, we can no longer ignore the transformative role that technology must play in aged care. It isn't just about keeping up with digital trends – it's about reimagining how we care for older people in an increasingly complex world.

The wake-up call came during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the truth is, the warning signs were there long before. Chronic staff shortages, mounting regulatory pressures and the increasing complexity of care needs have been pushing our traditional care models to their breaking point.

As Sarah Chen, a healthcare technology consultant, notes, "The aged care sector traditionally has been relatively slow in embracing digital transformation. However, we're now seeing a radical shift as providers realise that technology isn't just an option – it's essential for survival and growth in modern aged care delivery."

The resistance to technological adoption in aged care has often been rooted in a false dichotomy – the notion that we must choose between human touch and technological efficiency.

Michael Torres, director of innovation at a leading aged care facility, sheds light on this confusion.

"The goal of technology in aged care is to free up our caregivers to spend more time doing what they do best – providing personalised, compassionate care to older people who need services," he said.

"When we free our caregivers from the burden of administrative tasks and give them tools to work more effectively, we enable them to focus on

what truly matters – human connection and personalised care."

Consider the daily challenges faced by aged care workers. They juggle complex schedules, maintain detailed records, monitor multiple residents and navigate stringent regulatory requirements, all while trying to provide individualised care to each resident.

Without technological support, these competing demands create a perfect storm of stress, burnout and potential oversights. The evidence is clear; facilities implementing modern systems report a 30 per cent reduction in staff turnover and a 40 per cent improvement in staff satisfaction scores.

The financial argument against technological adoption in aged care – that it's too expensive or complex – increasingly holds less water.

Studies indicate that residential aged care homes implementing comprehensive digital solutions typically see cost savings of 15 to 25 per cent within the first two years, primarily through improved operational efficiency and reduced administrative overhead. These savings can then be reinvested in direct care services, creating a positive cycle of improvement in care quality.

The integration of smart sensors and monitoring systems has revolutionised how care is delivered, providing real-time data about residents' wellbeing and allowing for more proactive and preventative care approaches.

Dr James Peterson, a digital health researcher, highlights the impact. "We're seeing remarkable results with predictive analytics. Early intervention capabilities have improved significantly, leading to better health outcomes for residents," he says.

However, as Rebecca Martinez, chief executive officer of a leading aged

care provider, emphasises, "Success in digital transformation isn't just about choosing the right technology. It's about creating a culture that embraces innovation while maintaining our core focus on compassionate care."

This cultural shift is essential for the successful integration of technology in aged care settings.

Looking ahead, the challenges facing aged care will only become more complex. As our older population becomes more tech-savvy and their care needs more diverse, the demand for sophisticated care solutions will increase. The question is no longer whether technology has a place in aged care, but how we can best implement it to serve our fundamental goal, which is to provide dignified, high-quality care.

The path forward requires a shift in mindset. We must stop viewing technology as an optional add-on and recognise it as a fundamental component of modern aged care delivery. This doesn't mean blindly embracing every new innovation, but rather thoughtfully integrating tools that enhance our ability to provide better care.

For aged care providers, the message is clear. Technological adoption is no longer about gaining a competitive edge – it's about survival and the ability to fulfil our duty of care.

As we face the challenges of an ageing population, we must embrace technology not as a replacement for human care, but as an enabler of better, more sustainable care practices.





The future of aged care depends on our willingness to evolve and adapt, ensuring that older people receive the quality of care they deserve in a rapidly changing world. ■

Shiftcare
shiftcare.com

Less admin, better care.



Since 2016, we've helped over 5,000 care providers support more than 200,000 clients.

-  **Smart Scheduling**
Effortless rostering and shift management.
-  **Faster Invoicing**
Get paid on time with seamless billing.
-  **Care on the Go**
Mobile app keeps teams connected anywhere.
-  **All-in-One HR Tools**
Documents, compliance, and payroll made easy.



Unpacking the value of clinical information systems

Case studies from residential care and home care

An Aged Care Clinical Information System (ACCIS) offers a game-changing solution by securely capturing, storing and sharing clinical data in real time. A digital framework centralising resident and client care data, an ACCIS includes medical history, medication records, care plans and progress notes. This helps staff make informed decisions at every stage of a person's care journey.

Unlike finance or rostering software, both of which offer more flexibility in what they offer, an ACCIS must follow the Aged Care Clinical Information System Standards developed by the Australian Digital Health Agency, ensuring consistency, reliability and seamless data integration across healthcare technologies.

Key features and benefits of an ACCIS

A robust ACCIS offers a sophisticated level of automation that frees up staff time to focus on direct care.

Along with real-time data sharing and electronic record keeping, this supports person-centred care and better outcomes for aged care residents, while also helping maintain compliance with the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards. Data-driven insights are also useful for identifying trends and risks, contributing to ongoing improvement. When considering an ACCIS, look for one that contains the following features to maximise the benefits to your organisation:

- reliable, real-time data to ensure staff always have the most up-to-date information and can respond swiftly to changes in a resident's health or condition
- seamless data sharing of key resident information (medical conditions, care plans, dietary preferences, etc) via centralised records accessible to all care professionals for tailored support

- accessibility and transparency to support better communication and engagement between care teams and external healthcare providers, leading to improved decision-making
- streamlined clinical decision making pathways for evidence-based care
- single data capture to securely reuse data across the system and reduce administrative burden, which improves efficiency and reduces paperwork
- integration with other systems to provide you with seamless data oversight into your business.

A residential care provider's experience

When a service provider finds themselves to be 'not met' against several standards, it is often Standards 2, 3 and 8 that require immediate focus using a risk-based approach to achieving compliance.

We have worked with many clients in this position, who see the positive benefits of our CareLynx Clinical Navigator clinical information system to fast track a return to compliance and then return the service to sustainability through adoption of the platform. One of our clients, a 70-bed residential aged care home provider, faced a pressing need to meet Standards 2 and 3 after receiving an audit report.

By onboarding CareLynx Clinical Navigator, they quickly adopted in-built assessments that translated into person-centred care and support plans. This approach not only led to a successful subsequent audit outcome but also established a framework for ongoing compliance – ensuring each resident's needs continued to be met through sustainable clinical management.

CareLynx Clinical Navigator enables rapid adoption through a 'plug and play' approach. Our innovative data scripts and magic links streamline the onboarding process, ensuring minimal downtime. Coupled with our online self-service training portal, this makes

it a cost-effective solution for providers without the resources to build or maintain their own clinical systems.

A home care provider's experience

We are now seeing the same requirements for home care service providers with respect to clinical adherence to the standards, and the same systems are now proving beneficial for them.

A home care provider supporting 200 older clients reached out to us to support them in collating data efficiently, which had become a major challenge. With their rostering and finance system not providing them with robust ways to capture the clinical care and support needs of their older persons, they needed a solution that was both straightforward to implement and capable of offering clear oversight.

CareLynx Clinical Navigator's reporting dashboard provided real-time visibility into their care operations, enabling the team to proactively manage clinical risk while meeting compliance requirements.

From a governance perspective, the provider's board could now track metrics across the entire organisation at a glance – including National Quality Indicator reporting – streamlining decision-making and overall oversight.

Looking ahead

In both cases, the ability to fast-track compliance and embed person-centred care was underpinned by streamlined data management, a streamlined approach to onboarding and actionable reporting. By aligning assessments, care plans and dashboards within one comprehensive system, providers gained a clear, ongoing view of resident and client needs.

This not only supported immediate accreditation goals but also set the stage for continuous improvement in clinical and operational practices.

Looking ahead, if your organisation is ready to access the benefits of an ACCIS, reach out to CareLynx to ask us how we can help. ■

CareLynx
carelynx.com

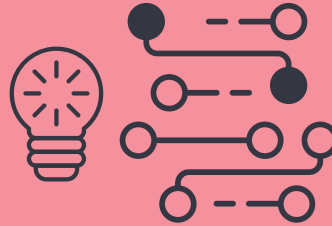


CareLynx Clinical Care Navigator

Streamline your care coordination with a solution that's built for efficiency and real-world results.



Smart Onboarding



Intuitive Workflows



Tangible Impact

No complicated setups - just seamless care, every day.

- **Plug & Play implementation**
Get up and running in no time - minimal disruption, maximum impact.
- **Automates Compliance & Reporting**
Stay audit-ready effortlessly with smart automation and seamless reporting.
- **NQIP-ready Solutions**
Ensure your care standards meet industry benchmarks with ease.
- **Centralised Data & Workflows**
Keep all your clinical data and processes in one intuitive, accessible platform.
- **Enhanced Team Collaboration**
Empower your staff with a tool that makes communication and coordination a breeze.

Experience it Live: See how our intuitive interface transforms your daily operations and elevates care quality - scan to book a meeting now!



www.carelynx.com | support@carelynx.com



A proactive approach to risk and quality

Key considerations when choosing governance, risk and compliance software

The increasing digitisation of aged care presents a wealth of opportunities to boost both operational efficiency and resident wellbeing. However, this shift also raises crucial questions: are these new technologies truly supporting effective workflows, providing actionable data for learning and improvement, and enhancing the quality of care? With a wide range of software solutions available for reporting, clinical governance and care management, selecting the right system can be a complex decision. Aged care organisations must ensure their chosen technology both strengthens system safety and provides valuable insights for continuous quality improvement.

Hallmarks of an effective incident management system

Implementing governance, risk and compliance software presents both challenges and opportunities. A successful rollout hinges on aligning technology with existing practices, which may require adjustments to business processes and clinical workflows. Scalability is a vital consideration, along with potential changes to reporting structures and audit trails, all of which contribute to efficient and meaningful data collection.

A well-chosen system will support diligent adherence to compliance standards for quality and data management. By streamlining mandatory reporting and escalation actions, it helps promote transparency and accountability and breaks down organisational silos. Importantly, the system should clearly track variances and process changes, providing solid evidence of quality improvements for auditing purposes. Because clinical

governance and compliance are ongoing rather than static processes, the software must effectively document these developments, allowing organisations to measure the impact of process changes on compliance performance.

