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News

MannaCare
WIDER CHOICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE



Message from CEO, Tracy Laethaisong

It is truly wonderful to be able to share a positive update heading towards Christmas.

The last three months have been challenging with our number six lockdown. What was meant to be a short seven day lock down in early August continued more or less until the end of October. Even though November saw restrictions, vaccination rates had improved substantially to enable the vaccination targets to be achieved a little bit earlier than anticipated. As a result, the State's Roadmap out of lockdown changed considerably. This enabled some earlier freedoms and relief for all of us.

At MannaCare it really has been 'business as usual' although in a very COVID-safe way. For aged care, the previous almost two years have been challenging to the extreme with ongoing restrictions in some capacity. Residents have been unable to see their families, clients have not been permitted onsite at various times and staff have continually been on the frontline in PPE, and with a raft of limitations.

Hopefully, we are now entering a new phase of the pandemic which is less onerous. COVID-safe practices will remain with us for some time, particularly in aged care, however 2022 looks a bit more optimistic.

Recently, MannaCare was pleased to participate in the SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) Screening Trial as part of the Australian Government (in partnership with Respond Global) trial screening in selected residential aged care facilities across Victoria. We thank everyone who participated in this four week trial, as well as their understanding and patience throughout this time.

As the year quickly comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the MannaCare community, our staff, volunteers, families and friends for their continuing support, patience and understanding throughout what has been another demanding year. For the MannaCare team across all service areas who have been working under testing conditions, thank you.

On a final note, I wish you and your families a Happy Christmas and safe New Year. May you spend time with family and friends enjoying each other's company and we look forward to 2022 being a much better year.

▼ Residents and volunteers enjoying Cultural Coffee Afternoon



Love of Music Shines through in Volunteer Award Outstanding Achievement Pat!

A warm congratulations to Pat Wheeler who was nominated for and subsequently awarded 'Volunteer of the Year 2020' in the Manningham Civic Awards recently.

Every fortnight for over 30 years, Pat has played the piano at MannaCare for the Manningham Uniting Church Services held at MannaCare for the residents. This is, however, only one aspect to Pat's volunteering as she has also volunteered in other areas at MannaCare, most recently in the corporate office.

Tanya Warms, Volunteers' Coordinator explains. "I personally value the inspiring contributions of Pat, who has not only volunteered for our organisation for over 30 years, but has given years of input into our community through her love of music and desire to help those less fortunate than herself. Never one to boast about her achievements, she demonstrates kindness and compassion to all of our residents and staff and has made a real difference to the lives of those who are in our care."

This award recognises those quiet achievers who often work behind the scenes to build a stronger and more caring society, and this is Pat to a tee. She was surprised to receive notification of her nomination stating, "I know that so many other people are changing the lives of others through volunteering, so "Why me?"

"My main support has been to provide music for services of

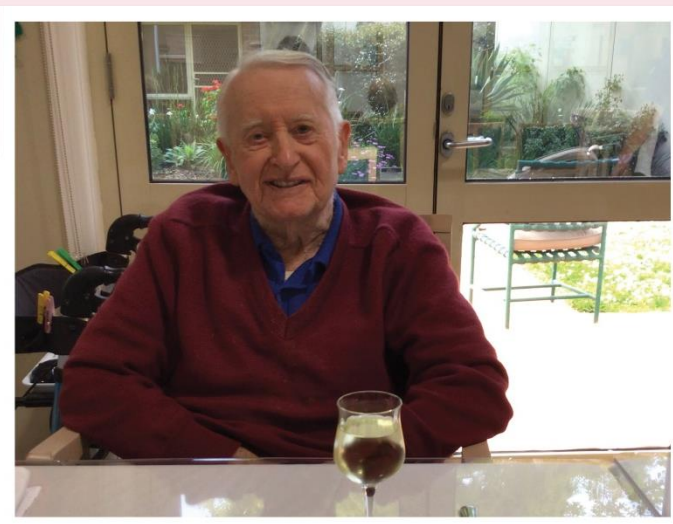
worship with a group of other volunteers from Manningham Uniting Church. For me, this began in the 1980's in the Doncaster Nursing home and later continued in the 'new' Melaleuca Lodge. It has always been a great opportunity to spend time with the residents. I feel this is a nomination for all the MannaCare volunteers and I feel humbled to be representing MannaCare at the event."

Once again, congratulations and well done to Pat for her wonderful contribution to MannaCare and the community in general.

Her final comments, "We look forward to being able to be actively involved with the residents again."



Doncaster Melaleuca Lodge Residents enjoying Octoberfest Celebrations



SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) Screening

In view of the risks faced by essential workers in outbreak areas, MannaCare was delighted to have taken part in a trial for SARS-CoV-2 rapid antigen test (RAT) screening.

The Australian Government in partnership with Respond Global is trialling the use of RAT screening in selected residential aged care facilities across Victoria. The aim of this pilot was to assess the efficacy and impact of fast COVID-19 screening such as RAT on aged care workers and visitors.

As part of MannaCare's ongoing commitment to the health and wellbeing of staff, residents, clients, volunteers and wider community, MannaCare participated in this trial in October and November.



Meet Joan Magalong, Occupational Therapist, Doncaster Rehabilitation Services

Joan commenced at MannaCare in 2010 and is an occupational therapist (OT).

Read on to find out a bit more about Joan, why she decided to become an OT and what part of the role she enjoys the most.

How long have you been an OT for?

I have been an OT for 10 years plus. I attained a Bachelor of Health Science in Occupational Therapy at Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand in 2010 and gained work experience in acute and community settings before working at Mannacare.

What made you decide to become an OT?

My passion is to assist and support people to overcome everyday challenges and live a meaningful life. I enjoy working in the community to deliver occupational therapy services to people in their own home environment and to assist them to live as safely and independently as possible.

How long have you been at MannaCare?

I have been working with MannaCare for more than 10 years since August 2010.

What is the best part of your role as an OT?

At that time I was studying Nursing, I had never heard of a profession called occupational therapy. Upon working as a student nurse and doing my second year placement at Auckland Hospital, I observed and liaised with OTs prior to discharging our clients.

Occupational therapy was a perfect fit. I have found that it is one of the most holistic health care professions, and I am proud to have chosen this as my career path. It is a profession that requires sensitivity, understanding and compassion; all of the characteristics that I value tremendously. Occupational therapy is a career that is certain to contribute much to society and bring enormous self-fulfilment.

What are your areas of expertise or interests?

Home Safety Assessments, Home Modification, Assistive Technology and Falls Prevention.

How have OTs adapted during COVID-19?

In many ways including:

- Adapting to working virtually and at home to enable social distancing.
- Providing clients/families an alternative method of service delivery (remote service delivery) and learning new skills such as telephone, online/video consultations to conduct assessments.
- Contact with client/ carers is another thing that has radically changed - more telephone and email use, rather than face-to-face.



MannaCare Inc. Reg. No A3444S
371 Manningham Road, Doncaster Vic 3108

Telephone: 1300 90 20 23 Fax: 03 9856 1233
Email: contact@mannacare.org.au
Web: www.mannacare.org.au

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