



Rae and Ross visit Australian War Memorial

Last year, Rae Hutchinson (WAAAF) and Ross Pulling OAM (RAAF), residents at Vasey RSL Care Bundoora submitted a Hero's Wish to visit the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. In February, it was fulfilled.

Rae and Ross, pictured above with Lifestyle Coordinator Linda D'Sylva (left) and Residential Manager Nicole Groves, flew to Canberra: they attended the Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial and laid a wreath in memory of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. The following day, they had a personalised tour of the AWM thanks to Glen

McNamara, a volunteer guide, who had researched the family members of both Rae and Ross. Rae honoured her father, two brothers and sister, and Ross, his brother who was killed in action in 1942.

We are very grateful to the Ivanhoe RSL Sub-branch for their generous donation which enabled this wish to be fulfilled. [Read more about Hero's Wish on page 7.]

From Our CEO

Flu Season is Here Now!

This year's flu season is of great concern to us with government statistics showing that it is one of the worst on record.

I cannot emphasise enough how important it is for everyone to have their flu vaccination.

We are all part of the 'herd' and when we each take responsibility for having our vaccination, we are protecting those in our community who are vulnerable. **It is not too late - please have your vaccination asap.**

ANZAC Day Memorial Services

With around 80% of our aged care residents being from the ex-service community, our ANZAC Day commemorations are a poignant reminder of Our Purpose - Serving Those Who Served.

I find it particularly moving to witness the respect shown by younger family members attending these services as we all remember the sacrifices made by past and present ADF members to protect the freedom we enjoy here in Australia. Photos from all the services can be seen on pages 4-5.

Our 15th Anniversary

In a few weeks, it will be 15 years since Vasey RSL Care came into being, following the merger of Vasey Housing Victoria and RSL Care Victoria in 2004.

Of our 550 staff, over 10% have been with us during the entire 15 years, and some as long as 30+ years. Staff loyalty is important on multiple levels: it is an indicator of satisfaction, and ensures continuity of care for those in our community.

I would like to thank all our staff for the commitment and care they bring to their jobs every day - 24x7, 365 days a year.

Residential Manager Changes

We have had two Residential Manager changes with promotions from within our organisation. I congratulate Nicole Groves, RM at Bundoora and Ruth Nduati, RM at Ivanhoe, on their new roles.



The Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety continues to be a major focus for us: we are closely following the progress of the hearings as they move from state to state. Two issues that are receiving scrutiny from the Commissioners are the care of people living with dementia and the levels of loneliness of those living in aged care.

Note that public submissions to the Royal Commission are **open until at least the end of September** and the closing date will be announced in the second half of the year.

New Aged Care Quality Standards

I hope you have seen our communications regarding the new Standards. Driven by GM Quality and Risk, Annette Greenwood and her team of Quality Coordinators, information about the Standards and how they will impact on our residents and consumers has been provided through a variety of means. New policies and procedures are ready for 1 July so that we can embrace 'person-centred care' and the increased flexibility and choice this means for our community.

We are committed to changing our practice across the organisation, and person-centred care training sessions have been held for all those in leadership positions, including team leaders, supervisors and managers, totalling around 120 staff.

The new Standards affect every aspect of our organisation and I encourage you to read the information so that you have a good understanding of what this will mean to you or your loved one.

With my best wishes,

Janna Voloshin



Would you like to 'Have Your Say'?

Hearing from you is important to us!

Our organisation is committed to continuous improvement - a process whereby feedback from all members of our community is recorded, discussed, analysed and responded to. Hearing from our community is the best way for us to find out what is going well and what is not going as well as it could, and this enables us to improve.

One mechanism for this is our 'Have Your Say' forms. The form is bright yellow at the moment, but the updated forms will be more of a goldy-yellow. Why?

"Feedback is gold!" says GM Quality and Risk, Annette Greenwood. "Feedback from our community members is the most important information we can receive. You are experiencing our care and support and only you can tell us what it is really like."