Co-design and collaboration

Shifting from a reactive to a proactive model of care requires the routine sharing of insights and the implementation of data-driven improvements. This approach allows for the systematic mapping of risks within a comprehensive risk register, providing a clear overview of potential challenges and driving proactive mitigation strategies.

Modern, effective software solutions show how governance and innovation can work together to create a future-ready aged care ecosystem, while connecting software solutions with existing workflows and aged care resident journeys ensure enhanced continuity of care.

This involves technology partners co-designing solutions with providers and fostering modernisation through collaborative approaches. Such partnerships are essential for integrating systems to yield the best possible health and safety outcomes for residents.

Insights and quality improvement

Compliance technology solutions should continuously derive meaningful insights from incidents, supporting the implementation of targeted quality improvements. The focus should be on technologies that prioritise responsiveness and preparedness, rather than simply reacting to events.

Aligning data and compliance metrics with established standards is also crucial, particularly with the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards and the upcoming new Aged Care Act.

A robust system acts as a single source of truth, demonstrating compliance with these standards. Such systems offer a range of data compliance measurement modules that enable organisations to evaluate their alignment with regulatory requirements, providing clear evidence for

demonstrating compliance to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

This evidence-based method supports the Commission's risk-informed and proportional approach to addressing non-compliance.

Risk and compliance interoperability

Interoperability between risk and compliance software and existing clinical management systems is essential to avoid duplication and ensure streamlined data flow. Digitising processes also reduces bias and enhances objectivity in performance measurement. Employing computer-based analysis provides an objective means of assessing data and performance, offering valuable insights into trends and areas for potential improvement. These metrics can then be used to benchmark performance and assess confidence intervals based on the data processed by the system.

Transition and implementation

Whether your organisation is at the beginning of its digitisation journey or already has established digital tools, the right technology can build confidence in enhancing safety, facilitating learning, and transforming the approach to care from reactive to evidence-based, responsive decision-making.

Successfully transitioning from manual processes to a digital solution requires strong leadership to drive change management, a supportive culture that promotes staff psychological safety, and technology that can be configured and scaled to meet the specific needs of the organisation.

Critically, the chosen product should adhere to the guiding principles that underpin clinical governance and system safety, driving efficiency and fostering a person-centred approach to improve resident outcomes.

To learn more about implementing the right governance, risk and compliance software for your needs, visit our website. We are a global health technology company with a breadth of knowledge and experience, to help you achieve your goals. ■

**Annie Clayton, Business Analyst,
Magentus**
magentus.com/eqstats



eQstats

Quality, risk and compliance software

eQstats helps aged care providers manage organisational risk, governance, and compliance. Our end-to-end cloud solution highlights areas of risk and non-compliance, assigning continuous improvement actions and linking all data to the National Aged Care Quality Standards.

- › Streamline accreditation processes
- › Improve compliance
- › Proactively manage risk
- › Enjoy standards benchmarking support
- › Collect external system incident data
- › Align with National Quality Indicators

Why providers must validate technology before committing for better outcomes in aged care

Testing before investing

The aged care sector is undergoing rapid transformation, with providers increasingly turning to digital solutions to enhance care quality, improve operational efficiency, and meet regulatory requirements, but they should test before investing.

Implementing new technology at scale carries risks, including integration challenges, unforeseen costs and staff resistance, and solutions should first be validated through a structured proof of concept (PoC) process to verify that investments will deliver value.

A PoC lets organisations test a technology in a controlled environment, assessing its real-world impact before committing to full-scale deployment. Aged care providers can mitigate risks, refine workflows and gain valuable insights that inform decision-making by taking this approach.

Minimising risk in technology adoption

Technology adoption in aged care is not just about purchasing new systems; it requires strategic alignment with operational goals, workforce needs and compliance obligations. A poorly implemented solution disrupts care delivery, increases the administrative burden on staff, and leads to costly inefficiencies. A PoC is an opportunity to evaluate key factors such as ease of integration, usability and performance within the provider's unique environment.

Engaging frontline staff in the testing phase lets organisations identify and

mitigate usability challenges early, so that solutions enhance, rather than hinder, care delivery. This approach builds internal confidence, increasing adoption rates when a solution is rolled out across an organisation.

Validating effectiveness before committing

Aged care providers must validate the effectiveness of any new technology investment in relation to improving resident outcomes and staff efficiency. A PoC assesses whether a solution delivers measurable benefits, such as reducing time spent on administrative tasks, enhancing communication or improving response times in critical situations. For example, a provider testing a workforce mobility solution through a PoC can measure its impact on staff response times, care documentation accuracy and overall workflow efficiency.

The provider can proceed with confidence if the solution demonstrates clear advantages, reassured that the investment will deliver tangible benefits. Comparatively, adjustments can be made before full implementation if challenges emerge, reducing the risk of costly setbacks.

Prioritising compliance and data security

Regulatory compliance is a major consideration in aged care, with providers required to meet strict standards for care delivery, documentation and data security. A PoC lets organisations assess whether a technology aligns with these requirements, so that any implementation supports compliance efforts, instead of complicating them.

Data security is another critical factor. The rise of digital health records and cloud-based solutions has heightened the need for robust cybersecurity measures. Aged care providers can test security protocols during a PoC phase, protecting resident data while maintaining accessibility for authorised personnel.

Optimising financial and operational efficiency

Most providers operate within tight budget constraints, making it

essential to invest in technology that delivers long-term value. A PoC helps determine whether a solution reduces costs by automating manual processes, improving workforce allocation or enhancing service delivery.

For example, a provider evaluating a real-time location system through a PoC can assess its impact on staff efficiency and resident safety. It becomes a financially viable investment if the system improves response times while reducing the need for additional staffing.

Building a scalable foundation for digital transformation

A successful PoC does more than validate a single technology; it lays the groundwork for long-term digital transformation.

Providers that adopt a structured approach to testing and evaluation can develop a framework for future technology adoption, integrating new solutions into existing systems seamlessly.

This proactive approach keeps organisations ahead of industry changes, implementing technology with confidence rather than reacting to regulatory or operational pressures. It also builds a culture of innovation, where staff and leadership collaborate to identify and implement solutions that enhance care delivery.

Moving forward with confidence

The aged care sector faces increasing pressure to modernise while maintaining high standards of care. Adopting a PoC approach mitigates risk, validates effectiveness and optimises resources for aged care providers before committing to large-scale technology investments.

This measured strategy means that technology supports both operational efficiency and resident wellbeing, creating a sustainable foundation for future advancements.

With careful planning and structured validation, providers can embrace digital transformation with confidence, knowing their investments are informed, strategic and impactful. ■

Phuc Nguyen, Service Delivery Manager, Connected Health, Wavelink connected-health.com

CONNECTED AGED CARE SOLUTIONS

ENABLING BETTER CARE WITH SMART TECHNOLOGY

Transform the way you deliver care, manage operations and maintain compliance across three essential pillars

RESIDENT CARE

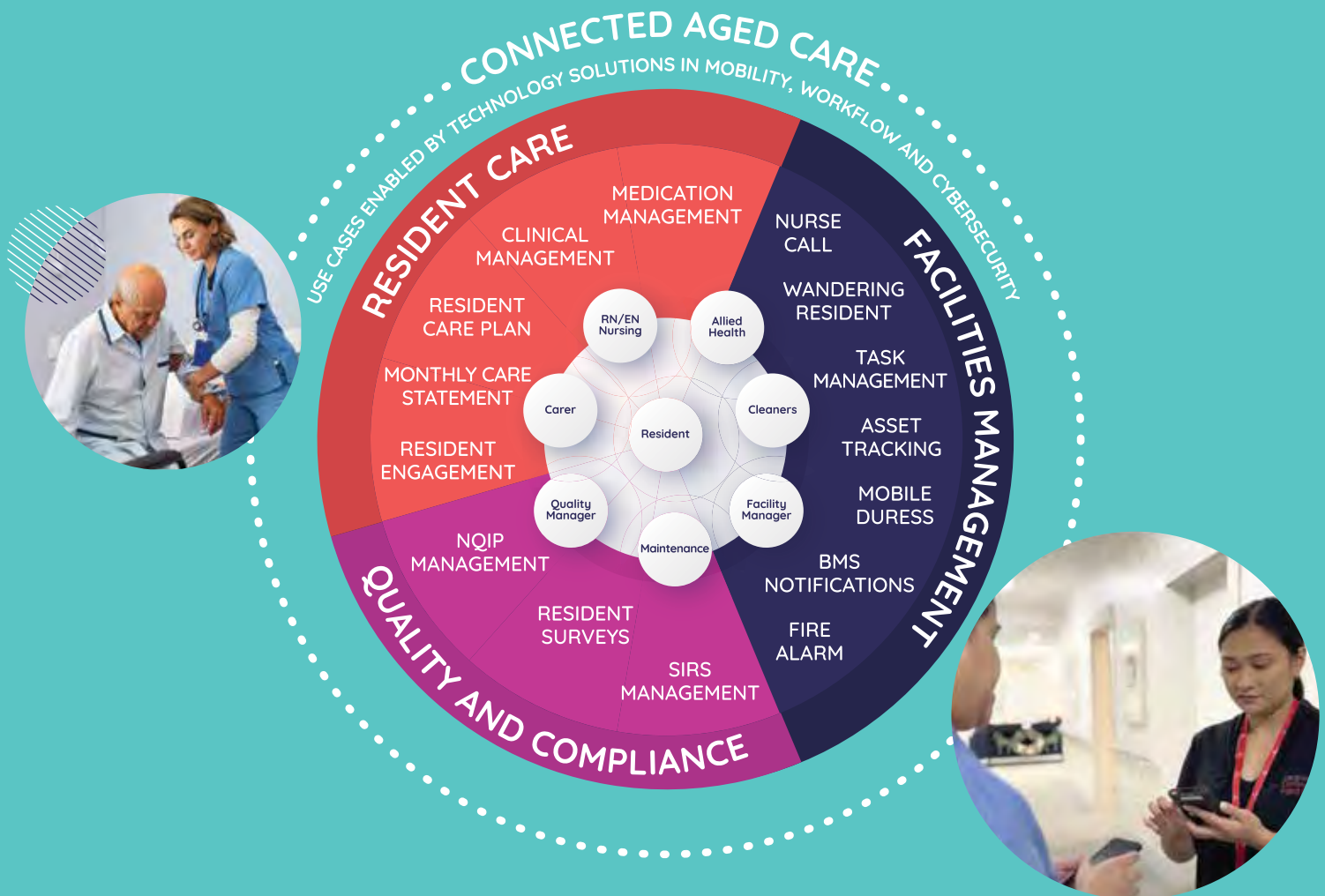
Enhance residents' quality of life with smart care coordination and real-time communication tools that prioritise their needs.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Streamline operations with intelligent systems to optimise resource allocation, maintenance scheduling, and staff workflows.

