Vasey RSL Care joins in Veterans Health Week 2015

For the first time this year, Vasey RSL Care participated in Veterans’ Health Week which is a nationwide program of events and activities for veterans, war widows and their families. This year the events and activities promoted mental wellbeing. Supported by DVA, Vasey RSL Care presented a series of activities, performances and information sessions for clients in our Independent Living Units at RSL Park, Cheltenham, Bell Park and Ivanhoe.

Chief Executive, Janna Voloshin opted to focus the week’s program on the ILUs because our residential care facilities already have an extensive weekly program of activities. “The Veterans Health Week program was an opportunity to provide the ILUs with activities that were stimulating and informative, and that combined entertainment with practical health advice,” Ms Voloshin said.

VRSLC’s residential care facilities did also participate in Veterans’ Health Week, as other favourite events such as our annual Seniors Master Chef competition were added into the week’s activities. RSL Park residents were also able to attend an introductory class of Tai Chi.

The four main programs for the week featured a tribute to the songs of Dame Vera Lynn presented by Kaye Harrison and Mike Kelly; Good Food in Mind where residents were treated to nutritional advice and healthy cooking tips; Mind Games, which engaged residents in playing favourite games from the past like Checkers, Dominos and Scrabble and learning new ones like Quirkle; and, Health Triangle, a three-way program concentrating on eye health, strength and balance, and foot care.

At Sir William Hall Hostel in Ivanhoe, which hosted events for the neighbouring ILUs, students from Our Lady of Mercy College joined the veterans in the Mind Games program. At one table, Edith a resident of the hostel, actively competed in games of Scrabble and Dominos, which she’d played as a girl, and happily learned to play Quirkle, a more modern game of mix and match, which tests a player’s ability to associate patterns and colours.

The Good Food in Mind sessions covered cooking and dietary issues relating to weight control, diabetes and cooking for one, which is highly relevant for ageing single men. As Karen Martin from Leading Nutrition observed: “Most older men have never had to cook for themselves. For most of their lives cooking was done by their mothers and wives or in the Mess. We can give them easy, practical advice on how to prepare healthy, tasty meals.”

The climax for Veterans Health Week at VRSLC came on the eve of the Caulfield Cup, when residents and staff at Vasey House, Bundoora, dressed up in race course finery to video messages that would form part of their entry in the Vasey RSL Care MasterChef competition.

As it turned out, the best tip for this year's Caulfield Cup came from 99 year old Mick Hayes, who advised his residence punters to “back the favourite”.

Assessing the outcome of VRSLC's participation in Veterans’ Health Week, CEO Janna Voloshin was upbeat. “As an organisation we really appreciated the support we received from DVA and we will definitely participate again next year. “We are encouraged by the positive feedback we received from those ILU residents who attended activities. Next year, with more advanced planning, we will work to involve more of the ILUs and also schedule events in the Lifestyle programs of our residential care facilities.” Ms Voloshin said.
Saluting Excellence Conference 2015

On Tuesday 24 November, staff, Board members, special guests and sponsors gathered at Fenix Restaurant for Vasey RSL Care’s annual Saluting Excellence Conference. This year’s conference celebrated the organisation’s purpose, with staff presentations highlighting Vasey RSL Care’s innovations, commitment to excellent clinical practices, strong focus on resident and client-centred care, and the commemoration of the Centenary of the Gallipoli campaign.

Keynote speaker, Emma Gee (www.emma-gee.com) delivered a powerful message of what client-centred care means to the care recipient, inspiring the audience with her personal story of resilience and strength. The theme of purpose was reinforced by a motivational address from Vasey RSL Care’s CEO, Janna Voloshin, who laid out the stepping stones of her career path from first arriving in Australia to today, and by positive psychologist Leonie Abbott (www.catchingsmiles.com.au) who educated the audience to re-think their capabilities using the principles of “growth mindset”.

As part of Vasey RSL Care’s staff recognition program, our annual Saluting Excellence Awards are presented at the conference. The major award is the CEO’s Award which was presented to Mandy Wakely, Lifestyle Coordinator and Administration Officer at RSL Park. Mandy was acknowledged for her significant contributions as a leader of the Heroes’ Wish trip to the Dawn Service in Canberra for ANZAC Day, and the opening of the Day Therapy Centre in RSL Park. In total, 26 awards were presented to highly deserving staff, with over 80 nominations received this year.

As MC for the day, General Manager Aged Care Services, Lee-Anne Suryn joined Janna in thanking the major sponsors of the Saluting Excellence Conference 2015. Our major sponsors were: Action Recruitment, Advantage Salary Packaging, AviFour AirCon, Crewe Sharp, Dominant Chemicals, Gary Peer Real Estate, Healthcare 2 You, HESTA Superannuation, Hightell Floors, Intrufit Pty Ltd, MKO Electrics Pty Ltd, Russell Kennedy, SACS Consulting, SOHO Lawyers, Tel Call Communications, TENA (Mallee Care), Transcend Building Design and Services, and Workforce XS.

