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Message from CEO, Tracy Laethaisong

I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful Christmas and New Year and that you were able to spend some time with family and friends over the summer period.

At the moment, it is certainly important to take some time out and enjoy the small things in life. The Omicron variant has certainly put a strain to the start of the year. On many fronts it has certainly presented many challenges.

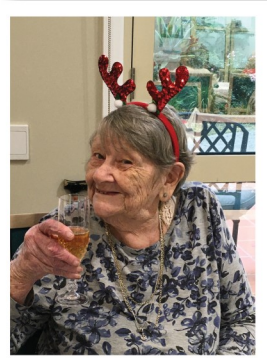
MannaCare has diligently worked through the challenges presented, and as a team I am pleased to say that everyone has pulled together incredibly well. We have managed to source additional RAT kits as well as lighter, more breathable N95 masks, which were all delivered in January. The uncertainty of COVID-19 will be with us for the foreseeable future, and this is the new COVID-normal we need to adapt to.

Finishing off the year 2021, it was delightful to be able to host our Staff Christmas party. The team has worked extremely hard over the past two years and it was great to be able to give something back to the MannaCare Team.

In December 2021, MannaCare commenced its COVID-19 Booster Vaccine rollout for all residents and staff. All aged care workers were required to receive their booster vaccine by 12 February 2022, and additional clinics took place early February to meet this mandated requirement.

I hope that this year is a little easier and smoother for all of us.

▼ Staff and residents enjoying the Christmas festivities



Jann and Pat Ernest - “We enjoy their (residents) company”

Jann and Pat enjoy opportunities to “give back” to the community through volunteering. They are both very adaptable and have already volunteered in a number of service areas. Whether it is at DML, Leisure and Lifestyle, working remotely or supporting our Respite or Corporate areas, they can just about do any role asked of them.

Tanya Warms, Volunteers’ Coordinator observes, “Pat is always up for a challenge” and “Jann always brings a smile and TLC to the residents.”

What do you enjoy the most about engaging with the residents and clients?

Jann: Residents are a wonderful source of wisdom and calmness. Assisting them and listening to them is a wonderful aspect of our volunteer work.

Why have you chosen to give back through volunteering?

Pat: Jann and I have had a fortunate life. Now in retirement, we have an opportunity to give back to the community. Collectively it offers us a great sense of fulfilment and purpose. We hope that, in some small way, we are improving the quality of life of others.

During the lockdowns, what was the most challenging aspect about not being onsite?

Jann: Not interacting with staff and residents. Whilst it was great to be provided with tasks to carry out remotely, it is always terrific coming onsite and experiencing the vibe at MannaCare.

What do you do when you are not volunteering at MannaCare?

Pat: During COVID very little, but generally trying to keep safe throughout the past couple of years. However, we were fortunate to be able to pivot remotely. Jann knitted fiddle muffs for residents and I continued creating Biographies. In between this we have joined the Willsmere Kitchen Garden, a local community garden, recently picking our first harvest.

What is the best thing about volunteering at MannaCare?

Pat: When you volunteer at MannaCare you can see and feel the positive culture that exists. The staff go out of their way, or do more than is expected, to develop a great workplace culture. MannaCare also went out of their way to keep connected and engaged to us housebound volunteers during the lockdown. This meant a lot to us.



Closing comments from Tanya

“Jann is a great listener and has a very caring attitude to those with whom she interacts with. The residents warm to her immediately,” while Pat has good attention to detail, revealing “when he writes the biographies, he always does his own research, finding more information that is missing from the story, such as a photo, which is always appreciated by the families.”

Community Initiatives

MannaCare is delighted and grateful to have the support of local community organisations. In particular the Rotary Club of Templestowe and Manningham Rotaract have been an valuable support throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Not only have they donated iPads, which were invaluable throughout the lockdowns (facilitating communication between residents and family) they organised two Sing-alongs with the MannaCare residents prior to Christmas. For residents who have had less in-person contact with family and friends throughout the past year due to lockdowns and restrictions, these have been beneficial.

Residents were also delighted to receive a delivery of Christmas cards from the students at St Gregory The Great Catholic Primary School, Doncaster which again, was facilitated by the Rotary Club of Templestowe.