One of the new Aged Care Quality Standards - Standard 6 - is 'Feedback and Complaints'. For this Standard, the Consumer Outcome states:

'I feel safe and am encouraged and supported to give feedback and make complaints. I am engaged in processes to address my feedback and complaints, and appropriate action is taken.'

"This is a great opportunity to update our 'Have Your Say' forms, and remind all members of our community that we are keen to hear your views at any time," says Annette.

Forms can be found at all residential sites and are provided in welcome packs for new home care consumers and ILU tenants.



Cameras in Aged Care: What can we expect?

Federal government has given approval and funding for a trial of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras in residential aged care, to begin later this year in South Australia and to run for 12 months.

SA Premier, Steven Marshall, said that his Government will partner with audio-visual monitoring company, Care Protect for the trial, a company that has been providing this service in the UK for four years.

For the trial, cameras will be put into residents' bedrooms, only with the consent of the resident or their family, and not into bathrooms.

The cameras will be monitored around the clock with video and audio recordings retained for 90 days.

Care Protect's system allows family members to view their loved one for a maximum of 3 minutes in each two-hour window. Care Protect's Australian manager, Scott Sterling said, "As they've already given consent they'll know that they will be watched from time to time."

"The Care Protect technology can allow for personalised access rights, so different people can view different cameras," SA State Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Stephen Wade said.

"We appreciate the concerns that family members have, especially for more vulnerable members of our community, such as those living with cognitive impairment and dementia," says Janna Voloshin, CEO. "We will be interested in the results of the SA trial and any recommendations that follow. We believe that CCTV could be helpful in protecting both residents and staff. If it gets the go-ahead from federal government, we foresee this being an added security system for vulnerable residents, but we do not believe it will become common practice for all residents.

"What is important to remember is that whatever happens, the system must respect and preserve the dignity of the individual."

If you have any concerns at any time, we encourage you to speak to the Residential Manager.

ANZAC Day at Vasey RSL Care



Bundoora (above and left): One of the youngest guests helps lay a wreath. Ross Pulling OAM speaks at the service. ADF member Major Adrian Sneddon from Simpson Barracks gives the address. Janet Bianco is interviewed by Channel 9 news!



Frankston South (below): Residents gather outdoors for the service - Margaret, David and Anthony score front row positions. Bishop Bob Billings gives the Minister's address and WO Nicole Leigent from HMAS Cerberus represents the ADF.

Brighton (above): Residents and family are joined Brighton School who took part in the service. Younger children seen with their display of poppies and wreaths. RSL





Brighton East (above & right): Resident, Percy wears his medals and those of loved ones. Charlie lays a wreath in memory of fallen comrades. A full house was present for the service held in the courtyard, to hear Colonel Coyle give the address.



... by students from St James Primary
... dren from Early Learning Brighton are
... resident Betty speaks about her life.

Ivanhoe (below): Residents and family gather outside for the service. Chef Kristine with residents Bev and Mary. GM Human Resources, Rom with Lieutenant DSilva, seen saluting the flag while resident Anne pays her respects.



Voluntary Assisted Dying Law Comes into Force

On 19 June this year, Victoria's new Voluntary Assisted Dying legislation comes into force, the first of its type in Australia.

Passed into law in November 2017, the new legislation takes effect this month. It permits a person in the late stages of advanced disease to take medication prescribed by a doctor that will bring about their death at a time they choose.

Conditions

This choice is only permitted for people who meet the conditions, and the legislation sets out the process for requesting and accessing the medication needed for voluntary assisted dying.

To access voluntary assisted dying, the person must have an advanced disease that will cause death, that is causing them unacceptable suffering, and is likely to cause death within six months, or twelve months for neurodegenerative diseases. They must also have the ability to make the decision and communicate it, as well as being over 18, having lived in Victoria for at least 12 months, and be an Australian citizen or permanent resident.

