

Autumn 2017

Out of the Blue



BlueCross
community & residential services

Message from the Chief Executive



Alan Lilly,
Chief Executive

Welcome to our Autumn edition of Out of the Blue. It has been a very productive start to the year, with my 100 day review completed, our strategic directions launched and, as a result of these, we have also recently announced our new organisational structure.

Whilst there are some cosmetic changes to our structure, the most significant is that our Care at Home, Residential, Respite and Private Services will be provided from within a single Operations Directorate with a single entry point. We will review what roles need to be provided from Central Services and what services would be better provided closer to where our clients and residents live. These changes will allow us to be highly responsive, agile and focused on meeting the needs of our customers.

The new structure will also enable BlueCross to provide strong governance and oversight of our care services, as well as a focus on innovation and enhancing our capacity to undertake a number of improvement projects.

It is indeed an exciting time. We are currently working through the practical aspects of implementation but do not anticipate that there will be any impact on the provision of services and admissions during this transition.



Here's to all our residents and clients celebrating 97+ years at our annual 97+ Party. Turn to page 2 for more...

Our Community Services offering is set to expand as BlueCross has been awarded a significant contract to provide Commonwealth Home Support Services right across metro Melbourne commencing later this year. This allows us to provide many more community services, employ more permanent staff and provide a significant BlueCross presence in the community.

We have also now opened an additional 60 places at Livingstone Gardens in Vermont South and we're just in the final commissioning phase to open BlueCross Ivanhoe (formerly known as Waterdale) in early May. It's certainly all happening at BlueCross and I will be sure to keep you posted on our latest developments.

In the near future, I will be formally seeking your feedback on the care and services we provide and the extent to which you are satisfied. I do hope that you will be able to assist us, as your feedback will help us improve.

I wish you all a happy holiday period and let's not forget to pause and show our respect for members of our armed forces on April 25th and remember all they have done and continue to do to protect the freedoms we enjoy every day as Australians.

Alan Lilly

BlueCross Ivanhoe (formerly Waterdale) opens this May!

For an advance viewing of our newest residence, join us at our Open Day.

10AM - 4PM
SATURDAY 29TH APRIL

VISIT US AT BLUECROSS IVANHOE FOR OUR
OPEN DAY
Enriching lives through quality aged care

Join us for a tour of the residence
| Sausage sizzle | Entertainment |
Barista-made coffee

enriching lives

Celebrating 97+ Years

At a special party for our oldest residents and clients

More than 4460 candles would be needed to light up the birthday cake if we combined all the birthdays of our guests of honour!

Each year, BlueCross throws a birthday party for all our residents and clients who have turned 97 years' old or more. This special event brings guests, their family and staff together for a grand celebration to recognise their incredible lives and achievements.

Our oldest guest in attendance, Mary Ward Breheny, aged 102, was given the honour of cutting the cake with Ms Julia Banks (MP for Chisholm), Mr Tim Wilson (MP for Goldstein) and BlueCross Chief Executive Alan Lilly. Pictured below.

Many may recognize Mary from her role as Mum Brooks in hit Australian TV series Prisoner and for her role as Dee Morrell in Sons and Daughters.

After cutting the cake at last year's event she said, 'I've had so much fun, I'll be back again to cut the cake next year!'. Sure enough, Mary returned to do just that.



This year we welcomed 46 guests of honour, while noting that we provide care and services to a further 100 residents and clients over the age of 97 years across BlueCross.

The 97+ party included high tea, live entertainment, champagne and birthday cake to celebrate of course! Guests were welcomed by the executive team, Ms Julia Banks and Mr Tim Wilson.

Chief Executive Alan Lilly, also paid tribute to our supercentenarian Marjorie Cooke of BlueCross Cresthaven, who was unable to attend on the day. (Pictured below at her 111th birthday celebration.)

At 111 years old, she is believed to be Australia's oldest person and is also our longest standing resident, having lived with BlueCross for more than 18 years.



At BlueCross, we appreciate being able to celebrate with our residents and their families and understand the importance of ageing positively and continue to develop innovative and person-centred programs to enrich the lives of our clients and residents.

What was the world like 97 years ago?

- Summer Olympics were held in Antwerp, Belgium. The games 'theme' was remembering the victims of the First World War and reconciliation.
- Mass media was born as the first commercially-licensed radio station began broadcasting live results of the US presidential election. The transmission of breaking news was new and unprecedented, and as word spread of this new medium, the 'talking box' exploded in popularity.
- A loaf of bread cost about 5 pence and a quart of milk cost 7 pence.



BlueCross Care at Home

Why recommend BlueCross? Referral encouragement

Last year we launched our Companion Care program, which provides extra one-on-one companionship support to people living either in their own home or in residential aged care. As part of this program, we introduced the Meaningful Memories experience, which we are pleased to make available to all new Companion Care clients for half price!

Companion Care is an additional service and provides clients with dedicated one-on-one interaction with one of our Care at Home carers. These carers are chosen to suit your (the client's) individual preferences, and together they can do activities to further enhance your lifestyle and wellbeing.

This might include taking you out to a café for a regular coffee date or shopping outings, accompaniment to special events, games or appointments, or general companionship and doing activities of interest together within the home.



It is important to note that our Care Companions do not replace the high level of care and services already provided by your BlueCross carers as they don't provide personal or nursing care. Our Care Companions provide additional social, emotional and mental support to enhance your wellbeing.

We are also able to support people living with dementia with activities designed to complement our STARlife Dementia Care program.

Special Offer

To encourage you to try our Companion Care services, we would like to offer you the opportunity to book our 'Meaningful Memories' experience for half price!

