

Autumn 2018

Out of the Blue



BlueCross
community & residential services

Message from Alan Lilly, Chief Executive



Welcome to the Autumn edition of Out of the Blue.

I hope this newsletter finds you well and that

you have enjoyed our warmer weather, as we now move to the colder time of the year! I enjoy keeping you informed of what is happening across BlueCross.

Firstly, I am pleased to report that the merger of BlueCross and SapphireCare was fully effected on 1 December 2017 and we are now operating as a single company. We are currently the largest residential care provider in Victoria providing service and care to 2500 residents across 32 residences.

To date we have intentionally retained our individual branding, however we are now taking a closer look to work out what will be best for our combined future with SapphireCare. You will have seen minimal changes within our residences but again, we are now looking to align our services and this is a great opportunity to have the best of the best.

We also recently celebrated the merger with our staff to bring our teams together. We are committed to creating 'one culture, one team'.

The aged care sector is also very busy at the moment participating in a number of external reviews and opportunities aimed at improving aged care services for older Australians. We welcome feedback to improve our services and it's also good to know about the things



A special moment captured for our 2017 Year in Review book – now available in print or online

we do well. The independent Australian Aged Care Quality Agency last year introduced Consumer Experience Surveys and this information is useful to identify areas for improvement. Based on nine residence surveys to date, our overall score is currently 91%. That's great news but we also need to understand what's in the 9% opportunity!

Due to recent Government changes, we will also receive more unannounced visits to assess our services. Since January, we've had 14 visits and have passed all, maintaining our full accreditation status with zero sanctions.

The use of agency staff continued to decrease in BlueCross last year and I am delighted to report a reduction of 29,545 hours in 2017 compared with 2016. This means we are delivering more care with our own care staff.

As we move into the winter season, we seek your active support in stopping the spread of respiratory and gastroenteritis outbreaks and we have more on that later in this newsletter. Thank you in advance for your understanding and support in this regard.

David Eccles, outgoing Board Chair, has announced the appointment of Dr Julie Caldecott to the position of inaugural independent Board Chair. With the merger now complete, the Board determined that an independent

Director would further enhance our transition and plans for the future. A qualified Medical Practitioner, Julie later moved into leadership and management consulting and holds an MBA from Melbourne University. For Julie's full profile, please visit our website. Please join me in welcoming Julie to BlueCross|SapphireCare with her commencement effective from 1 March.

Finally, this will be our last Out of the Blue newsletter designed specifically for our BlueCross readers as we move to an integrated edition for both BlueCross and SapphireCare next time around.

I am excited about the challenge and opportunities ahead and look forward to sharing more with you next time. Until then, take care and kind regards ...

Alan Lilly

Our 2017 Year in Review book is now available online

The Year in Review provides an insight into the vibrant year we had together and the things we do that have created a better experience for our people.

Please contact us if you would prefer to receive a hard copy.

enriching lives

Renovations and Redevelopments

BlueCross continues to invest in the improvement of existing residences and the construction of new homes to ensure we meet your aged care needs both now and into the future.

BlueCross Box Hill – Open September 2018



BlueCross Box Hill combines modern aged care with contemporary living. Spanning three residential levels, it features 220 beds with private ensuites, and includes a memory support wing with specialised facilities for people living with dementia.

In a first for BlueCross, we've engaged the services of a Feng Shui specialist to ensure harmonious spaces and an environment that supports optimal health and wellbeing.

Amenities include lounge, dining and sitting rooms, activity areas, gymnasium, consultation and treatment rooms, cinema, library, hairdressing salon and internet café. Conservatories, terraces and balconies are set amid landscaped gardens to provide tranquil outdoor spaces for residents and their guests.

Our emphasis for this residence is to create a homely environment, with small kitchens where residents can prepare meals and private dining rooms for a more personal feel, while at the same time offering world class facilities and the highest calibre of care.

BlueCross Monterey – Renovations complete



Redevelopment works on BlueCross Monterey in Glenroy were completed earlier this year. The additional 35 rooms with private ensuites and high quality finishes are now available for new residents.

Boasting an updated façade, the residence now offers a choice of standard, superior and deluxe rooms as well as a host of great communal amenities including modern dining and lounge rooms, activity area, landscaped gardens and the award-winning Men's Shed.



Farewell BlueCross Yarralee

The end of January marked the end of an era with BlueCross Yarralee closing its doors for the final time. We take a moment to celebrate 20 years of providing exceptional residential care in this stately Kew manor.

BlueCross Yarralee, a grand manor in leafy Sackville Street in Kew, was converted to an elegant aged care residence to provide a home for a total of 48 residents. Yarralee became a much loved residence, both by the staff and our residents who chose to call it home over the last 20 years.

Yarralee was originally deemed a 'high care' residence, for people deemed as having increased care needs. It became home to many of Melbourne's most frail and vulnerable older persons; a place where our

team of dedicated staff offered not just care but compassion and dignity at a time when it was most needed.

In recent times, in line with Government aged care reforms, Yarralee became an 'ageing in place' residence, whereby anyone could enter care at the home and as their needs changed, the services were adapted to ensure they continued to receive the best care.

The decision to close Yarralee's doors was not made lightly and we are pleased that the transition process went very smoothly with almost all residents and staff remaining part of the BlueCross 'family'.

A big thank you to everyone involved, including residents and their families, for their support and for helping to make this not a sad farewell, but a fond one.



BlueCross HomeCare

Providing short term restorative care to achieve improved wellbeing for clients with specific health needs

A new addition to our suite of aged care services is the Short Term Restorative Care Program (STRC). This early intervention program aims to reverse or slow the decline a client is experiencing with their ability to care for themselves. We provide a range of services and equipment as part of the program and we are already achieving some great outcomes for our clients.

