

# VASEY RSL CARE NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter for the Vasey RSL Care Community

## The V Centre: help make it happen!

Having lodged a funding submission for \$12.7 million to Treasury for staffing/operation costs for the V Centre for inclusion in the May budget, we are now calling on veterans and all those associated with the ex-service community to lobby for this funding through your networks.

Vasey RSL Care has invested over \$11 million in the future V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program and we are seeking to partner with government to bring this initiative to life.



Visual representation of a kitchen/dining room.

“We know there are significant numbers of homeless veterans in Australia – around 5,800 according to some sources. And we know veteran suicide rates exceed those of the general public. We can’t stand by and do nothing,” says Janna Voloshin, CEO.

The V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program will be able to house up to 19 veterans at a time in four units or wings, each with a small kitchen/dining area.

It will offer a main sitting room and a gym/multi-purpose room for activities, 16 two-room apartments and 3 smaller suites.

“The V Centre has the capacity to change lives - to bring about lasting change for veterans experiencing homelessness and its causes. Find out how you can help on page 3”, says Janna.

Visual representation of a typical apartment.



Visual representation of the main sitting room.



Visual representation of the multi-purpose room.

# V CENTRE

Empowering Veterans

# From Our CEO

As you read this, we will be reaching the third anniversary of the arrival of COVID-19. And another anniversary that has just passed is the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine. Countless lives have been lost fighting on both sides, more have been injured, and of those who survive, many will be affected for life by what they've witnessed.

Like everyone, I just hope it comes to an end as quickly as it began.



While Australia is not currently engaged in any active theatre of war, there are over 60,000 people currently serving in the ADF. Some 6,000 leave each year and of these around 300 become homeless each year. They are not all sleeping rough: they might be sleeping on a mate's couch, staying long term in a caravan, living back with family or even sleeping in their car. They could be in short-term emergency housing or in overcrowded and inadequate rooming houses.

For this to be the reality for those who have served our nation is shameful. We have a duty to help these men and women to overcome their challenges and be able to live a life they value. That's why we are investing in the V Centre and asking Federal Government to help fund it so that lives can be changed for the better. I ask you to seriously consider how you can help us make this a reality (please see opposite).

### New Volunteers

In our last issue, we called for people to join our team of volunteers and I'd like to send out a huge thank you to all those who responded.

For much of 2020 and 2021, volunteers were not permitted at our aged care homes, so we really appreciate this renewal of volunteers to provide the 'icing on the cake' for our residents.

If you've been thinking about it but not yet made the call, there is no deadline – just call the Lifestyle Coordinator at your preferred aged care home or call



Krishna in our HR team on 9810 5529 during office hours, when you get the chance.

### New Residential Star Ratings

In this issue you will find an article about the recently introduced Star Rating system for residential aged care. These have caused some concern across the aged care sector and as an organisation that works hard to provide the best possible quality of care for our community, we have been quite disappointed in the ratings we have received. However, we understand that there is always room for improvement and we will continue to do all we can to provide high quality care not just in our residential homes but across all our services. (Read more on page 5.)

### Resident Surveys - Coming Soon

As part of the Star Ratings, the 2023 Residents' Experience Survey is being undertaken at all four homes during February and March. Participation is voluntary and all responses are confidential.

### Home Care Update

Over the next year, we will be making changes to the way we deliver home care services.

Currently we have our own team of Qualified Care Advisors who support clients to set up a suitable Personalised Care Plan – they have qualifications in nursing and allied health services. We also have Service Coordinators who provide phone assistance to coordinate clients' services. The services themselves are provided through third party providers. As the number of clients has grown, we will now begin recruiting our own staff to carry support service provision, helping reduce the effect of changes in third party providers and helping us manage quality standards across our service.

*Janna Voloshin,  
Chief Executive Officer*



# New Ivanhoe Apartments Taking Shape

The Samma Place construction (image from December) will house 27 ex-service accommodation apartments as well as a small business centre for Vasey RSL Care Ivanhoe residents' use.

Our existing units can be seen in the background to the left; the new home for The V Centre is on the right (red roofs), and the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital is right behind it, with the CBD in the distance.

"This will increase our total units to 295 and enable us to provide long-term rental housing to more veterans, war widows and their partners," says Janna Voloshin.



"If we have more demand than we have apartments, decisions will be based on greatest need, as with all our ex-service accommodation."

## Ways to support the V Centre Funding Bid:

### Ex-Service Organisations:

Write a letter/email from the management/leadership of your organisation stating your support for the V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program funding submission. Send it to the Federal Minister for Veterans' Affairs and copy the Assistant Treasurer (details right) and any others in your network who may be able to assist.

### Service Providers and Business Partners:

Write a letter/email of support from your management team indicating your respect for Vasey RSL Care's track record for management, support for Veterans and strong financial position (refer to annual reports online) and send it to the Assistant Treasurer (details right) and any other relevant contacts.