QUALITY & COMPLIANCE

Stay ahead of regulatory requirements with automated compliance tracking and documentation, all within a secure digital framework.



ENABLING AGED CARE WITH INTELLIGENT TECHNOLOGY TO DELIVER:

SEAMLESS CARE COORDINATION: Keep care teams connected and responsive with real-time communication and workflow management.

ENTERPRISE-GRADE SECURITY: Protect resident data and operational systems with state-of-the-art cybersecurity measures.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY: Automate and optimise processes for better resource allocation and regulatory compliance.

STAFF EMPOWERMENT: Equip your team with tools that reduce administrative burden and enhance care delivery.

BOOK A DEMO OR PROOF OF CONCEPT TODAY!

Experience the benefits of Connected Aged Care solutions before you invest.

Book a demo or proof of concept (POC) to see how our technology enhances care delivery and operational efficiency.

1300 147 000 | sales@connected-health.com.au | connected-health.com.au

Government urged to supercharge technology funding for home care revolution

Smart devices need smart investment



Professor Paul Egglestone (left) with the NSW Smart Sensing Network's Catherine Oates Smith (centre) and older Australian Janet McDonald at the NSW Smart Sensing Network's 3rd Ageing Forum at NSW Parliament House last November.

Australia stands at a critical juncture in addressing the needs of its ageing population, and experts are calling on the Federal Government to step up its support for home care.

A NSW-based coalition of industry leaders, universities and government partners – dubbed the Healthy@Home consortium – argues that increased investment in home care technology is key to keeping older Australians healthy, independent, and out of hospitals and aged care facilities.

The solution? Harnessing the power of smart technology like wearables to revolutionise in-home care.

These devices – ranging from smartwatches to rings and phones – can monitor critical health metrics such as activity levels and blood pressure, sending real-time alerts to family members and carers about potential emergencies like falls or seizures. This push comes as the government introduces sweeping reforms to the aged care system, aiming to ease the strain of a rapidly ageing population.

Under the new Support at Home program, older Australians will gain access to the Assistive Technology and Home Modifications scheme, with funding packages between \$500 and \$15,000 starting July 2025. However, experts say the current minimum funding for assistive technology – \$500 – falls far short of what's needed.

"A smart watch alone costs upwards of \$300, and that doesn't include the Internet plan required for connectivity," says Human Health Lead at the NSW Smart Sensing Network Catherine Oates Smith. "We need to raise the baseline funding tier to ensure more Australians can age independently with dignity and a higher quality of life."

The call for action is backed by a groundbreaking survey funded by Maridulu Budyari Gumal (SPHERE), which captured the views of 1,000 older Australians, their families and carers.

Almost 90 per cent of family, carers or older people in the survey supported government funding for smart sensor technologies in home care packages.

"This survey underscores a clear demand," says UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures Professor Jason Prior. "Older Australians want to use technology to stay home longer, but we need more research to identify the most effective and affordable solutions."

The UK's National Health Service (NHS) has already embraced the power of wearables, distributing devices to millions under a 10-year plan to keep people healthy and reduce hospital visits.

Australia could follow suit, but only if the government makes the necessary investments. Professor Paul Eggleston from FASTLab stresses the importance of getting it right.

"This isn't just about convenience – it's about dignity, independence and reducing pressure on our healthcare system," Professor Egglestone says. "Smart technology can give our parents and grandparents the quality of life they deserve." The Healthy@Home consortium brings together five NSW universities, healthcare providers, and industry innovators like Tunstall Healthcare and IntelliCare Holdings.

Together, they aim to drive Australia's transition to smarter, more sustainable home care solutions.

With billions of dollars already pouring into aged care reforms, advocates argue that bolstering technology funding is not just an opportunity – it's a necessity.

The message is loud and clear; if Australia wants to empower its seniors to live longer, healthier lives in the comfort of their homes, it's time to back smart technology with smart investment. ■

NSW Smart Sensing Network
nssn.org.au

Standard 6: Food and nutrition

- ✓ On-Site Consultancy
- ✓ Menu Refresh
- ✓ Dining Experience
- ✓ Auditing
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Software

We've
got you
covered!



SoupedUp®
Catering Care Software

**NEW Catering Support Packages
Available NOW!**

Groundbreaking project to improve care delivery

Benefits to impact residential aged care worldwide

Mark Sheldon-Stemm, chief executive officer of Valley View in Collie, Western Australia, is spearheading an innovative project that aims to revolutionise the delivery of care in residential aged care settings.

Funded by Aged Care Research & Industry Innovation Australia (ARIIA), in partnership with Person Centred Software (PCS), the University of Canberra and Customer Feedback Systems (CFS), it's a collaborative effort.

The project has developed a digital alert system called the Aged Care Electronic Data & Information Tool (ACEDIT), designed to draw data from existing collections to enhance the quality of care, improve residents' health outcomes and reduce adverse events.

Care management systems are instrumental in capturing essential data, however the substantial amount of information within these systems can sometimes present challenges for staff. In addition, a significant amount of this data is often collected for compliance purposes rather than focusing on residents' actual care needs.

That is why the ACEDIT project seeks to identify critical factors in monitoring residents' conditions as they change, with an emphasis on key indicators such as hydration, nutrition and toileting.

With the University of Canberra's nursing expertise, they have assessed global critical indicators that formed the development of the ACED-IT dashboard. By consolidating vital information and aligning it with data collected within the PCS clinical care system (mCare), this innovative dashboard aims to provide a clear and actionable overview of residents' health status.

One core focus of the project is addressing inconsistencies in documentation, such as varying water intake records for residents. By extracting hydration data from mCare and displaying it on the ACED-IT dashboard, nurses can easily identify trends and proactively address issues to ensure timely and appropriate care interventions.

This streamlined approach not only enhances care delivery but also supports managerial oversight to



Mark Sheldon-Stemm

ensure that nursing duties are carried out effectively.

This initiative underscores Mark's commitment to elevating standards in aged care and addressing the challenges of providing clinical care in a non-clinical setting.

"This project aims to revolutionise and elevate the standards in aged care on a national and international scale, a pioneering effort not yet seen within the sector," he said.

"By leveraging technology and data-driven insights, we are committed to enhancing the wellbeing of residents and empowering our staff to deliver exceptional care consistently."

Jemma Robinson, chief operating officer of PCS added, "We are thrilled to be part of a groundbreaking project alongside one of our valued customers. This collaboration represents a significant step forward in our efforts to innovate and implement meaningful change within the aged care sector.

"At PCS, we are committed to pushing the boundaries of what's possible, and through this project, we can achieve remarkable results that will benefit our customers and the broader community."

The ACEDIT digital alert system, in collaboration with PCS, is poised to be a game-changer in enabling aged care staff to stay ahead of clinical requirements and provide optimal care to residents. ■

Person Centred Software
personcentredsoftware.com





Built for Care. Trusted for Decades. Leading Today.

Empowering aged, home, and community care, disability support, retirement living, and day support programs with the most advanced, people-first technology since 1997. A complete software suite designed to meet strengthened standards out of the box, ensuring seamless care, compliance, and operational efficiency across every stage of the care journey.

Why Leecare?

- Over 30 years of trusted care technology.
- Designed by health professionals, for care.
- Complete configuration to meet your organisation's needs.

Key Features:

Real-time mobile & tablet apps: for staff, residents, clients, and families. Linked to AI-powered features that enhance efficiency and decision-making.

Advanced reporting & PlatinumBI: full business intelligence capabilities with real-time analytics, compliance tracking, and audit-ready reporting.

Strengthened standards-ready: built-in compliance for NMQIP, MyHealthRecord, PRODA, eNRM, and all regulatory reporting requirements.

Customisable form builder & reporting suite: adapt and enhance your software with powerful tools tailored to your organisation's workflow.

Comprehensive finance & accounting suite: purpose-built for aged care, ensuring accurate financial management and streamlined funding processes.

Continuous innovation with monthly updates: incorporating client feedback and aligning.

Leecare Solutions

Australia Head Office:

1005A Mt Alexander Road, Essendon VIC 3040
 p: +61 3 9339 6888 e: enquiries@leecare.com.au



Transforming care with virtual reality

Enhancing engagement, wellbeing and social connection at Parkdale

In an era where innovation is reshaping aged care, Medical & Aged Care Group (MACG) and SiVR Adventures have partnered to use virtual reality (VR) to enhance resident engagement, wellbeing and social connection. Through this collaboration, residents at MACG's Parkdale care home in Melbourne have experienced an exciting new way to reconnect with the world, proving that technology can bridge the gap between isolation and engagement.

A vision for change in aged care

MACG has always been dedicated to fostering vibrant and connected aged care communities across Victoria. Recognising that many residents were hesitant or unable to leave their rooms, MACG's Group Wellbeing & Community Coordinator, Jacinta Jarutis, sought to introduce a solution that could inspire confidence and encourage movement.

Enter SiVR Adventures, a VR provider known for its extensive multi-language content library, reminiscence therapy tools, and ability to recreate deeply personal experiences, such as revisiting childhood homes or wedding venues.

