

## Longevity making a difference to the lives of residents and clients



Dorothy Collins (known to most as Dodi) has had a varied, and she would probably agree, a fortunate life. “I’ve always believed we need to help those who can’t look after themselves,” reveals Dodi. She was born shortly before the Second World War into a supportive family that always lived by this caring ethos.

Having worked in paid roles until she was 75 years of age, she was well entitled to put up her feet. Instead she called [MannaCare](#) (then known as the Manningham Centre) and offered her time as a volunteer. And as one of the staff put it, “Dodi has been volunteering every Wednesday for some years at Grevillea House. She is very familiar with all the clients, she reads the daily news and entertains them about her busy week.”

In a warm and friendly environment, Dodi says “it’s lovely when you walk in. They know you and trust you, greeting you with these lovely smiles”. Dodi has remarked that it has been “an experience that has proved life-changing for her.

It is so unfair and heartbreaking that dementia affects so many wonderful people in so many walks of life. I hope and pray that a cure and understanding of it is just around the corner so people can live a full and happy life.”

She along with other volunteers and the staff help prepare morning tea and set the table for lunch. “We get the clients to help us with that”. Dodi also enjoys giving hand massages, “engaging residents in discussions where they can remember things, we go for walks and do other activities.” Staff say Dodi uses “her calm voice, respectful ways and patience as well as sense of humour” to support clients in ways that make them feel less lonely and isolated. “Staff and clients truly treasure her for her friendship and warm nature. She has made a big impact to the lives of those at Grevillea House,” says one staff member.

Dodi expresses her gratitude that she is glad to play “a sincere role in giving these wonderful people the care and assistance that they deserve.” Her experience as a volunteer makes her feel “so grateful that I have my own good health and can remember so much of my good life. At my age, who knows what comes next?”

### For more information about MannaCare:

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Volunteering: <http://mannacare.org.au/support-us/>