### Individuals:

Write a letter/email expressing your support for veterans in need and the V Centre funding submission and send it to your Federal MP asking for their support for the funding submission. Check online for your MP's details. You may like to use the template letter available on our website: <https://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/> and choose the News section.

### Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Finance, The Hon Stephen Jones MP

[Stephen.Jones.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:Stephen.Jones.mp@aph.gov.au)

### Minister for Veterans, The Hon Matt Keogh MP

[Matt.Keogh.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:Matt.Keogh.mp@aph.gov.au)

### Minister for Defence, The Hon Richard Marles MP

[Richard.Marles.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:Richard.Marles.mp@aph.gov.au)

### Assistant Minister for Veterans, The Hon Matthew Thistlethwaite MP

[Matt.Thistlethwaite.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Matt.Thistlethwaite.MP@aph.gov.au)

### Minister for Social Services, The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP

[Amanda.Rishworth.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:Amanda.Rishworth.mp@aph.gov.au)

### Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, The Hon Julie Collins MP

[Julie.Collins.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:Julie.Collins.mp@aph.gov.au)

### Postal Address for all the above:

PO Box 6022, Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600

# Infection Prevention Corner

## Celebrating Each Moment of Hand Hygiene

**Every day has a celebration – and 5 May is when the world celebrates Hand Hygiene Day.**

In fact, each time a person cleans their hands is a moment worth celebrating!

### Why cleaning your hands is a celebration

When you clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitiser for 20 seconds or with soap and water for 40 seconds, you are removing or killing potentially harmful germs your hands picked up from the environment. These germs may give you or your loved ones infections such as gastroenteritis, influenza (flu) or even COVID-19, so removing or killing them protects you and your loved ones from infections – and that is something to celebrate!



### Avoid Transferring Germs

Your goal is to remove harmful germs from your hands, so it is important to do it straight away after you've been in contact with germs, from the toilet, rubbish or any dirty material, and before you may unknowingly transfer them to your mouth, eyes, or to a wound.

### Remember to clean your hands:

- Before, during and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after touching someone who is sick with vomiting or diarrhoea
- Before and after touching a cut or wound
- After using the toilet

- After changing adult incontinence products or touching someone who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching rubbish

Can you add three more situations when you need to clean your hands?

### Moisturise after cleaning your hands

Pat your hands dry after cleaning and moisturise immediately. Why? Because germs thrive in dry, cracked skin. Choose fragrance-free and dye-free moisturisers because they are less irritating to your skin. To keep your skin soft, use moisturisers with mineral oil or petroleum.

### Be a hand hygiene champion!

Join the Infection Control Team in celebrating Hand Hygiene Week from 1 to 5 May!

### References

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (2022). What is hand hygiene? <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/infection-prevention-and-control/national-hand-hygiene-initiative/what-hand-hygiene>

American Academy of Dermatology Association (2023). Dry skin relief from COVID-19 handwashing. <https://www.aad.org/public/everyday-care/skin-care-basics/dry/coronavirushandwashing>

## Jab Time Again!

If it has been more than six months since your last COVID-19 booster, you are encouraged to have another one.

And the influenza (flu) vaccinations will be available soon. We urge you to get your 2023 flu vaccination as early as you can to help keep the numbers down again this year.

Health authorities have confirmed you can have both done at the same time.



# Residential Aged Care Star Ratings: what are they?

**The Federal Government Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission has now introduced its new 'Star Ratings' system for residential aged care services. How will this affect us?**

Undertaking the search for the right aged care home for yourself or your loved one is a complex task. Now, the Federal Government has launched a 'Star Rating' system overseen by The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (The Commission).

A rating is given for each of four sub-categories as shown in Table 1:

- Compliance (A)
- Residents' experience (B)
- Quality measures (C)
- Staffing minutes (D)

An overall rating is provided as an average of these.

## Initial Results

The Star Ratings results were published in late 2022 indicated that 1% of aged care homes achieved 5 stars (excellent), 36% 4 stars (good), 59% 3 stars (acceptable), 8% 2 stars (improvement needed) and 1% 1 star (significant improvement needed).

**Table 1: Vasey RSL Care's results**

Home	A	B	C	D	Overall
Brighton	*****	*****	***	*	3
Brighton E	*****	***	*****	*	3
Bundoora	*****	***	***	**	3
Frankston S	****	***	***	*	3

## Star Rating Meanings

**Compliance:** To achieve a **5 star rating**, the home must have had no non-compliance results for three years and have been granted accreditation for a three-year period following a site audit. **A four star rating** requires no non-compliance results for a 1 to 3 year period where it has been operated by the same approved provider for at least that same duration. **A three star rating** requires any non-compliance to have been resolved or a direction to revise plan for continuous improvement is in place. **A two star rating** is where a home has been given a Notice to Remedy, or Compliance Notice relating to the Code of Conduct, incident management or restrictive practices, and a **one-star rating** applies where a Notice of Decision to

impose sanctions, a Notice of requirement to agree, or an infringement notice has been given.

