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Message from CEO, Tracy Laethaisong

The past three months have been a combination of lockdowns and restrictions. COVID-19 continues to impact us all. We are regularly reminded that we are still in a pandemic. For aged care, COVID-19 continues to bring challenges. The restrictions on aged care facilities in particular is difficult for residents and clients alike.

Our COVID-19 vaccination roll out continues with another round to vaccinate staff currently taking place. This is in line with National Cabinet agreement in June 2021 for mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for all residential aged care workers from 17 September 2021, and who will be required to have received a minimum first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by this time.

MannaCare's policy will be updated and will require all staff who work for MannaCare (including Residential, Home and Community) to be vaccinated unless an exemption applies.

Currently, 99% of our residents are fully vaccinated with around 60% of staff fully vaccinated and the rest to be completed by September.

We take this opportunity to thank the Rotary Club of Templestowe for their generous donation of two iPads which were delivered prior to one of the lockdowns. This donation assists greatly in the connection between residents and their families.

Again, we thank all of our staff, volunteers, families and friends for their continuing support, patience and understanding during these unpredictable times.



▲ COVID-19 staff vaccination rollout



◀ Jimmy enjoying the garden



▶ Maria baking a lemon & coconut cake at Grevillea House



Carers Connecting Through Writing

MannaCare has many wonderful ways of supporting the families of residents and clients.

As major stakeholders of MannaCare we are always looking for innovative ways to continue to expand this support. With regular carer's lunch group, family visiting opportunities as well as the option to join our Association, our aim is to provide carers with as much support as possible.

To build on all this work to date, in 2020 we established the Carer's Creative Writing Group. It was launched last year to provide an outlet for participants to express their thoughts about their caring role. Although caring can be rewarding, it can also be stressful.

The Carer's Creative Writing Group has offered a non-judgmental and safe group to share experiences, coping strategies and problem support. The group is led by two experienced facilitators and the benefits for participants include developing valuable connections with others in similar situations, social interaction encouraging conversation and developing new coping strategies.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19 last year the group proved to be quite successful. Feedback from participants has been positive. After a successful pilot program, another opportunity to participate in this group has been facilitated for the second half of 2021.

For further information, please get in touch with:

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▲ Carer's Creative Writing Group

"I joined the group as I wanted to get together with others who are also grieving the loss of a life partner who is still alive. The fact that [my partner] is still alive, but not living, amplifies my grief because she is confused and doesn't know where she is. I didn't have any expectations when I joined the group but I hoped that it would be cathartic, which it was."

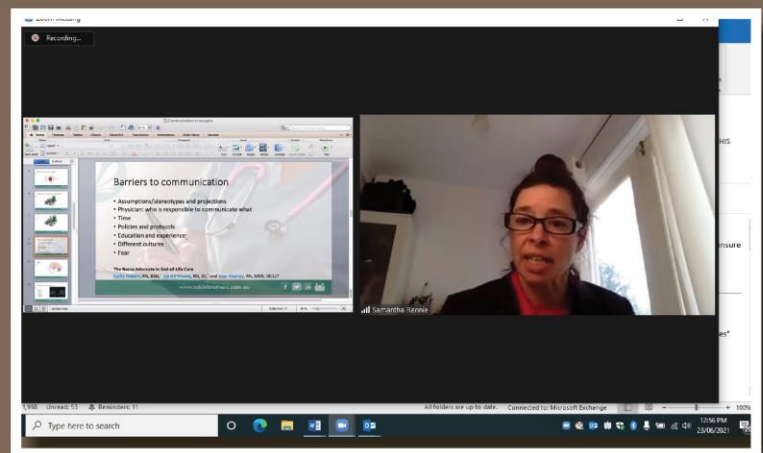


▲ Volunteers John & Richard

Communication Seminar

To support our volunteers to feel confident in doing their job well, they are offered ongoing training and seminars to provide them with the latest information about caring for seniors.

Thank you to Samantha Rennie from Tobin Brothers Funerals Doncaster who recently presented (via Zoom) on the topic of Communication Tools in Times of Crises. A very appropriate and informative seminar enjoyed by those who participated.



▲ Samantha Rennie from Tobin Brothers Funerals Doncaster

A range of activities and events have taken place at both Cassia House and Doncaster Melaleuca Lodge over the past few months.

Food is always a common theme providing social connection, community and conversation.

Bastille Day

In July residents enjoyed an afternoon tea of champagne, croissants and strawberries for Bastille Day. This was a great success with residents wanting to eat seconds and thirds. Thoroughly enjoyed by all!

Bastille Day is the common name given in English-speaking countries to the National Day of France. In French, it is formally called Fête nationale (National Celebration).



Grevillea House Makeover

Thank you to Alannah Burgess, a talented designer who has redesigned some of our walls at Grevillea House. The final mural which has been created can be seen in the photos. It looks amazing with much positive feedback.

Her brief was to design a wall that was dementia specific. Colours are muted with lots of pastels, design is simple with flowers. The space is so welcoming for our dementia clients, more inviting and more homely. Well done!



MannaCare Employee Day

On Friday 6 August MannaCare held Employee Day in recognition of all our staff and the work they do every single day.

Again, as last year, COVID-19 prevented us from celebrating Staff Appreciation Week. The past 18 months has been challenging for everyone, particularly for those that are on the frontline. In appreciation, coffee and donuts were available for all staff working on site.

These were appreciated and very well received. Thank you to Sandy Roberts for organising, and to Alfie Vrantsis for being the barista for the day!



Some comments from staff included:

"It really was a lovely gesture of appreciation coupled with delicious coffee and donuts for all staff. We ditto the "big thank you" to MannaCare management. P.S. Alfie did a terrific job as barista."

"Thank you to Alfie and Sandy and of course thank you to MannaCare for providing! Enjoyed the latte and the cookies and cream donut was yummy."

"Thank you MannaCare for appreciating our hard work in a sweet way. Alfie you made one of the best coffee!!"

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