Meaningful Memories is a special program that takes place over six weeks, in weekly one hour sessions, where we guide you (the client) through a conversation about your life. It has been developed for people of all cognitive ability (including those living with dementia) and is conducted by one of our specially-trained carers to elicit some of your fondest memories. This sharing of your life story encourages you to reminisce and value your life experiences while supporting meaningful connections and communication.

This offer is valid for Meaningful Memories programs commencing on or before 31 May 2017 for the special price of \$142.50.

For further details and bookings, please contact our Care at Home team on **1300 133 414**.



You spoke, we listened!

Why we are reducing our use of agency-sourced care staff

At BlueCross, we aim to provide an outstanding customer experience each and every day. As part of that commitment, we take your feedback very seriously and, where possible, put in place initiatives to improve your experience.

One such piece of feedback that we have received from residents is that they want the people taking care of them to be regular staff who 'know them', rather than agency staff who are unfamiliar with their care needs and preferences.

And we couldn't agree more! However, we also need to remember that our staff are only human, and from time to time they need to take personal leave or holidays. When this happens, those staff need to be replaced by other carers.

One way to fill these staffing shortfalls is to contact a third party nursing or care 'agency' to provide the replacement staff. While convenient, the use of

agency staff is not our preferred option as it does not always provide the highest quality of staff or consistency of care.

In October 2016, BlueCross commenced daily monitoring of agency staff use across all residences. Our aim was to reduce the use of agency staff and thus improve our quality of care.

By focussing our attention on the use of agency staff and working tirelessly to ensure full use of our own BlueCross staff, we have reduced agency use by more than 60% since July 2016.

Feedback thus far from our staff is overwhelmingly positive and anecdotal evidence from residents and families indicate this initiative is improving their experience and satisfaction.

Soon we will launch a new process to regularly obtain feedback from our customers (residents, clients and their families) and we look forward to sharing this initiative with you in future editions.

It's Flu Season

Winter is not far away and it is at this time of year that the occurrence of influenza becomes more common.

In order to help protect our clients and residents, BlueCross has begun its annual flu vaccination program for all staff.

We'd like to remind all family members and visitors to our homes of the importance of flu vaccination as one of the best ways to prevent their loved ones from being affected by the virus.

Information on the vaccine can be found at: www.immunise.health.gov.au

Or speak with your family GP for more information.

At our residences

Indulging our senses in Ashby's Halcyon Space

Halcyon is the new BlueCross term for our sensory programs, and at Ashby we have created a new Halcyon Space to give residents a dedicated place to come and indulge their senses.

Our space offers views of the sensory garden where we can watch and listen to birds at the bird feeder and water cascading down our water feature, while enjoying the sights and smells of the garden plants and flowers.

The Halcyon Space offers a variety of programs throughout the week such as aromatherapy, hand massage, live music and there is a television and DVD player for appropriate taped programs. Paro, a robotic baby harp seal designed to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia, and our Virtual Reality programs are also used in this area. A salt lamp adds atmosphere and sensory items are displayed in a glass cabinet for residents, family and staff to use.

The Halcyon Space also hosts our STARLife Club, where we have a Dementia specific program running each week day. The benefits of this club continue to make a difference, with the obvious outcomes of having happy residents and also with the more subtle, but just as important, outcomes such as giving participants a sense of purpose and a feeling of belonging.



One of our residents enjoying some time in the Halcyon Space with Paro

Promoting our residents' independence at Monterey

We hosted a special afternoon tea recently to mark a very special day for one of our residents, Connie, who thanks to a new, customised wheelchair was able to find a little more independence once again.

Our Lifestyle team worked diligently with Connie's son and a member of the community who designs electric wheelchairs to source and customise an electric wheelchair that would meet her needs. And the smile on her face when it arrived said it all!



We presented Connie with her 'L' plates as well as her very own personalised number plate 'Bad Mumma', which was chosen in jest by her son. Connie passed all the safety and 'driving' tests and will continue to grow her confidence with the support of staff.

Connie hasn't received any speeding tickets yet but there have been many jokes about her losing her licence for doing wheelies! She has also perfected the art of doing 'doughnuts' by turning the chair in circles in a confined space.

We always work to encourage independence and this day was a great example of a very positive outcome. We are all very proud of our teamwork and input in supporting Connie's happiness, meeting her individual needs and making her day.

Glengowrie's fish and chips day by the bay

At the residents' request, we recently enjoyed an excursion from Glengowrie to Williamstown for a special dinner of fish and chips by the bay.

Sadly on the chosen day, the weather was very unkind – wind and rain – but it wasn't enough to deter us and we collected our fish and chips and drove around to the back of Williamstown, to watch the ships come in while eating our food in the comfort and protection of the bus.

To our amazement every seagull in the area somehow still knew that we had food!



And luckily the sun came out while we were eating, so we finished up eating at a table overlooking the water.

Once we finished dinner, we went for a walk along the main street to get ice cream from Williamstown Ice Cream Shoppe. Wow, all those flavours! – with over 60 to choose from everyone was able to get their favourite.



For all BlueCross enquiries call **1300 133 414**

or go to www.bluecross.com.au



AVONDALE HEIGHTS
CHELSEA
CHELTENHAM

CROYDON
GLENROY
HEIDELBERG

IVANHOE
KEW
KILMORE

MALVERN EAST
MILL PARK
MOOROOLBARK

MOUNT WAVERLEY
MULGRAVE
SANDRINGHAM

SUNSHINE
SURREY HILLS
TEMPLESTOWE

LOWER TEMPLESTOWE
TOORAK
VERMONT SOUTH