Together, MACG and SiVR launched an innovative initiative to bring the outside world into residents' rooms – creating a VR experience showcasing Parkdale's communal spaces, gardens and outdoor settings. The goal was simple yet powerful – use immersive VR experiences to build confidence, excitement and encourage residents to step outside in real life.

Confidence, connection and joy

The impact of the VR sessions was overwhelmingly positive. Many residents who previously remained in their rooms were inspired by the VR experiences and began venturing outside to explore their surroundings. Feedback from participants was incredibly moving, with residents describing the VR experiences as “amazing”, “beautiful” and “life-like”, saying “I feel like I'm there” and that they “love it”.



A MACG resident using a VR headset.



MACG and SiVR launched an innovative initiative to bring the outside world into residents' rooms.

Beyond individual feedback, survey data validated the success of this program. According to survey results:

- 100 per cent of participants rated their VR session positively. 76.2 per cent found the VR experience “very good”, while 23.8 per cent rated it “exceptional”
- 42.9 per cent of residents reported VR helped them recall special memories, reinforcing its potential as a reminiscence therapy tool
- 52.4 per cent expressed interest in having family members join them in future VR experiences.

A step forward for aged care innovation

The partnership between MACG and SiVR Adventures highlights the potential for VR to revolutionise aged care, not just as entertainment, but as a meaningful engagement tool. By blending technology with person-centred care, this initiative demonstrates how aged care providers can creatively enhance quality of life, reduce isolation and foster social connection.

“Technology should never replace human interaction; it should enhance it,” says Colin Pudsey, Founder & CEO of SiVR Adventures. “The success of this initiative at MACG demonstrates how VR can be a catalyst for meaningful experiences, inspiring residents to reconnect with their surroundings and each other.”

With plans to expand the program across multiple sites, MACG and SiVR Adventures are paving the way for a new standard in personalised, immersive aged care experiences. This collaboration is a testament to how technology, when thoughtfully applied, can transform lives in ways we never imagined. ■

SiVR Adventures
silvradventures.com.au



Ageing Australia

Become a member of Ageing Australia

Joining Ageing Australia as a member unlocks a wealth of benefits for providers of retirement living, seniors housing, residential care, home care and community care across Australia.

We provide advocacy, expert advice, resources and tailored services to support our members in delivering exceptional care to older Australians.

To start your membership journey please contact our membership team.

 **1300 222 721**

 **members@ageingaustralia.asn.au**

 **ageingaustralia.asn.au**

Smarter solutions for better care

Why you need to get out of the digital dead zone

Australia's aged care sector is sleepwalking into a digital storm. Providers are under mounting pressure to deliver high-quality care and meet regulatory requirements, but too many are still shackled to clunky, outdated systems that belong in the last century.

Data silos, manual paperwork and disconnected platforms aren't just frustrating for staff — they actively delay care, create inefficiencies and leave families in the dark.

The only way forward is a full-scale technology overhaul. Not just a fresh coat of paint on legacy systems, but deep integration, automation and real-time access to data that puts people — clients, families, and care workers — at the centre.

Old technology is no longer sustainable

For years, aged care has been stuck in a digital dead zone. Many providers are juggling multiple systems that don't talk to each other, leaving critical information scattered across platforms like a messy filing cabinet. The result? Duplicate records, missing client data, and care workers spending more time on administration than actual care.

It's not just an inconvenience — it's a liability. When frontline staff don't have instant access to up-to-date client information, mistakes happen. Care plans take longer to update. New hires spend weeks drowning in paperwork before they can even set foot on the floor.

Meanwhile, families are left frustrated by the lack of transparency, unable to check service updates or manage care schedules without making a dozen phone calls.

The Australian Aged Care Worker Survey 2024 reveals just how dire the situation has become. Aged care workers already face increasing workloads with only 47.5 per cent of nurses and personal care workers saying they spent all of their last shift actually providing care, with the rest were pulled into paperwork and meetings.

Kalyra's technology overhaul

Kalyra, a South Australian aged care provider, found itself trapped in this web of inefficiency. It knew that its future depended on rethinking how technology could streamline operations.

The solution? Full-scale digital integration — connecting every system, automating key processes and ensuring that all client and workforce data is instantly accessible and accurate.

By overhauling its IT infrastructure, Kalyra built a connected, intelligent aged care environment. Instead of juggling disconnected platforms, its core systems — HR, home care, residential care, customer experience and a client-facing mobile app — now operate as a single, seamless network.

The difference was immediate. Care workers can now access real-time client records at the touch of a button, eliminating the time-consuming scavenger hunt for missing

files. Families have full visibility over their loved ones' care through a mobile app, removing guesswork and frustration from the aged care experience. While onboarding is now faster, smarter and less prone to human error.

Regulatory compliance has also been strengthened. By integrating and automating reporting processes, Kalyra has ensured compliance data is accurate, up to date and easily accessible.

“By overhauling its IT infrastructure, Kalyra built a connected, intelligent aged care environment.”

This kind of digital leap isn't just about efficiency; it's about empowering people. Staff now have the tools to make administration more efficient, giving them more time for caring. Families feel informed and in control. And Kalyra can now operate at a rate to meet growing demand.

The future of aged care is smart, not just digital

Integration is just the start. The next frontier for aged care isn't just getting systems to talk to each other – it's making them smarter.

Imagine an aged care system that doesn't just react to problems but predicts them. AI-powered analytics could spot early signs of health deterioration, alerting staff before a crisis occurs. Robotics could assist with mobility and hygiene, easing the physical strain on care workers while giving clients more independence. Automated compliance tracking could remove the bureaucratic headache of reporting, ensuring providers meet regulatory standards without mountains of paperwork. Kalyra's transformation proves that aged care can modernise without losing its human touch.

The solution isn't complicated. Providers need to integrate their digital ecosystems to create a single source of truth for client and workforce data. They need to automate manual processes to reduce the administrative stranglehold on staff. And they need to start preparing for AI, not as distant possibilities, but as immediate tools to improve care delivery.

Providers that embrace smarter ways of working will set the standard for quality, efficiency and client satisfaction with organisations like Kalyra showing what's possible. Those that don't, face a steep uphill climb. ■

David Irecki, Chief Technology Officer for Asia-Pacific and Japan, Boomi
 boomi.com

Ageing Australia

State Conferences 2025

<p>TAS 6 May 2025, Grand Chancellor, Hobart</p>	<p>SA 9 May 2025, The Playford Hotel, Adelaide</p>	<p>VIC 19-21 May 2025, Marvel Stadium, Melbourne</p>	<p>WA 26-28 May 2025, Crown, Perth</p>	<p>QLD 10-12 June 2025, The Star, Gold Coast</p>	<p>NSW/ACT 25-27 June 2025, Hilton, Sydney</p>
--	---	---	---	---	---

☎ 1300 222 721

🌐 conference.ageingaustralia.asn.au

✉ events@ageingaustralia.asn.au

Digital transformation in aged care

Overcoming challenges with intelligent automation

Across Australia's aged care sector, providers are confronting an increasing number of challenges that affect both day-to-day operations and the overall quality of care, with intelligent automation emerging as a practical solution.

Administrative overload, staffing shortages, and ever-changing regulatory demands have created an environment where every minute counts. Routine tasks such as manual data entry, invoice processing and juggling multiple IT systems not only consume valuable time but also elevate the risk of errors. These inefficiencies can detract from the essential focus on resident care, undermining the quality and safety of services.

Many aged care providers are reviewing their operations to identify areas where improvement is needed. A common challenge is the significant administrative burden that takes away from face-to-face interactions with residents. When staff are tied up with paperwork or managing outdated systems, the human element – the conversations, empathy and reassurance – can suffer.

Equally, the complexity of ensuring compliance with stringent regulatory requirements can force care providers to devote resources to monitoring and reconciling data rather than to enhancing direct care.

By automating repetitive tasks, providers can streamline operations and reduce the likelihood of errors. For instance, automated invoice processing can handle data entry and reconciliation in a fraction of the time it takes to do manually. Similarly, by integrating

systems that once operated in isolation, aged care providers can create a more seamless flow of information. These improvements not only drive efficiency but also free up staff to focus on more critical, human-centred activities.

A measured approach to digital transformation often begins with a comprehensive evaluation of current processes. This audit phase is crucial, helping managers understand where bottlenecks exist and which tasks are most ripe for automation.

Once the pain points are clearly identified, pilot projects can be initiated. For example, a provider might start by automating invoice processing within a specific department, reducing processing times and administrative errors, while improving communication between teams. These tangible benefits provide the confidence needed to expand automation efforts across the organisation.

The gradual implementation of intelligent automation is key to ensuring a smooth transition. Change management in aged care must be approached with sensitivity, as staff are often wary of new technologies disrupting their familiar routines. By introducing automation in phases – beginning with non-invasive, clearly beneficial projects – providers can build trust and demonstrate technology as an aid rather than a threat.

Clear communication about the purpose and benefits of automation, alongside training and support, ensures that staff are both prepared and motivated to embrace new systems.

The next crucial step is to secure the right industry partnership. This is where engaging with an experienced

technology provider can make all the difference.

ProcessX is a company that focuses on process automation and business optimisation, offering tailored intelligent automation solutions designed specifically for the aged care sector. Their approach is not one-size-fits-all; instead, they work closely with clients to understand unique operational challenges and design systems and how to integrate them seamlessly into existing workflows.

By choosing a partner like ProcessX, aged care providers can leverage expert guidance during the pilot phase and beyond, ensuring that the transition is managed efficiently and sustainably.

In one notable instance, an aged care provider that partnered with ProcessX reported a dramatic reduction in the time spent on routine administrative tasks. As the system took over repetitive functions such as data entry and invoice processing, staff were able to reallocate their time to direct care and other high-impact activities.

Ultimately, the promise of intelligent automation in aged care lies in its ability to integrate advanced technology with the practical realities of everyday operations. The transformation journey is not about overnight change or radical disruption; rather, it is a gradual, thoughtful process that involves assessing current challenges, piloting targeted projects and partnering with industry experts to drive sustainable improvements. Through these steps, aged care providers can build an environment where technology acts as a powerful enabler, streamlining routine tasks while preserving the essential human touch that defines quality care.

