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MannaCare - Wider Choices for Older People



MannaCare  
news

## Message from Ross Dawson, CEO

As the days get longer, the weather gets warmer, the Christmas holiday season approaches and the average daily number of new COVID-19 infections continues at or near zero. The road ahead looks bright, free and full of promise. Looking back though, for most of us 2020 will be considered a dark year that we will be glad to bid farewell to. Whether it be residents, clients, relatives, volunteers or staff, it has been tough having to cope with the isolation, stress, restrictions and infection control protocols made necessary by the pandemic.

We have lived through history in the making and have come out the other end! Careful plans are now being put in place to return MannaCare services to what has been termed “COVID-normal”. True normal won’t be possible until we have an effective vaccine in place and it is widely administered. We have been assured that the aged care sector is a priority area for vaccination so we are hopeful this won’t be too far into 2021.

Thank you to staff, volunteers and families for your patience and understanding throughout the year. I look forward to a less difficult year in 2021. As the end of the year draws closer, I take this opportunity to wish everyone best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.



▲ Congratulations Gordon - Birthday 99!



▲ Lodge residents enjoying their International Lunch



▲ AFL Grand Final Day at the Lodge



## Clive's Joke Corner

One of our residents, Clive is a great joke teller, and he has shared a few jokes with us to get us all into the Christmas spirit. Thank you, Clive!

**Q: Why don't crabs celebrate Christmas?**

*A: Because they are selfish.*

**Q: What's every parent's favourite Christmas carol?**

*A: Silent Night*

**Q: What did Mrs Claus say to Santa Claus when she looked up in the sky?**

*A: Looks like rain, dear*

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## Friends of MannaCare iPad donation

Thank you to Friends of MannaCare (FoM) for their recent donation of two iPads to MannaCare, one for each facility – Cassia House and Doncaster Melaleuca Lodge.

As a long term volunteer group associated with MannaCare, FoM raises money that goes towards providing Sunday entertainers for our monthly concerts held at Cassia House. These concerts are for the enjoyment of residents and their family and friends. Unfortunately, this year due to COVID-19 these have not transpired.

Liz Haylock and Don O’Gorman, representatives of the FoM group, expressed their delight at being able to donate some of the funds raised to improve the lives of our residents in

another way. “It is good that the money is being used to support MannaCare and help residents stay in touch with families, particularly during COVID-19 restrictions.”

This has been a valuable contribution for our residents. During COVID-19, the demand for the use of MannaCare’s existing two iPads far exceeded our capacity to share them around.

The FoM donation was greatly appreciated as it has allowed residents to have more opportunity to keep in touch with family members. Thank you FoM for your efforts. We look forward to a time when these concerts are back up and running again for the enjoyment of residents and their families.



▲ Donated iPads from Friends of MannaCare



▲ Lodge resident with one of the cards she received

## Pen Pal Program

Our recently launched Pen Pal Program has proved to be a hit with both the volunteers (who write cards) and our residents (who receive them)!!

The Pen Pal Program aims to reach out to our residents whom the volunteers used to see face-to-face pre COVID-19.

“In the past few days I’ve received a couple of cards from Lodge volunteers. What a lovely surprise! One included a newsy note which in part told me of the family significance of the picture on the card. It was a delight to receive them both.” Lodge Resident

Well done to Tanya Warms, Volunteer Co-ordinator, who shared with us “The aim

of the Program is to support the residents and to assist them in lessening their feelings of isolation and loneliness of not seeing familiar faces.”

Thank you to Mary, Natalie, Lindy, Liz, Don, John, Maureen, Jan and Helen who are some of the volunteers participating in the Pen Pal Program.



▲ Pen Pal Program - some of the beautiful cards created by volunteers for our residents

## Fiddle Bags

One of our volunteers, Miffy despite COVID-19 restrictions keeping her away from our facilities, has been busy supporting our residents in whatever way she can.

Recently she has been sewing ‘fiddle bags’ for the Leisure and Lifestyle Team at Cassia House. Small items are placed in these bags by staff, and residents then have to identify the item purely by touch.

This is a great sensory activity for those that like to ‘fiddle’, and items can be marked-off as they are found. It is great for reminiscence and to stimulate conversation particularly for our residents with dementia.

Thank you to Miffy!



▲ Miffy with her completed Fiddle Bags

# Initial findings from POWER Program

When MannaCare’s Program for Oncology Wellness and Exercise Rehabilitation (POWER) was established in 2018, POWER teamed up with oncology researchers at La Trobe University, Dr Casey Peiris and Amy Dennett to evaluate this innovative community based exercise and wellness program.

POWER is the first oncology exercise program to run a multi-site structure utilising both a community rehabilitation centre (MannaCare’s Doncaster Rehabilitation Services) and a community gym (Aquarena Aquatic and Leisure Centre) over a 12-week period. This multi-site program aimed to increase client confidence in a community gym setting, while still providing personalised and tailored exercise in a safe community setting.

The pilot POWER program was run over a 12-month period. Those who entered the 12-week program received twice weekly tailored, supervised exercise from an exercise physiologist and physiotherapist trained in oncology rehabilitation. Participants were also able to access a free counselling service supported by Monash University, as well as fortnightly wellness seminars.

Initial findings from the program suggest this novel approach to community-based oncology rehabilitation had a significant positive effect on both the physical and emotional health of participants. The POWER program addresses a gap in oncology rehabilitation post-treatment and has highlighted the feasibility and need for community based oncology exercise programs for those who have received a cancer diagnosis.

