

# Spring 2016 Out of the Blue

2016 Chase Perfection, Capture Excellence

BlueCross  
community & residential services

## Message from the Chief Executive



Alan Lilly  
Chief Executive

As the new Chief Executive of BlueCross, it's my great pleasure to introduce the Spring 2016 edition of Out of the Blue.

I joined the organisation in early September, and can clearly see that BlueCross is a progressive and innovative organisation committed to high quality care and service. I can also see that our staff and residents are having lots of fun, a hallmark of the BlueCross way.

Having worked in the public health sector for almost forty years, I was attracted to BlueCross because of its fine reputation in the community and its tangible commitment to creating a very positive culture of care for our residents and community clients.

I am now in my fifth week and thoroughly enjoying my transition into the organisation. I have been out and about meeting staff and residents in all of our residences and I am planning to spend time 'on the road' with our Care at Home team too. There's nothing quite like getting out and experiencing our services in an up close and personal way.

At BlueCross, we are committed to enriching lives and I look forward to sharing my journey with you in future publications and keeping you updated on our exciting initiatives and plans to expand our services to meet demand.

Alan Lilly



Our Residence Managers each receive a Paro baby seal to use with their residents who are living with dementia



## When technology and aged care unite

BlueCross has presented each of our 23 aged care residences with a new furry friend – Paro, a robotic baby harp seal designed to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia.

The seals were presented to our Residential Managers by Alan Lilly, BlueCross CEO and Professor Takanori Shibata, the creator of Paro, at a special event. Prof. Shibata is a researcher at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology in Japan, and is in Australia at the moment to promote this incredible technology.

As part of our STARLife Dementia Care program and commitment to enriching lives, BlueCross trialled Paro (affectionately known as Sammy by those who use him) at The Boulevard, in Mill Park. The success of this trial led to our decision to invest in providing a dedicated seal to each of our residences across Melbourne.

Paro is designed to reduce anxiety, depression, loneliness and aggressive behaviour, while also stimulating and engaging with people who are living with dementia. He is responsive to touch and sound, and has the capacity to learn his name and recognise voices, cooing and moving for his caregiver.

Residents who have had the opportunity to interact with Sammy have shown an improvement in their responsiveness and behaviours associated with dementia.

Bridget Howes, BlueCross Dementia Care Specialist, said, 'It's heartwarming to see the connections some residents have made with Sammy. One resident who is known to wander, will sit and pat Sammy, talking to him, without getting agitated or wandering away.'

'Another resident, who is unable to speak due to her dementia, absolutely lights up when she is given Sammy to hold. He provides comfort and affection in much the same way as traditional pet therapy, without any of the limitations of an actual animal.'

L-R: Verity Leith, Prof. Takanori Shibata, Bridget Howes and Alan Lilly at the Paro presentation



enriching lives

# It's Extravaganza time

Each year, our residences host a special event to celebrate positive ageing and having fun – no matter what age you are! We call this our Extravaganza.

The Extravaganza brings together residents, family, friends, staff and volunteers and the wider community for a party at each residence. Staff and residents enjoy this opportunity to get creative with preparing all the wonderful costumes and props for the big event!

## Hansworth – The Sound of Music

Hansworth residents were transported to the set of the iconic musical, The Sound of Music. Against a scenic Austrian mountain backdrop, the Hansworth resident choir sang and yodelled some of their favourite songs, with resident Neil Mance surprising everyone with his impressive solo performance as Captain Von Trapp.

Residents had fun dressing up as Austrian yodellers, nuns and the Von Trapp family, singing and dancing along to the live music by entertainer Steph Renouf who performed a special Sound of Music tribute show.



## The Boulevard – Academy Awards

The Boulevard's Extravaganza was a glamorous affair with their Academy Awards theme. Residents and staff dressed to impress with the ladies adorned with feather boas and the gentlemen looking dapper in top hats and bow ties.

Residents walked the red carpet, while the paparazzi (staff) took photos to add that extra element of celebrity. At the award ceremony residents presented each other with 'Lifetime Achievement' awards. A chicken and champagne formal luncheon was served as former Ten Tenors singer, Ben Clarke, regaled them all with songs.



The residents and staff really shone like stars at this event!

## Baradine – Rock 'n' Roll

Baradine residents flashed-back to the rock 'n' roll scene, transforming their home into an American diner. The hospitality team served up hotdogs, burger sliders and hot chips followed by ice-cream sundaes and milkshakes. The ladies put their party dresses on and applied extra hairspray, the gentlemen donned their leather jackets and popped their collars.

Classic rock 'n' roll anthems, such as Jailhouse Rock, Twist and Shout and Born to be Wild, got everyone dancing and singing along.



Residents Pam and Noel dressed up as Priscilla and Elvis Presley and posed with other residents and staff for 'celebrity' photos.

## Silverwood – Rockin' 50s

Silverwood got rockin' with their 50s themed Extravaganza. The residence was transformed into a 1950s soda shop complete with pink Cadillac photobooth. Classic diner food was served up, topped off with lemon meringue pie, pecan pies and a rock 'n' roll cake.