In today's challenging environment, intelligent automation offers a realistic and proven strategy to overcome the pressing issues faced by the aged care sector. By taking deliberate, well-planned steps toward digital transformation, providers can pave the way for a more efficient, resilient and compassionate future – one where every resident receives the high-quality, person-centred care they deserve. ■

ProcessX
process-x.com.au

Enhancing aged care efficiency and quality through technology

The right tools, training and cultural change are vital

In Australia's aged care sector, frontline workers are under immense pressure. With rising compliance demands, workforce shortages and the need to provide high-quality, personalised care, the balance between compassionate service and operational efficiency can feel almost impossible to achieve. The question is: how can aged care providers leverage technology to support staff, streamline operations, and, most importantly, improve outcomes for residents?

Technology has emerged as a crucial ally in addressing these challenges. By automating administrative tasks, integrating communication systems and providing real-time access to information, innovative solutions can empower staff and enhance care quality. However, the implementation of technology in aged care must be carefully designed to meet the specific needs of this sector. It's not just about adopting new gadgets; it's about creating a seamless experience that benefits both residents and caregivers.

For instance, one of the significant hurdles in aged care is the time-consuming process of documentation. Care workers often spend a considerable portion of their shifts on paperwork, which detracts from valuable time with residents. Point-of-care data entry solutions have been developed to tackle this, allowing staff to update records in real-time while remaining with the resident. This not only improves record accuracy but also ensures that information is immediately available to all team members, enhancing communication and continuity of care.

Another key area is workforce retention and satisfaction. With staff turnover being a persistent issue in aged care, technology can play a role in creating a more supportive work environment. Tools that reduce administrative burdens and streamline communication can help alleviate some of the stress that contributes to worker burnout. Additionally, user-friendly systems that are intuitive and easy to learn can make onboarding new staff – including temporary or agency workers – far more efficient, enabling them to integrate smoothly into the care environment.

Safety and security are also top priorities in aged care settings. Modern solutions have started to integrate features like secure communication, building access control and real-time location tracking to enhance the safety of both residents and staff. These advancements provide peace of mind, especially when it comes to responding promptly to emergencies or managing high-risk areas.

Amid these advancements, IT Integrity has developed the One Tool Ecosystem, which exemplifies how technology can be used effectively to support aged care workers. This ecosystem integrates essential functions into a single device, offering seamless access to clinical information, communication tools and security features. While it's just one example of the many innovative solutions emerging in this space, it illustrates the impact that considered technology can have. By simplifying workflows and providing real-time data, such solutions enable care staff to dedicate more time to residents and deliver a higher standard of personalised care.

However, it's important to note successful implementation of technology in aged care is not just about the tools themselves but about training and cultural change. Staff need to feel confident using new systems, and technology should be intuitive enough to fit naturally into their routines. Collaboration with frontline workers during the development and deployment of these systems is crucial to ensure technology enhances, rather than hinders, their ability to care for residents.

The future of aged care lies in creating environments where technology and human connection coexist seamlessly. By prioritising solutions that support efficiency and quality, aged care providers can navigate the complexities of their roles while delivering compassionate, person-centred care. ■

Steve Iannuzzelli, Chief Client Officer, IT Integrity
itintegrity.com.au

Innovation reducing the physical impact of care work

Lumbar support exoskeletons solving workforce challenges

By 2050, one in five Australians will be aged 65 or older, increasing demand for aged care services and adding strain to the workforce. Compounding this issue is the ageing care workforce itself, with older workers at higher risk of musculoskeletal injuries.

Care workers often perform physically taxing tasks such as lifting, repositioning and transferring patients placing strain on the lower back. According to Safe Work Australia, healthcare workers experience high rates of injury claims, with manual handling a key contributor.

In 2020–21, an estimated \$3.4 billion was spent on the treatment and management of back problems, representing 2.2 per cent of total health system expenditure and 23 per cent of expenditure for all musculoskeletal conditions.

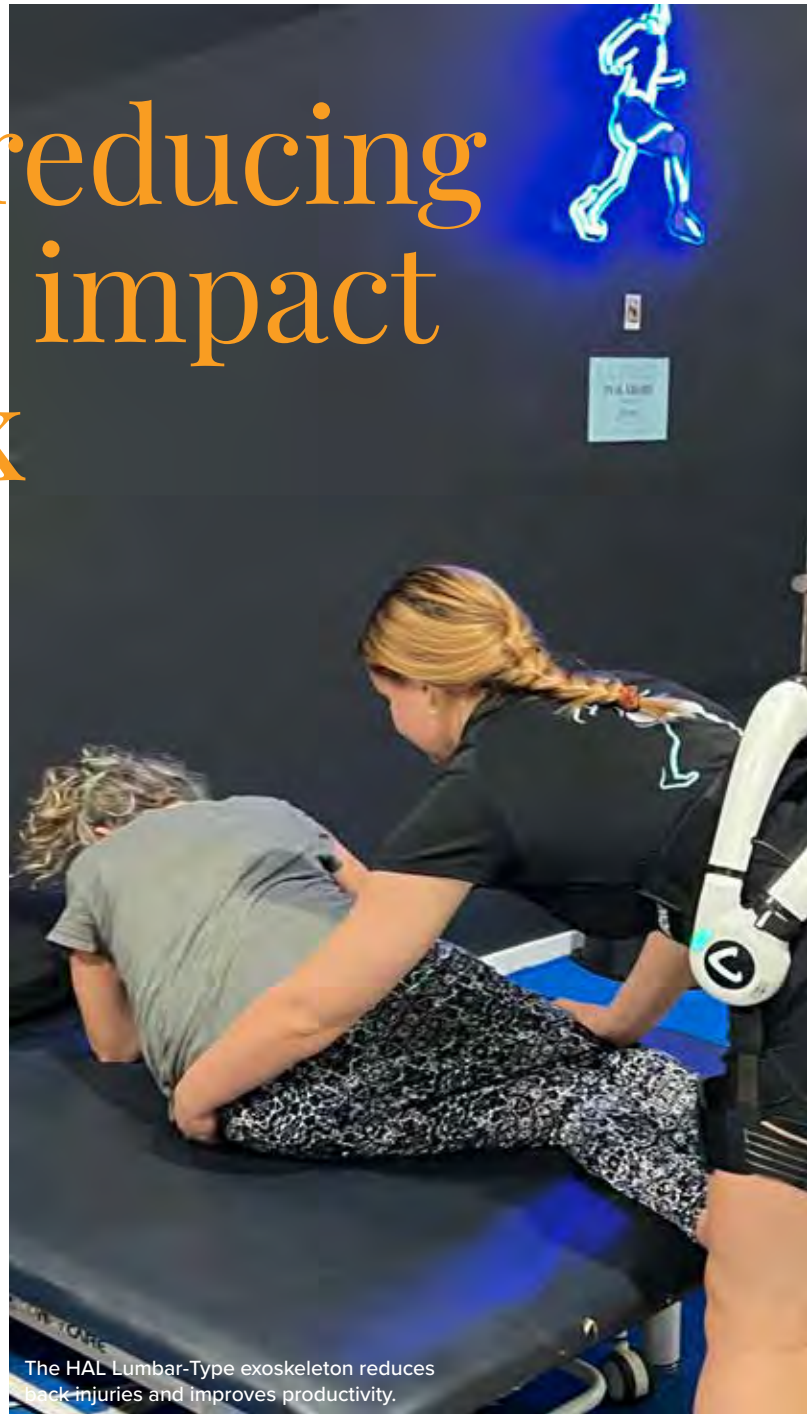
Chronic back pain impacts quality of life, increases absenteeism and is a driver of staff turnover. Protecting care workers is essential for the stability of aged care services.

New technologies, such as lumbar support exoskeletons, play a critical role in addressing these challenges by transforming how care workers manage the physical demands of their roles.

What are lumbar support exoskeletons?

Lumbar support exoskeletons are a type of cobot (collaborative robot) technology, which are computer-controlled robotic devices worn around the waist and lower back.

The Hybrid Assistive Limb (HAL) Lumbar-Type exoskeleton, developed by Cyberdyne and available in Australia through



The HAL Lumbar-Type exoskeleton reduces back injuries and improves productivity.

RoboFit, is a wearable robotic device that uses sensors to detect bioelectrical signals from the user's muscles. It assists with movements like bending, lifting and carrying, reducing strain on the lumbar region.

This device is beneficial for manual handling tasks common in aged care, such as transferring patients to wheelchairs or repositioning them. By providing active support, the HAL Lumbar-Type exoskeleton reduces fatigue and helps maintain proper posture during physically demanding tasks.

Enhancing safety and productivity

With an ageing workforce, it is critical to support older aged care workers who may be more susceptible to injuries

and take longer to recover. An exoskeleton allows them to perform tasks with reduced physical effort, extending their careers while safeguarding their health and wellbeing.

By improving safety and reducing fatigue, the device fosters job satisfaction and retention. It also improves efficiency by reducing the effort required for physically demanding tasks, allowing staff to focus on other responsibilities and boosting productivity.

The UK experience

Local providers in Hampshire, United Kingdom have invested in lumbar exoskeletons for their workforce to assist in reducing the physical load of work and reducing carer burnout.

Funding was initially granted from the UK's Social Care Digital Innovation Programme to explore how carers could be better supported with the physical aspects of caring (in conjunction with Hampshire), which found carers were struggling with the physical demands of caring and were eager for new solutions, including using robotics.

Hampshire then developed a business case for a cobot pathfinder programme and leased six cobots, deploying them in residential and home care settings.

There was positive feedback from carers, who indicated they were less fatigued and felt less strained completing their care duties. This project has now been scaled from a pilot stage to deploying additional lumbar support exoskeletons.

Overcoming barriers to adoption

Challenges to adopting lumbar support exoskeletons in Australia include upfront costs and limited awareness. One of the keys to a successful experience in the UK was investment in engagement, with a range of offerings to enhance understanding among the aged care workforce.