This strong evidence has allowed MannaCare to grow POWER with the support of Bendigo Bank Templestowe Lower and Doncaster East Branch, which has provided funding for the next three years.

The research is currently published in the Journal of Cancer Rehabilitation.

## POWER

Program for **O**ncology **W**ellness and **E**xercise **R**ehabilitation

### BACKGROUND

1 in 2 people in Australia will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85. Survival rates are increasing meaning people are living longer with the detrimental effects of cancer. Oncology rehabilitation improves outcomes BUT there is limited access.

Community-based programs may improve access BUT is it safe and feasible to run a program in the community?

**Aim:** to assess the feasibility of implementing an innovative oncology rehabilitation program at MannaCare.  
**Method:** A prospective feasibility study.

<h3>PROGRAM</h3> <p>Individually tailored, twice weekly group exercise and fortnightly well-being sessions for 12 weeks run by qualified health professionals. One session each week is held at a local gym to facilitate ongoing exercise. Participants also have access to individual counselling services.</p>	<h3>PARTICIPANTS</h3> <p>Over 10 months, 65 referrals were received. Twenty-four participants who were a mean age of 62 (SD 12) years, median 9 (range 2 to 120) months post-cancer diagnosis completed the program.</p>
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### RESULTS

Overall, 73% of scheduled exercise sessions were attended. No adverse events were reported.  
Challenges: funding sustainability and cost.  
Enabling factors: in-kind support from MannaCare and location.

 ↓ Fatigue by a moderate amount	 ↑ Walking endurance by a large amount	 ↑ Strength by a large amount	 ↑ Self-efficacy to exercise by a moderate amount
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### CONCLUSION

✓ Safe
✓ Feasible
✓ Effective

Funded supported by Doncaster East and Templestowe Village Community Bank <sup>®</sup> branches 	<b>Funding partners</b> 
Support partners    	

For further information contact MannaCare on 1300 90 20 23 or enquiries@mannaCare.org.au

## Caption This Photo Winner



▲ Caption this photo Competition - Winning Entry

Our ‘Caption this Photo’ competition resulted in a number of entries. Staff had the opportunity to win a hamper when they submitted an entry to offer their best caption to describe the Seal’s reaction!

The aim was to offer staff the opportunity for a fun based activity to promote team spirit in what has been a very challenging year. Thank you to Sandy Roberts for managing this initiative.

Congratulations to Fiona one of our Enrolled Nurses who is the winner of this competition.



▲ Ross presenting Fiona with her hamper

## Turina Harnett – Training, Orientation & Return to Work Co-Ordinator

Turina has been part of MannaCare in some way for 20 years, commencing in December 2000. She has a varied and broad role which officially includes being a Training & Orientation Coordinator and Return to Work Officer, as well as a Registered Enrolled Nurse. Her roles keep her busy with the focus being on “increasing the number of skilled and experienced staff who are available to provide care to our ageing population through ongoing supportive learning and development training. Another important part of my responsibility is to ensure appropriate ongoing training for each different role at MannaCare to promote and implement safe working practices.”

### Favourite part of role

Definitely helping and caring for people. Also the flexibility of both roles and how it all blends together. I am also passionate about Health and Safety in the workplace, and it is a very strong point that I advocate for. Staff safety is the number one goal.

### What does a typical day look like?

Totally unpredictable. I may have certain tasks or a planned schedule for a particular

time or day which can change at any moment. There are challenges at times which I thrive on. You have to have a strong ability to multitask and flexibility is the key.

### What are you passionate about?

TIME. Time is precious. Having two adorable grandchildren and another on the way, it's extremely important to spend as much quality time with them and watch each moment of growth in them. Health and wellbeing-eating well helps you keep on point both mentally and physically. I love the physical and mental challenge of daily exercise. You get through it and you feel amazing.

Spending time with my Whanau (family) in New Zealand is always important, but unfortunately this has been put on hold during COVID-19. Face time has been a blessing to keep in touch with loved ones both family and friends overseas. I value the opportunity of annual overseas travel and certainly look forward to the time that this can recommence safely.

### In my spare time, you will usually find me...

I enjoy watching a good movie or TV series.



▲ Turina Harnett, long term employee

My total relaxation moment is when I am reading a good book either on the lounge indoors or on the beachside soaking up the sun or paddle boarding, tending to outdoor duties (gardening, mowing lawns, orchid maintenance) is my therapeutic blend in life along with myotherapy and chiropractic monthly treatments.

## Chairman's Christmas Message

As we near the end of 2020 it is interesting to look back at a year that we all thought would provide us with many opportunities but which in fact presented us with very many challenges. At the start of this year we were focused on welcoming new residents to our new and improved residential facility and on increasing the number of Manningham residents we look after in our home care programs. As we near the end of the year our aims are still the same but we have had mixed success in 2020 as all of the people who work at MannaCare have had to battle a very hostile and difficult COVID-19 environment.

The Board is very proud of the great work that the MannaCare teams have done to keep all of our operations running safely and effectively all year and we congratulate and thank every single one of you. Sadly our greatly valued volunteers have been largely side-lined for much of the year but each day that passes brings us a day closer to your return.

Unfortunately the immediate future is not going to be any easier but I know that we do have the people at MannaCare to bring us through safely.

And as it is near year end I wish everyone and their families a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

David Meiklejohn AM  
Chairman