**Residents' Experience:** this is determined via an annual survey of residents consisting of 14 questions about their experience living at the home, carried out by the Commission's staff.

**Quality Measures:** this looks at five health issues that are indicators of the quality of care being provided: pressure injuries, physical restraint, unplanned weight loss, falls and major injury, and medication management. This is evaluated each quarter and results are compared to the national average.

**Staffing Minutes:** 'staffing minutes' or 'care minutes' is a new requirement for aged care homes. From October 2022, we have been required to record and report the number of minutes provided by Registered Nurses (RNs), Enrolled Nurses (ENs) and personal care workers (PCWs) following a recommendation from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

From July 2023, residential aged care must have an RN on site 24x7, and, from October 2023 an industry average of 200 care minutes per resident per day of which an industry average of 40 minutes must be provided by an RN.

Each home will have varying requirements depending on the overall needs of residents. For example, our Bundoora home had a minimum target for the last quarter of 185 minutes, and achieved 198 minutes, while their goal for RNs was 39 minutes and they achieved 26, the rest being provided currently by ENs.

While the staffing minute requirements do not come into force until October 2023, the Star Ratings already reflect the new system.

We are working on a number of different strategies to change our staffing profile so that we can achieve the mandated minutes by the October deadline. These include a graduate nurse program (through which two additional registered nurses have been appointed), and a staggered recruitment process through which additional RNs are being added to the team and ENs are assisted to upskill.

# Learning from Others: Research Tour to the UK

**Part 2: Last issue, we brought you the first part of CEO, Janna Voloshin's UK research tour with Sage. This time, Janna talks about visits to retirement villages in the south of England.**

The focus for this day of our tour was on Retirement Living.

We had the opportunity to visit two luxury retirement villages.

Audley is a private provider that has been developing and managing retirement living options for over 12 years. They were one of the first to recognise the market demand for high quality retirement living, rather than the residential aged care that is provided through social support programs.

Their retirement communities provides 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments with on site restaurants, spa, pool etc, providing integrated retirement with three elements: housing, lifestyle choices and care options provided by home care services. This is very similar to Australian retirements villages, except that many are located in stunning refurbished manor houses.

This really is the top end of luxury with Audley Cooper's Hill, a stone's throw from Windsor costing approx \$1.3M to \$2.8M plus management fees. *(Top row below).*

Audley Sunningdale Park *(left column bottom row)* is a little further outside London close to Ascot and prices are similar.

There is a strong belief that this style of living extends independence as residents have the advantage of living in their own home but within a community and with easy access to home care services.

While the villages we looked at are aimed at the more wealthy buyers, this provider is now investing in retirement living for the roughly 77% in the mid-tier, people who own their own home and want to downsize. These properties provide smaller and more affordable apartments with lower management fees and high deferred costs.

As a result of the research we carried out at Vasey RSL Care in 2021 regarding the Victorian ex-service community's housing preferences, we will be doing further research into the retirement village concept for our community here.

The day was rounded out with a networking event with UK aged care providers, held at the Lord's Cricket





Ground. My cricket knowledge moved from extremely low to not quite as low and I was certainly impressed with the aura of the place and the reverence exhibited by my fellow tour members (pictured).



The following day we headed west to Bristol to visit the St Monica Trust Chocolate Quarter. (*Below and below left*).

This is a new integrated living community with 136 retirement apartments and 93 residential aged care rooms over 3 levels. Each level has around 30 rooms, one being the memory support unit, one low care and one high care. Each of these is divided into two parts so that each group of 15 rooms has their own dining room and lounge.

What makes this different is the concept of providing general facilities such as movies, restaurants, gym, pool, spa, hair salons, barbers, office space, a large



medical centre and a number of function rooms, *within* the integrated community. Facilities can be used by those from outside through membership while aged care and retirement residents have them included in their management fees.

Instead of separating retirement and aged care from the community, they have taken a decommissioned chocolate factory located a little way outside Bristol, upgraded and refurbished it to create a vibrant multi-aged environment. Hire of office space and function rooms contributes about a third of their income.

Again, as retirement apartment residents are able to live independently while in a community, with home care services readily available to them, their need for residential aged care appears to be postponed.

Returning to London for the evening, we were privileged to have dinner at the Tower of London followed by the key ceremony on the grounds.

We were hosted by Standards Wise International and CommonAge. Standards Wise International is an industry leading champion of standards and quality compliance working to improve outcomes for people around the world, especially those with fewer resources who are ageing, disadvantaged to subject to exploitation.



CommonAge was officially launched here in Melbourne in 2013 and works to advance the interests of older people throughout the Commonwealth.

We were welcomed by the President of CommonAge, an infantry

officer in the British Army who had commanded an armoured battle group through the first Gulf War. It was particularly interesting to me to be able to meet with British veterans and to see how much there is in common between them and Australian veterans.

*Next time:*

*Janna visits veteran-specific support services in England and Scotland.*