RoboFit, the Australian provider of the HAL Lumbar-Type exoskeleton and other HAL devices, offers training and integration support for aged care providers, to assist with understanding and correct use. Government incentives and subsidies could help accelerate adoption, while continued research will support an evidence-based approach.

Demonstrating a commitment to staff

Now available in Australia, the HAL Lumbar-Type exoskeleton represents a groundbreaking solution to the physical demands of working in aged care, offering a way to prevent injury among carers. Investing in technologies like the HAL Lumbar-Type exoskeleton demonstrates a commitment to worker wellbeing, building trust and loyalty among staff, and helps to futureproof your business against workforce challenges.

As the nation grapples with an ageing population and workforce, embracing technologies like the HAL Lumbar-Type is vital for building a sustainable, resilient care system. ■

Maryanne Harris and Gaby Clarke, RoboFit
robofit.com.au

Ageing Australia InnovAGEING

Strategic Innovation Program

Focused on the Support at Home Program, you will gain world-leading innovation skills, realise new opportunities, collaborate with like-minded peers and connect with the sector's thought-leaders.

13-14 May 2025 at Novotel Darling Harbour, Sydney. Register now:



2025 is the year of smarter solar

Innovations are making sustainability a great deal

As the aged care sector evolves, so too do its energy demands. Rising operational expenses, regulatory pressures to reduce carbon footprints, and the need for reliable energy sources have made renewable energy adoption a top priority. Enter 2025: the year smarter solar technologies take centre stage in reshaping energy strategies for aged care facilities.

Harnessing innovation for energy resilience

Modern aged care facilities are energy-intensive, requiring constant power for the efficiency of critical day-to-day operations, climate control, essential care services and equipment. Solar energy is no longer just an environmentally conscious choice; it has become a strategic asset for operational resilience and cost efficiency.

Emerging innovations, such as AI-driven energy management systems and IoT-enabled monitoring tools, are transforming how aged care facilities harness solar power. These technologies enable facilities to:

- optimise energy use by predicting energy demand patterns and allocating solar power where it's needed most, reducing reliance on the grid during peak hours
- enhance reliability by detecting and addressing system inefficiencies in real-time, minimising downtime and ensuring uninterrupted power supply
- drive cost savings by maximising energy storage and usage through smart battery integration, lowering overall operational expenses.

Meeting the unique needs of aged care

Unlike other sectors, aged care facilities require tailored solutions to meet strict compliance, operational and resident care standards. Smarter solar solutions address these unique needs.

- **Customised system design:** Advanced solar technologies allow for precise system sizing and layout, ensuring maximum efficiency whether the facility is in a space-constrained urban setting or a more sprawling rural location.
- **Energy storage integration:** Batteries are no longer add-ons; they are integral to ensuring systems remain powered during outages or emergencies. Smarter battery systems optimise energy allocation, prioritising critical loads over non-essential ones.
- **Regulatory compliance:** Smarter solar systems simplify data reporting and compliance with sustainability mandates, offering automated insights into energy savings and carbon reduction metrics.
- **Robust cybersecurity:** High-quality solar system inverters now include robust cybersecurity features that align with industry standards. These measures ensure the safety and integrity of an aged care facility's energy infrastructure by preventing unauthorised access and safeguarding data and system operations. This provides peace of mind for providers as they transition to renewable energy solutions

Looking ahead

As we step into 2025, the following trends are expected to drive solar adoption in aged care, in cases where providers manage residential care, retirement living or seniors housing.

- **Increased AI adoption:** Artificial intelligence will play a larger role in predictive maintenance, ensuring solar systems operate at peak performance with minimal human intervention.
- **Greater focus on sustainability reporting:** Aged care facilities will prioritise solar installations that align with ESG (environmental, social and

governance) goals, leveraging smart systems to track progress.

- **Government incentives:** New subsidies and grants for renewable energy adoption in aged care will make the transition more accessible and affordable.

Partnering for success

Energis is at the forefront of these advancements, bringing smarter solar solutions to the aged care sector. By combining cutting-edge technologies with a deep understanding of the unique challenges that the sector faces, we help reduce electricity expenses, improve sustainability and ensure reliable energy for operations.

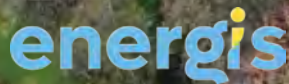
As 2025 unfolds, there has never been a better time for aged care leaders to embrace solar innovation. Let's make this the year your facility takes the leap toward a smarter, more sustainable energy future. ■

A checklist for aged care leaders

For aged care decision-makers considering solar investments in 2025, here's a checklist to guide the journey.

- **Assess your energy needs:** Conduct an energy audit to identify consumption patterns and peak demand periods.
- **Explore smart solutions:** Choose solar providers that offer AI-driven systems, energy storage options, and real-time monitoring tools.
- **Prioritise compliance:** Ensure your solar solution meets local regulations and sustainability reporting requirements.
- **Leverage incentives:** Research available grants and subsidies to offset installation costs.
- **Plan for scalability:** Design your solar system with future expansion in mind, accommodating growth or changing energy needs.

Energis
energis.com.au



energis.com.au

1300 782 217

“ We should have done it years ago!

Cameron Willoughby, Director
Park Lane Croydon Residential Aged Care
reduced their electricity bills by up to 40% with their 100kW solar installation

ENERGISING CARE

Supporting a Seamless Transition to Low-Cost Sustainable Energy

Rising energy costs and sustainability pressures are creating new challenges for aged care facilities, retirement villages and healthcare providers. However, transitioning to solar and battery solutions can feel complex, with concerns around investment, compliance and operational feasibility.

Energis is a leading provider of solar and battery solutions for businesses in this space, delivering reliable, cost-effective renewable energy. Our Free Sustainability Energy Audit provides a structured, data-driven assessment, helping organisations identify cost-saving opportunities and maximise government incentives—ensuring a commercially viable, future-proof energy strategy.

Benefits of Solar & Battery Solutions with Energis



Cost Reduction & Energy Security

Lower operational expenses and reduce reliance on the grid with solar and battery storage tailored for aged care and retirement villages.



Government Incentives & Rebates

Maximise available funding opportunities to make solar and battery investment more affordable and commercially viable.



Seamless Integration

End-to-end project management ensures hassle-free implementation with minimal impact on daily operations.

FREE Sustainability Energy Audit

Get a free comprehensive assessment of your energy usage, cost-saving opportunities and recommended solar & battery solutions.

Contact Sheridyn Lynch

✉ sheridyn@energis.com.au

☎ 0412 708 344

[Enquire Now](#)

About Energis

Since 2013, Energis has been delivering solar and battery solutions to help aged care organisations and retirement villages reduce costs. With over 10,000 installations, we are a recognised sustainability partner, ensuring a seamless transition to renewable energy with minimal operational disruption.

✔ Expert Support

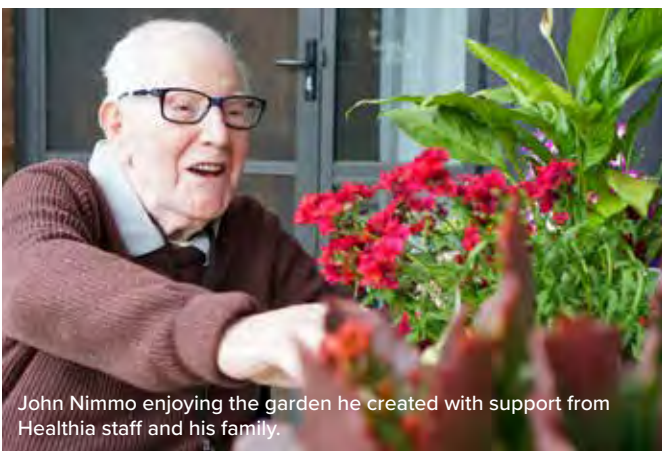
✔ Cost Savings

✔ Seamless Integration

✔ Government Incentives

ACH Group's newest residential home empowering residents and staff

Small home model proving a great success



John Nimmo enjoying the garden he created with support from Healthia staff and his family.

ACH Group Chief Executive Officer Linda Feldt leads a passionate 2,000-strong team who believe in supporting older people to live a good life – a commitment that is evident in the built form and model of care at their newest residential aged care offering in Adelaide's Elizabeth South.

With over a year since it opened its doors, the Healthia home has proven itself to be a model that goes above and beyond to support the independence, health and wellbeing of older people, in a small household setting.

"Healthia was the first residential aged care home we had built in 15 years, so we wanted to make sure we were doing something progressive and innovative; we had a greenfield site so there was a lot of scope to do things differently," said Linda. "The small house model was already on our radar when it was highlighted by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety as an example of excellence, so we looked for a partnership where we could explore this possibility.

"At ACH Group, we have a proud history of innovation, and our board was fully supportive of our approach. "We partnered with the US-founded Green House Project (GHP) model of care, because of the strong alignment with our own values, but we did need to make some adjustments to align with our own ACH Group operating model and the Australian Aged Care Quality Standards.

"Over several years, we also conducted our own rigorous consumer consultation, with the help of COTA Australia. We also consulted our current residents to help us choose

furniture and artworks; we wanted to incorporate their preferences into the design and furnishings that would feature in our new home.

"The GHP mentored us, they sent their trainers to train our staff ahead of the home opening, and we still maintain a connection today, to help us stay focused on our vision."

Owned and overseen by the Center for Innovation, the GHP model promotes the autonomy and individuality of residents and staff in a de-institutionalised setting, and has been successfully implemented in about 400 private and not-for-profit care homes in the United States.

Healthia is their first collaboration with an Australian aged care provider.

"While our business model was already focused on helping older people live good lives, this project pushed us further to think about how residents can live well and independently in a residential care setting," said Linda.

"At Healthia, each home sets its own rhythm for the day. Residents decide on a collective mealtime, individuals choose when they will get up and go to bed and what they will do each day. It's a big change from the traditional model of care.

"It also meant a big change in how our staff care, with a shift away from being focused on tasks to being focused on residents; tasks still get done but interacting with residents is now the priority."