One such client, Vitangelo Stefanelli, commenced his STRC package with us in January, with the aim of gaining back some of his independence lost as a result of Motor Neurone Disease.

Although Vitangelo is only 70 years old, his disease has advanced to the point where he has lost the ability to grip mobility aids and he has progressive weakness of his upper limbs.



Despite this, Vitangelo takes great pride in his ability to manage his condition with minimal assistance from others and to be as independent as possible with his personal care. It is also very important to him to be able to continue living at home with his wife, Josephine, who has become his full time carer. The STRC program has been able to provide the support and equipment he needs to maintain his way of life.

BlueCross identified that Vitangelo is very technologically savvy, demonstrated by his use of Google Home to assist with activities such as locking the door, switching on lights and calling friends. So we considered where else technology could be used to support his independence.

Following an assessment by an Occupational Therapist, Vitangelo received a Bestic Feeding Arm and additional equipment to assist with his daily activities through the STRC package.

This special machine enables Vitangelo to be independent with his meals by operating as a mechanical arm that picks up and feeds him spoonfuls of food, as directed by him.

'I'm so appreciative of the work that has been done by BlueCross HomeCare in helping me get this equipment.'

– Vitangelo.



It's been very rewarding to see the benefits the STRC program can bring in such a short space of time.

Short term restorative care is a goal-oriented, multi-disciplinary and coordinated range of care services for older people. Uniquely designed for each client, STRC is delivered for up to 56 days in either the client's own home and/or in a residential care setting. It is available for those deemed eligible via an Aged Care Assessment.

For further details or to be placed on our waitlist, please contact our HomeCare team on **1300 133 414.**

Fusion Ball – unifying our teams

We recently brought together staff from BlueCross and Sapphire Care to celebrate our merger. The focus of the merger has been on how we can learn from each other and grow together to be a stronger, better aged care provider for the benefit of all our residents and clients. The Fusion Ball was not only a wonderful celebration of our bright future but also a great opportunity to meet and network with our new colleagues.

Our aim is to unite our teams and align our cultures and strategic direction, to bring you a unified company; one that delivers a consistently excellent quality of care, that continues to innovate, and that is a great place to work and creates great places in which to live.

'The scale of our combined companies provides leverage for further growth and exploration of opportunities to meet the changing needs of our ageing communities. This is an exciting time for the newly merged company, as demand for our services continues to grow.' - Alan Lilly



Help us, help you

Flu and 'gastro' viruses can greatly impact the health of older people. If a residence is affected by these viruses, our strict infection control protocols are implemented. This is done to minimise the spread of infection, protect residents and staff and resolve outbreaks quickly. BlueCross engages extra staff to assist with the additional care needs of our residents and to ensure the residence is sanitised and clean during and after the outbreak.

Help stop the spread of infection:

- Get vaccinated – the flu shot is now available, speak with your GP
- Practice good hygiene
- Refrain from visiting when unwell



Glengowrie grants another Secret Wish

Glengowrie has made another wish come true with their Secret Wish program when two residents Doreen and Joe were taken for a surprise visit to the North Melbourne Football Club. Both residents are passionate long-time supporters.

They were gifted with signed caps and posters on arrival and then went out to watch the players train. Doreen and Joe had their photos taken with the players as they came off the field, as

well as a quick chat with some. Doreen's favourite present player is Ben Brown, who had a photo and chatted with her. She even asked if she could give him a kiss and he agreed!

Doreen and Joe were so ecstatic about being back at Arden Street, Doreen is still talking about it today and Joe has a smile on his face unlike anything we've seen before.

It was a joy to make this wish come true and make Doreen and Joe's day, month, year! A big thank you to the team at North Melbourne Football Club too for helping us make this happen.



Happy 100th Birthday to David Madden

In March, we celebrated David Madden, one of our HomeCare clients, turning 100 years old. We are thrilled to have been able to support him to continue living at home and reaching this fantastic milestone with a positive attitude and a smile on his face – congratulations David!



David pictured with his BlueCross carer Lisa

Indigenous Entertainers visit BlueCross

We have recently had a couple of Indigenous Australian entertainers visit some of the residences and give an educational talk and demonstration of the didgeridoo. They told us stories of the dreamtime and shared the history of the instruments and their importance to Aboriginal culture.

The residents were able to get involved and participate in playing the instruments – they were amazed at the rhythm and sounds that could be made with them and by the various different kinds of didgeridoo used.

Residents at Scotchmans Creek continued the festivities after the performance on Australia Day with lamingtons and hot drinks for afternoon tea.



Above: entertainers perform at BlueCross Baradine
Below: residents at BlueCross Scotchmans Creek



**CARE
OPINION** AUSTRALIA
BE HEARD.

Care Opinion is an independent website where people can share their care experiences.

These stories are then shared with the Chief Executive of BlueCross who responds directly to them. All feedback is then passed onto staff, which is an opportunity for us to see the things we do well and the things we can improve.

Republished below is an extract of some lovely feedback received from a family member of a resident at BlueCross Broughtonlea:

‘...The care he received during his period of residence was nothing less than outstanding.’

The staff involved in his care did so for my father with skill, respect and compassion at all times: this included not just the staff providing his nursing and personal care but the cleaners, kitchen staff, laundry staff and the staff in the cafe. They all became friends to both my father and my family. The staff went above and beyond what was required of them and nothing was too much trouble...’

If you have feedback you'd like to share, please visit www.careopinion.org.au

For all BlueCross enquiries call 1300 133 414

or go to www.bluecross.com.au

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