Residents dressed in their rockin' 50s outfits and took to the dance floor (or danced from their chairs) and sung along as the entertainers performed some of the classic hits of the 50s.



They even had a visit from Elvis, who got everyone's feet tapping and hands clapping in time.



# BlueCross Care at Home

Supporting people in the community who need additional care and services.

Care at Home delivers a variety of services which includes Companion Care for clients in residential settings. Companion Care is 1:1 additional support and social interaction. Each of our clients have a different set of needs and circumstances and we tailor our support to fit this.

The reasons for using Companion Care are many and varied. We have several clients who have moved into residential care after being cared for by Care at Home and want to continue the relationships they have formed with their carers who may have been looking after them for several years. They are able to have a companion take them out for coffee or to assist them to do other activities that they enjoy, like visiting the library.

For one of our clients it was important that their mother could have someone take her home to see her beloved cat – something that was difficult for the

family to manage during the week and gave great joy to our client. For others it can be someone to help write cards, paint their nails, go for a walk, read the paper or help navigate technology so families can be in touch when they are away.

In cases when regular family visits can be difficult due to other commitments or geography, we have added to the social circle of these residents.

Peg\* is a 96 year old BlueCross resident who has companion care seven days a week. She does not have family able to visit her and so we have been providing companion care for her since 2011.

As Peg is blind, our carers offer dedicated companionship as well as one-to-one support for activities, such as reading to her, exercises, going outside and participating in events at the residence. Our carers love working with Peg and they have developed strong relationships with her over the past five years.



Peg's next of kin recently wrote to us with the following feedback: 'I wanted to let you know how very much we appreciate the wonderful team of carers you have provided for us. They do so much more than "just the job" and Peg (and the rest of us) would be lost without them. Peg is so fond of them all, and they help her in too many ways to mention; often it is just by being with her so she is never alone. You have picked some rare and dedicated people, and we are both happy and grateful!'

*\* Name changed to protect her privacy*

Contact BlueCross Care at Home today to find out more about Companion Care.

☎ 1300 133 414

🌐 [www.bluecross.com.au](http://www.bluecross.com.au)

## Focus on inspiring and developing strong leadership

At BlueCross we have a strong focus on leadership – developing, supporting and recognising those who are making a difference and inspiring others to do the same.

As part of this commitment, we host an annual leadership forum, where we bring together our BlueCross leaders for a meeting of the minds. This year we addressed the important area of customer experience – sharing, discussing and exploring new ways to innovate and enhance our customer service and how we can best tailor your interactions with us.

If you have thoughts on what we could do to improve your experience, or even feedback on what we're doing well, please feel free to contact us at [feedback@bluecross.com.au](mailto:feedback@bluecross.com.au)



Congratulations to this year's Senior Manager Award recipients, Helen Sketcher, Residence Manager at Darnlee and Steve Gray, Assistant Property Development Manager (pictured above left).

Congratulations also to our finalists at the prestigious SACs Leadership awards; Christian Gementiza (Manager



in Training) in the Non-Executive Aged Care Leader category and Bridget Howes (STARLife Dementia Specialist) in the Executive Aged Care Leader category (pictured above right).

Helen, Steve, Bridget and Christian are incredible examples of leadership at BlueCross and demonstrate a strong passion for enriching lives.

# At our residences

# Olympics special feature



During July and August BlueCross residents and staff participated in our very own Olympic torch relay. Carried by bus, boat, limo, wheelchair and walking frame across all 23 of our residences, the torch's 12 day journey began at Willowmeade in Kilmore and finished at Gardenia in Chelsea, covering an impressive 300 kilometres across Melbourne. With special events planned at each home to welcome the torch, it certainly was good fun for all.



The Greek Gods and Goddesses light the torch at Willowmeade



The torch was passed from hand to hand next at Western Gardens



Monterey welcomes the torch from Italy's Riverlea



Vic. champion runner Hugo Sarpa delivers the torch to Glengowrie



Central Services even got into the spirit representing Australia



Highgrove's power walking group keep the torch moving



Clevedon Terrace hands the torch over to Silverwood



The Boulevard's 'King Jock' and 'Queen Alice' went for gold



Broughtonlea carried the torch for India in various traditional attire



Next stop was Ireland with the leprechauns of Baradine



Tarralla hand over to Livingstone Gardens aka Norfolk Island



Cresthaven celebrated with games and handed out medals



The Olympic torch reaches its final destination, Gardenia, by boat



India met NZ when Karinya Grove passed the flame to Autumdale



Roger Federer was everywhere as Hansworth waved Switzerland's flag



Scotchmans Creek got festive and represented Brazil

For all BlueCross enquiries call 1300 133 414 or [www.bluecross.com.au](http://www.bluecross.com.au)



AVONDALE HEIGHTS

CROYDON

KEW

MILL PARK

MULGRAVE

SURREY HILLS

TOORAK

CHELSEA

GLENROY

KILMORE

MOOROOLBARK

SANDRINGHAM

TEMPLESTOWE

VERMONT SOUTH

CHELTENHAM

HEIDELBERG

MALVERN EAST

MOUNT WAVERLEY

SUNSHINE

LOWER TEMPLESTOWE