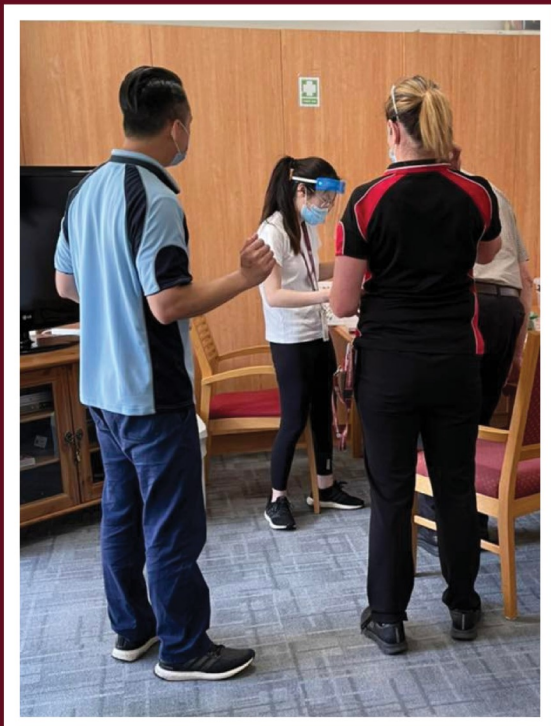
These cards were hand made by the students and addressed to individual residents, with personalised messages. Not only does this facilitate intergenerational connection, it brightens up the lives of theresidents enormously. The residents loved receiving these cards prior to Christmas.



It is this kind of support that we receive from organisations such as the Rotary Club of Templestowe and Manningham Rotaract which are valuable and important to MannaCare. It contributes to additional social support for residents and contributes to their lives being more vibrant and engaging.

Thank you to the students for their great work, and many thanks to the Rotary Club of Templestowe and Manningham Rotaract.

Vaccination Clinics

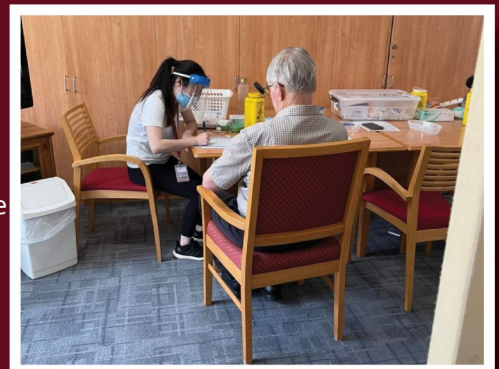


We are pleased to announce that the COVID-19 Booster Vaccine rollout commenced mid-December as we were approved to deliver booster shots to residents and staff. Our two self-managed onsite booster clinics were facilitated at both Cassia House and DML.

Further booster clinics took place in early February to meet the Government's deadline of aged care workers receiving their boosters by 12 February.

Thank you to everyone for their cooperation and assistance with these clinics.

They have provided MannaCare with the opportunity to meet our mandated Government targets in very a managed and focused approach.



Staff Christmas Carnival

We were excited to host our Staff Christmas party last year on 15 December 2021. It was a Carnival of fun, food and games. The last two years were challenging, so to be able to host some Christmas festivities was a delight.

Held at the Grevillea House carpark from lunchtime onwards, and extending into the evening, the MannaCare team thoroughly enjoyed themselves. There were lots of opportunities for staff to win prizes, have something to eat and connect with colleagues in a relaxed environment, something we have been unable to do for the past two years.



Comments included:

*"It was a fabulous day" | "Thanks everyone, was a lovely afternoon" |
"Thank you management for organising it, great and enjoyable!"*

DRS POWER Christmas Catch Up

It was fantastic for the POWER group to have a Christmas catch-up at Cassia House in December 2021. After the challenges of last two years, the POWER clients appreciated connecting in-person. This event was thoroughly enjoyed by the clients, and staff alike.

We would like to extend our warmest thanks to our volunteers Liz and Don and our Administration staff Sharon and Julie-Anne for welcoming the clients. Thank you to Friends of MannaCare who provided a delicious sandwich platter and presents for the attendees, as well as the clients who also provided a few delicious treats to enjoy.

Clients provided feedback that they sincerely enjoyed coming to MannaCare for their exercise sessions and that each time they walk through the doors, they feel the 'positive vibe' of the whole place. We hope that there will be more POWER events coming up in 2022, and that clients will continue to have opportunities to connect and support each other along their cancer journey.



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