It was a pleasure to have so many of our sponsors join us throughout the year. As part of Vasey RSL Care’s staff recognition program, our annual Saluting Excellence Awards are presented at the conference. The major award is the CEO’s Award which was presented to Mandy Wakely, Lifestyle Coordinator and Administration Officer at RSL Park. Mandy was acknowledged for her significant contributions as a leader of the Heroes’ Wish trip to the Dawn Service in Canberra for ANZAC Day, and the opening of the Day Therapy Centre in RSL Park. In total, 26 awards were presented to highly deserving staff, with over 80 nominations received this year.

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ANZAC Hostel team at conference table

Carol Mehmed receives the 2015 Carer of the Year Award

Jason Starr-Nolan and Vicki Jarrett at the conference

From the CEO

There is never a quiet time at Vasey RSL Care – there is always something happening – but when September arrives, time seems to fly and things get even busier. It has certainly been true this year. We have packed a lot into the last three months.

Early in October we took the opportunity, with the support of DVA, to participate in Veterans’ Health Week. We engaged providers and presenters to deliver a program of events and activities that promoted mental wellbeing and social interaction to members of our ex-service community in our Independent Living Units. We worked hard to engage our ILLU residents and though we had mixed success, based on this year’s experience, we plan to participate again in October 2016 with an even better program and more advanced notice for our potential clients.

Veterans’ Health Week also featured some major events at our residential facilities, especially the annual Senior’s Master Chef competition. The intensity of competition and the quality of the entries in this year’s event was rewarded by the appearance of three specialist judges from the ADF-based HMAS Cerberus. This marks another important step in our strategy to involve stakeholders and representatives from the ADF and the wider ex-service community.

Around the same time, we were preparing for another first – our first ever, full colour annual report which documents in words and pictures our achievements and progress through the 2014-15 financial year. The report and the financial statements are available for on our website: www.vaseyrslcare.org.au

We also recorded another achievement in October when Vasey Brighton East successfully passed their latest accreditation examination by Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (AAQCA). This was followed in early December by the presentation of an AAQCA Better Practice Award for our Evidence-Based Diabetes Management Plan. My congratulations and thanks to all management and staff at our residential facilities for these recent successes and the others throughout the year.

On 24 November, it was our turn to recognise the achievements of our staff at our Annual Saluting Excellence Conference held at Fenix Events in Richmond. Using a new online nomination process, there were 26 awards in 11 categories presented to staff in recognition of the important contributions they made beyond their everyday workplace responsibilities.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

As we prepare for Christmas and a New Year, Vasey RSL Care wishes to thank the many generous donors who have supported the important projects we delivered for residents throughout 2015. We are now planning another busy program of events and facility improvements for 2016. If you would like to contribute to this ongoing program, please complete the form below and send it to:

To: Ms Janna Voloshin
Chief Executive Officer
Vasey RSL Care Ltd
PO Box 203, Hawthorn Vic 3122

Enclosed is my cheque (payable to Vasey RSL Care) for $……………… or please debit this amount to my:

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Minister visits to celebrate Dot’s 100th birthday

Having hosted a tour by the new Governor of Victoria, Vasey Brighton East has now welcomed a visit from the local Member of Federal Parliament and Minister for Trade, Andrew Robb. On the eve of his official visit to Jakarta to talk trade with Indonesia, Minister Robb dropped in to visit VBE resident Dot Dorman, a happy 100th birthday. Dot was more than happy to share her birthday cake with the Minister and other guests including her daughter Jenny and her friend and VBE neighbour, Bev O’Meara, who arranged the Minister’s visit.

Chair of the Board launches Annual Report for 2104-15

The Chair of the Board, David Paroissien, officially launched Vasey RSL Care’s Annual Report 2014-15 at our AGM at ANZAC House on Wednesday 18 November.
This is the first time we have produced an annual report that records our year’s work in words and pictures, in full colour. The report is accompanied by a separate document detailing the financial position of the organisation. Both documents are available to view on our website at www.vaseyrslcare.org.au

David Paroissien reported to the AGM that Vasey RSL Care had achieved a small surplus for the year in the face of increasing competition from other aged care providers while housing clients who more frail and who needed higher, more costly levels of care.

Vasey RSL Care CEO, Janna Voloshin reported that the organisation was developing strong, sustainable systems and processes to succeed in meeting the challenges facing aged care providers at a time of increasing complexity and competition.

HMAS Cerberus ADF personnel officially attend Remembrance Day services

Another significant date and another visit occurred at all our residential sites on Remembrance Day. For the first time, all of our Remembrance ceremonies were attended by serving personnel of the Australian Defence Force based at HMAS Cerberus, which these days hosts ranks from Australia’s Army and Airforce as well as the Navy on Western Port Bay. We hope the visit marks the start of a much closer continuing connection between Vasey RSL Care and our ex-service clients in our residences.

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Independent Living Units Community Care
03 9818 0568

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