In addition to these conditions, the law requires that the person's decision is voluntary, consistent and fully informed.

Safeguards

The ministerial advisory panel on voluntary assisted dying details 68 safeguards, looking at eligibility, medication management, practitioner protection, reporting and oversight.

Voluntary assisted dying is only available to people who have decision-making capacity at the time of the request. It is therefore not possible to include it in an Advance Care Directive. Nor can a person's carer, family, friend or other support person ask for it for them, including their medical treatment decision-maker. The request must go to the person's doctor. Doctors are not permitted to suggest that a person seeks voluntary assisted dying and there are safeguards to ensure that the person is not being pressured by anyone and that the request is coming voluntarily and consistently from them.

People with a disability, a mental illness or dementia have the same right to ask for voluntary assisted dying as others in the community. However, having any of these conditions is not sufficient reason to access

voluntary assisted dying: like anyone else, they must meet all of the conditions, and must have the ability to make and communicate their decision.

"We live in a time where progress in medical treatment is continuing to make leaps forward," says Lee-Anne Suryn, General Manager Aged Care Services. "But of course, there are times when no further treatment is possible. Whatever the situation, end of life discussions, by their nature, are very difficult for us all."

The Role of Palliative Care

A concern raised by opponents to the law was that voluntary assisted dying may be considered as a solution to unbearable pain, instead of seeking care to make the person comfortable.

End of life care is the care that the person (and their families) receive when they are aware that their life may be nearing its end. Palliative care is more specialised care for those who are terminally ill to help relieve symptoms and provide emotional, spiritual, practical and cultural care.

Lee-Anne: "In Australia, end-of life and palliative care are very advanced, and we believe that in the majority of situations, good end-of-life care can ensure that the person is comfortable and that family and friends are cared for, by staff who have expertise, knowledge and experience.

"According to Dr Judi Greaves, Chair of Palliative Care Victoria, 'The majority of people want to die naturally, with dignity and in comfort, receiving high quality care and support from their carers.' In our residential and home care services, this is what we offer, and will continue to offer, to those needing it."

As 19 June approaches, we anticipate discussion of the new law and media focus on specific situations.

"This is a topic that is hard to discuss without emotion," says Janna Voloshin, CEO. "If you have any concerns, please speak to the relevant manager, or you can read more online."

More information:

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/>

Charlie's Reunion with a Spitfire



Thanks to support and donations for the Hero's Wish program, we have been able to continue to fulfill wishes of veterans and war widows in our community.



During World War II, Charlie Dimech served in the allied forces in Malta, as part of the ground crew servicing Spitfires.

Charlie was a resident at our Cheltenham Independent Living Units (ILUs), where his friend, Keith Walsh, put in a Hero's Wish for him. Charlie was very keen to see a Spitfire again: we tracked down two, still flying, at Temora Aviation Museum (NSW); before we had planned his trip there, we discovered that they would be flying to Melbourne for the Avalon Air Show. Thanks to Deputy Chief Executive, Greg Campbell, and Executive Director, Mick Jennings, the Avalon International Air Show presented us with Gold Passes.

Charlie met with Murray Keir, the Spitfire's Chief Engineer and Steve Death, well-known warbird pilot, both from Temora. He presented them with a 185th Squadron Coat of Arms - Charlie's RAF Squadron in Malta - hand-made by Keith Walsh, to take back to the museum.

Thank you to Bob Evans and Mou Dell for accompanying Charlie and making sure he was well looked after throughout the day.

Above: Charlie chats with Spitfire pilot, Steve Death.



Top right: Charlie with Chief Engineer Murray Keir (l) and Steve.

Right: the Spitfire takes off.



Below right: Charlie presents Murray with the 185th Squadron Coat of Arms, which features a griffin in front of the Maltese Cross and the motto 'Ara fejn hu' - 'Look where it is'.