Healthia's street frontage blends seamlessly with the streetscape and local housing stock.



Healthia resident Fay Tozer and ACH Group multi skilled worker Michelle Faderl, making the most of the inviting domestic kitchen.

Healthia comprises eight purpose-built single storey homes with a maximum of 12 residents in each, co-located in a village atmosphere and joined via interconnected walkways. The homes are designed to integrate with the natural streetscape of a typical suburban neighbourhood through their scale, domestic features and materiality.

There is also a central building that includes a café, gymnasium, hairdresser and open space for meetings, activities and events.

“We aim to focus on what brings our residents joy, their simple pleasures. For one resident it’s ice cream because she doesn’t eat cake. For others it’s gardening in the courtyard.

“We also focus on communication. We hold weekly meetings with the residents of each house to discuss new ideas or concerns. Rather than having issues addressed by management, we aim to seek resolution and facilitate consensus from the resident group.

“We want people to feel like this is their home not an aged care home, so we encourage them to live as they want to live. The built form is highly conducive to this model of care.”

The Healthia homes have been designed and audited against dementia design principles and all individuals are assessed prior to moving in to determine which household is the best fit for them.

It goes without saying the response from residents and their families, as well as staff, has been overwhelmingly positive.

“All staff who work at Healthia receive the core training and find it invigorating because the model of care is focused on developing meaningful connections. As a result, we have high engagement and low staff turnover,” said Linda.

“One of our valued staff members started a coffee catch up for residents at the café on Friday mornings, and now there are as many as 60 people joining in.



ACH Group CEO Linda Feldt (left) and Home Manager Danielle Gordon (right) chatting with Healthia resident, John Scragg.

“The model is not just about supporting residents to continue to live life the way they want; it’s about empowering staff to have a voice and make a difference.”

Healthia was designed by award-winning Adelaide-based architects Brown Falconer and built by Sarah Constructions.

“Our design process is focused on collaboratively resolving client and stakeholder core values and principles and then resolving them with their operational model,” said Brown Falconer Managing Director Mario Dreosti.

“Healthia was heavily informed by ACH Group’s strong resident-centric values and process, and a model of care which unlocked design opportunities particularly around staff activities and movement.”

Aside from anecdotal evidence from residents, their families and staff, the University of South Australia’s research into the project indicates positive outcomes.

The findings will enable further enhancement of the design and model, with ACH Group planning to build more small household residential aged care homes in the future, as well as renovate current homes into small home models. ■

ACH Group
achgroup.org.au



Learning from the household model

Better for residents and better for business

Aged care in Australia is undergoing a transformation, with a shift away from institutional settings towards environments that foster dignity, autonomy and connection. Paynters is proud to be at the forefront of this evolution, partnering with providers and delivering projects that prioritise person-centred care.

Our research and observation firmly support that matched with the right service structure and change management, a household model can be both a viable business opportunity and offer residents an experience that delivers on dignity, purpose, better clinical outcome and most importantly, joy.

A journey to a household model for existing sites is not an easy one. It requires passionate change makers and teams of carers who are willing to actively listen to residents' needs.

Some residents can find it difficult to transition out of a traditional model as they are used to fixed routines, but time and again we have seen them ease into their new home.

From a business perspective, costings of our projects have shown that small households cost less per room than a traditional facility, due to savings in back-of-house areas in both square metre rates and duplication of services.

Equally, we have seen strategic smaller renovations and operational adjustments significantly enhance the viability of existing smaller households. Many providers successful in the current Aged Care Capital Assistance round have been supported to adopt hybrid versions of the model, turning to innovative options in current facilities with low capital costs.



The Emmaus Memory Support Village is one of Australia's newest small household models for residential aged care.

Brownfield sites

Simple ways the household model is being adopted within brownfield (or existing) sites:

- **Smaller living groups.** Moving away from central dining back to satellite dining and resident accessible kitchenettes.
- **Reconfiguring underutilised lounge areas.** Turning large areas into functional spaces such as activity specific rooms, social engagement areas or additional storage. Key to this is the involvement of resident cohorts in styling.
- **Decluttering and optimising storage.** Improving movement flow and maintaining a home-like environment.
- **Piloting hybrid models.** Allowing providers to test smaller households and decentralise aspects such as dining.
- **Improved wayfinding.** Improving wayfinding and unconscious institutional signage and removing staff directions.

The right household size

If a larger development is on the agenda, then the common question is what is the right number of residents per house?

Indication from the royal commission says less than 12, while the design guideline states eight or less is ideal, however less than six is difficult to maintain due to staffing requirements.

The right answer will depend on your local context, the customer experience you are targeting and the existing services that may operate alongside any new beds. Key considerations are:

- **Staffing adaptability.** Can the staffing model flex with changes in resident acuity? What are the fixed requirements and targeted care minutes?
- **Decentralisation of services.** What operational functions am I willing to move inside the household structure to create a more home-like atmosphere?

Australia is moving away from institutional models of aged care, with the facade of the Emmaus Memory Support Village looking like a suburban home.



shared vision with our clients to create spaces that promote independence while offering the highest level of care and support.

The village consists of small, self-contained households that accommodate eight residents, fostering familiarity and a sense of belonging.

Each home includes open-plan living areas, private bedrooms with ensuites, and shared kitchen and dining spaces.

This design allows residents to maintain daily routines, engage in meaningful activities, and build strong relationships with both staff and fellow residents.

Looking ahead

As Australia's ageing population grows, the demand for well-planned, compassionate and person-centred environments will continue to rise.

The household model is not just a trend; it is the future of aged care, providing residents with the dignity and independence they deserve.

With projects like the Emmaus Memory Support Village, Paynters is proud to be a driving force behind this transformation, ensuring that every resident has a place to call home. ■

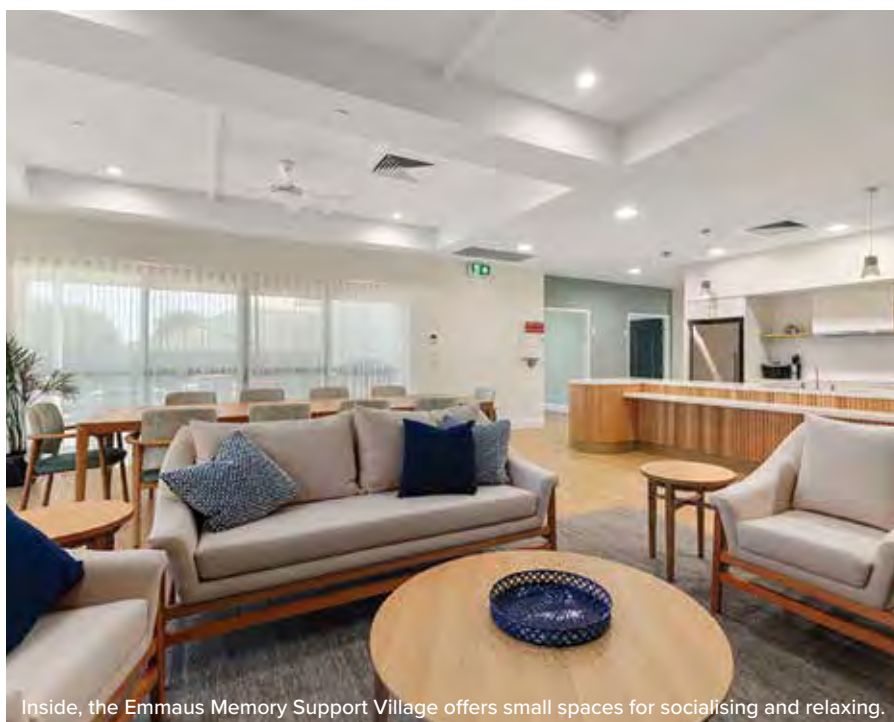
Paynters
paynters.com.au

- **Future client purpose.** What will give future residents a sense of belonging and purpose in this environment?
- **Beyond care needs.** What lifestyle, social and personal preferences should be considered in grouping residents?
- **Relational base.** How should residents interact with daily routines and each other?
- Historically, larger house groups were seen as more financially viable due to efficiencies in staffing and supervision however, AN-ACC funding requirements create new opportunities for smaller household models when staffing is optimised. We suggest the exploration of the following to support your 'right number' approach:
- **Traditional staffing.** Households of 10 or more residents, staffed with two personal care workers (PCWs) during the day and evening, and one overnight, often working in pairs across neighbouring households.
- **Flexible model.** Households with less than 10 residents with one PCW per house for all shifts, supplemented by a floating PCW across houses during the day and evening. This approach reduces fixed labour costs and makes smaller households financially feasible.

St Agnes Care Emmaus Memory Support Village

St Agnes Care's Emmaus Memory Support Village in Port Macquarie offers purpose-built residential aged care with a home-like environment to enhance quality of life.

Designed and delivered by the Paynters team, this project reflects our



Inside, the Emmaus Memory Support Village offers small spaces for socialising and relaxing.

Stage 2 Burradoo expands award-winning aged care

Delivering excellence in regional New South Wales

Having supported older people in the Southern Highlands community since 1959, Harbison is excited to take the next step in its evolution this year. Harbison will commence construction on Burradoo Stage 2 after winning the Excellence in Aged Care award for Stage 1 of the masterplan from the Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW in 2021.

The community-owned organisation secured a Federal Government grant of \$27.5 million to help fund the project in the December 2024 round of the Aged Care Capital Assistance Program (ACCAP) which provided funding for projects to improve regional, rural and remote aged care facilities.

Chief executive David Cochran said Stage 2 was the next step in a 10-year plan, Harbison 2034, which is designed

to meet the needs of older people and people living with dementia. “We are committed to supporting all of our residents to have healthy, productive, longer lives,” said David.

“Stage 2 will allow us to achieve the next stage of our vision to improve the way people age in the Southern Highlands and Illawarra Shoalhaven.

“It will improve access to well-organised healthcare and address the critical shortage of residential aged care in our ageing community.” Stage 2 will include a new and modern 72 bed residential aged care facility and dementia respite service, replacing the original hostel which was built in the 1950s and has been closed since 2023.

Mr Cochran added the Harbison Burradoo project, which is located five minutes from Bowral, will create far more than 50



An artist's impression of Burradoo Stage 2.



An artist's impression of Burradoo Stage 2 which will enhance the existing village experience.

full-time equivalent local skilled jobs for the area and provide first class facilities for its quality staff to care for residents.

Stage 2 will enhance the existing village experience for residents which already includes elegant lounge rooms offering cosy fireplaces, entertainment, allied health services and spaces for social activities.

It is just one of many initiatives underway at Harbison to enhance the health and wellbeing of residents. One project that has had a transformative impact on residents has been a virtual indoor cycling program called Motiview, which has been in use at Harbison since 2018.

The state-of-the-art adaptive indoor bikes with a video library have helped seniors to reminisce as they pedal around the world and share stories with those around them.

"It has changed the lives of many residents," said David. "We have had people on the verge of needing a walker regain their leg strength and independence as well as enjoying the

enormous benefits from the increased everyday engagement with other residents.

"It is great fun for residents as they ride virtually around some of the most iconic and scenic places in the world. They enjoy competing not only against each other but other cyclists around the world using the program. The staff get a kick out of it as well and ask to be tasked with looking after residents involved in the cycling.

"This technology brings joy and enormous benefits to residents, and we would love to roll out the program across Australia so that experience can be shared with more people."

The Norwegian-designed program has been successfully trialled by OneCare in Tasmania and has potential use across the country. ■

Harbison
harbison.org.au

The importance of a dementia enabling environment

Dementia Australia guidance for residential and home care

Dementia can change a person's perception of their environment. This perception may be impacted by an ability to process information such as visual cues, spatial awareness and memory changes experienced by people living with dementia. Small changes to create an enabling environment can make big differences to the lives of people living with dementia.

Residential care

According to 2025 figures recently released by Dementia Australia, at least half of people living in residential aged care have dementia.

It is vital to providing quality care for people living with dementia that the physical environment is designed and maintained to support the provision of this care, along with assisting families or loved ones to engage when visiting.

A residential aged care environment is more than a physical space for people living with dementia. It is a space where they should feel safe and connected. An enabling care environment can help maintain a person's abilities, increase independence and provide meaningful engagement with people around them. Dementia enabling design should prioritise wayfinding, maximise accessibility and reduce risks.

Enabling wayfinding

Wayfinding refers to the process of navigating or finding your way in an environment. Contributing factors to the experience of wayfinding can include architectural, landscape and graphic design along with lighting, visual prompts and signage. Ask yourself, can they find the lounge room or communal area to socialise? Can they access the dining room or kitchen if they feel hungry? Is there effective signage and directive arrows or visual cues that are obvious to the functionality of a space?

Prompts in the environment should support movement and wayfinding. One effective design change in residential care is the personalisation of bedroom doors or corridors to assist residents to identify their room.

This could include favourite colours, photos of loved ones, clearly marked names or decorations that residents, staff and visitors can all become familiar with. This supports independence, comfort and engagement with the environment.

Accessibility and meaningful engagement

A key foundation for accessibility within an enabling environment is to reduce risk and unhelpful stimulation. Risk may refer to people living with dementia entering an incorrect door, area or risking a fall.

One contributing risk factor is a changed behaviour in someone living with dementia. This may occur if they become overstimulated or distressed in an environment. Simple changes to reduce unhelpful stimulation include turning down the volume of the television and finding an alternative to trolleys with loud wheels.

By actively addressing potential risks and ensuring the environment is safe, accessible and welcoming, you can enable people living with dementia to get involved and support meaningful engagement.

When people living with dementia are meaningfully engaged in activities that support their wellbeing, they may exhibit fewer changed behaviours. Meaningful engagement with an environment may involve encouraging residents to make their own beds if able, water plants or set a table with cutlery in the dining room.

It is important to acknowledge that the physical environment is not a passive thing that people live in, but a space that is responsive to the needs and circumstances of its occupants, to support quality of life at all stages of living.



For people living with dementia at home or for carers, The Dementia-Friendly Home is a free, interactive video guide created by Dementia Australia to support people to live independently in their home environment.

The new interactive video guide offers practical tips, for any budget, to make homes safer and more accessible for people living with dementia. For more information, visit dementia.org.au/dementia-friendly-home or contact innovation@dementia.org.au. The Dementia-Friendly Home was developed by Dementia Australia and generously supported by the Arcare Family Foundation.

Audits and training

For aged care managers, a range of dementia-friendly audit tools are available to assist you to review your care environment or plan a new design.

Dementia Australia offers environmental audits to help you create dementia-enabling environments to support people

living with dementia. Audits can be done of aged care, acute care and community environments.

There is also a suite of Dementia Australia professional development and training opportunities – for staff, families and carers – to provide education around how to best utilise and engage with the environment to support people living with dementia.

Because if we get it right for people living with dementia, we get it right for everyone.

For more information, visit dementia.org.au/professionals/professional-development-and-training/environmental-audits-dementia-enabling or contact the Centre for Dementia Learning on 1300 336 368. ■

Dr David Sykes, Director of the Centre for Dementia Learning, Dementia Australia and Dementia Training Australia
dementia.org.au

Navigating changes in fire safety regulation

Understanding AS1851-2012



The updates to fire safety in buildings have significant implications for Australia's aged care sector, particularly providers of residential care and retirement living and seniors housing.

Fire safety reforms were introduced in Australia in 2022 to make buildings safer and increase compliance with fire safety measures, with February 2025 seeing a material update to AS1851-2012, which is the fire protection standard for fire systems and equipment in Australia.

The changes introduced by AS1851-2012 include increased testing frequencies, enhanced documentation and promotion of a risk management approach. Many of the amended requirements place responsibility on the provider to prove that each component of each service has been completed, whereas previously fire system documentation and servicing was the responsibility of the fire services contractor.

Increased frequency of testing

One of the most notable changes in AS1851-2012 is the requirement for more frequent testing and maintenance of fire protection systems. The regulation now specifies new intervals for various tests, ensuring that systems are regularly evaluated for effectiveness. This proactive approach helps identify potential issues before they escalate, enhancing overall fire safety.

Detailed maintenance requirements

The revised regulation provides more specific guidance on the maintenance of different fire protection systems, including fire alarms, sprinklers and emergency lighting.

AS1851-2012 outlines detailed procedures and criteria for inspections and performance tests, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of what is required for each component of the fire protection system.

The regulation update includes more detailed requirements and tolerance limits for each of the service cycles (monthly, six-monthly and so on). For example, kitchen exhaust systems must now be inspected and be subject to routine service monthly.

Documentation standards

The new documentation standards might have the greatest impact on the aged care sector.

AS1851-2012 now places a greater emphasis on the importance of documentation of all the components of the fire systems, including the passive components.

Facilities are now required to maintain comprehensive records of all maintenance activities, including inspection dates, test results and any corrective actions taken.

Proper documentation not only ensures compliance but also serves as a valuable resource for tracking the performance of fire safety systems.

Records of servicing now need to be kept and maintained, ideally within a Computerised Maintenance Management System (CMMS) for ease of reference.

It's now a requirement to document and keep comprehensive records of:

- inspection dates
- test results
- corrective actions taken
- fire and smoke barrier locations (documented with marked-up plans)
- integrity inspections of fire-resistant beams, columns, and doors.

Risk management approach

The updated standard adopts a risk management approach to fire safety. Rather than following a one-size-fits-all model, AS1851-2012 encourages organisations to assess their specific risks and tailor their fire safety strategies accordingly. This customisation allows for more effective risk mitigation and resource allocation.

Training and competency requirements

Recognising the importance of qualified personnel, the standard outlines the necessary training and competencies required for individuals responsible for maintaining fire safety systems. This emphasis on training ensures maintenance and inspections are conducted by knowledgeable professionals, enhancing safety.

Changes in equipment standards

AS1851-2012 reflects updates in technology and equipment standards, ensuring maintenance practices align with the latest developments in fire safety technology. This adaptability helps organisations stay current with innovations and improvements in fire protection systems.

Emphasis on performance-based solutions

The revised standard's regulations encourage the implementation of performance-based solutions, allowing facilities greater flexibility in how they meet their fire safety obligations. This approach fosters innovation and enables tailored solutions that best fit an organisation's unique needs.

MDFM advises that organisations familiarise themselves with these updates to ensure compliance and effectively safeguard their occupants and property from fire hazards.

If measures are not already being maintained to AS1851-2012 in buildings needing an annual fire safety statement, it is important to note this updated standard is now mandatory. ■

MDFM
mdfm.com.au

Advertise with us

We can help you get there

Advertise in *Aged Care Today* – Australia’s leading aged care sector magazine – to expand your business reach and increase your brand awareness.

Now managed entirely by Ageing Australia, *Aged Care Today* is produced in-house – from advertising to editorial to magazine design – so we can ensure a seamless process and personalised support.

Delivered electronically to a growing database of more than 25,000 contacts in your target market, advertising in *Aged Care Today* is an easy way to access your audience.

Plus, the chief executive of more than 75 per cent of Australia’s aged care providers will get their own print copy – giving your business exposure as a key partner of the aged care sector.

With a range of advertising options and discounted rates for Ageing Australia associates as well as multiple issue purchases, plus the opportunity to run editorial in conjunction with advertising for our valued associates, we can tailor a package to meet your needs.

Help us share your message with Australia’s aged care sector.



Ageing
Australia

✉ agedcareday@ageingaustralia.asn.au ☎ 1300 222 721

🖥 ageingaustralia.asn.au

ALL YOUR LAUNDRY TROLLEYS AND ACCESSORIES



IN ONE PLACE

COLLECTION TROLLEYS GARMENT RACKS RISING BASE TROLLEYS
WASHNET BAGS FOLDING TABLES SOLUBLE BAGS

View our entire trolley range



E: info@laundrysolutions.com.au

P: 1300 666 289

W: laundrysolutions.com.au