

ISSUE NO. 3

UNITING SA

SUMMER 2018

FLOURISH



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“One of the things I admire so much about our staff and volunteers is that amid busy work schedules, they take the time to really listen to people and go the extra mile to create positive change.”

CEO LIBBY CRAFT, 2018



WELCOME

Welcome to our first edition of *Flourish* for 2018.

The year ahead promises to be busy and fulfilling at UnitingSA, as we continue to work together to improve the lives of people in our community.

One of the things I admire so much about our staff and volunteers is that amid busy work schedules, they take the time to really listen to people and go the extra mile to create positive change.

As you read through this edition of *Flourish*, you will see examples of this time and again.

We share the story of Irene, who moved into our Regency Green Multicultural Aged Care home last year and in the process had to leave her cats behind.

Irene's cats were like her family and she quickly became depressed without them by her side.

Noticing her distress, our staff went out of their way to find a solution by having Irene's room converted and an outdoor enclosure added so that Irene's cats could move in with her.

The transformation in Irene was immediate and she started eating, talking and smiling again.

On the cover of this edition you will see one of our talented youth workers, Celina, who was named a finalist in Youth Work SA's Youth Worker of the Year Awards.

This time last year, Celina started running programs in the Adelaide Youth Training Centre, ensuring that young people in custody are supported to develop confidence and goals.

She also started a pilot program running soccer classes for young multicultural women to help reduce social isolation and forge community connections.

These are not isolated cases – there are daily examples of our staff and volunteers going above and beyond to uphold our vision for a compassionate, respectful and just community in which *all people* participate and flourish.

It makes me incredibly proud to work for UnitingSA and excited for what we can achieve in the year ahead.

Ms Libby Craft
Chief Executive Officer

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Volunteers are changing the lives of people in need in our community



UPCOMING DATES

February

13 Anniversary of Apology to Stolen Generations

13 UnitingCare Pancake Day

20 World Day of Social Justice

March

15 National Close the Gap Day

21 Harmony Day

30 Good Friday

April

1 Easter Sunday

15 Youth Homelessness Matters Day

25 Anzac Day

UNITING SA ANNUAL PROFILE



13,157

PEOPLE SUPPORTED



947

EMPLOYEES



124

VOLUNTEERS



3,165

PEOPLE CARED FOR ACROSS AGED CARE



5,952

OCCASIONS OF EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE



NATIONAL APPEAL HAS INCREDIBLE LOCAL IMPACT

This Christmas we were able to help more than 550 families put food on the table and provide gifts for their children, thanks to the community's support of the UnitingCare and Target Christmas Appeal.

More than 50 businesses, community groups, churches and schools hosted toy collections for UnitingSA, and others in the community donated gifts at the Fulham Gardens, West Lakes and Whyalla Target stores.

In total more than 1800 gifts were donated to our organisation, which we distributed to families in the week leading up to Christmas.

Almost \$20,000 was also raised locally as part of the Christmas Appeal, which nationally raised about \$600,000.

UnitingSA CEO Libby Craft said it was a wonderful demonstration of the power of community giving.

"Christmas can be a stressful time for some people in our community who may not be able to afford things that many take for granted," she said.

"Each toy donated brings a smile to the face of a child on Christmas morning and all funds raised help us provide emergency relief to people over the Christmas period.

"By coming together as a community, we really can make a positive difference in people's lives."

Among the generous donors this year were the Toyboys – a group of men who meet each week in a shed in Woodville to make toys for people in need.

The group – part of the Rotary Club of Charles Sturt Grange – donated their

quality gifts to our organisation at a presentation in their toy factory.

"I hope UnitingSA gets as big a thrill giving these toys away to disadvantaged families as we do making them," Rotary Club of Charles Sturt Grange president Peter Read said.

The SA Power Networks Employee Foundation – one of our biggest collectors each year – was again incredibly generous. As well as donating gifts, staff donated their time by cooking a free barbecue at our Family Centre.

Other campaign supporters included the City of Charles Sturt libraries and community centres, Grange Primary School, The Lakes Resort Hotel, Raine & Horne Semaphore, and The City of Port Adelaide Enfield.

Thank you to everyone who was involved and we look forward to uniting again to make a positive difference in 2018!

Conference highlights innovation in aged care

UnitingSA staff came together in November for our 7th annual Aged Care Conference held at Regency Green Multicultural Aged Care home.

Generously sponsored by TerryWhite Chemmart and other aged care service suppliers, the conference allowed staff to gain insight into the innovative and uplifting success stories across our sites.

The keynote guest speaker, Rachael Robertson, started the day off by sharing her humorous and inspiring experience of being the first female to lead a team of 18 Australians in the 58th Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition.

The conference also featured staff from across our aged care sites, who shared feel good stories of how the Meaningful Life model of care is being implemented.

From a home brewery created by Hawksbury Gardens residents, to school visits from Portside Christian School students at Wesley house – the staff showed the multitude of ways they are delivering person-centred programs to help their residents flourish.

UnitingSA Executive Manager Aged Care Deborah Burton says the conference keeps getting better every year.

"Each year our conference continues to reinforce the commitment of staff across both residential and community aged care services," she says.

"It is a special opportunity for all levels of staff to come together and learn from each other to improve services to residents and clients."

Many attendees left with gifts generously donated by the sponsors and, more importantly, with the confidence that UnitingSA is committed to the professional development of staff and holistic, optimal care for residents and clients.



COLOURFUL TRANSFORMATION IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE

When somebody has dementia, life is largely about living in the moment.

They may not recall yesterday or visualise tomorrow – it's what is right in front of them that matters.

That's why a recent renovation of Westminster Village's Memory Support Unit has been so transformative for the people who live there.

Gone are their bland walls which did little to inspire.

The space has been turned into a vibrant mix of colours, textures and activities.

Previously underused nooks have become reading corners and bedrooms have been painted boldly to help with recognition.

A new outdoor garden room is the perfect place for a chat and cuppa and a reminiscing room complete with an old sewing machine and radio helps residents connect with an earlier time.

Activities Officers Diana Battifuoco and Lee-Anne Corbett have been behind many of the changes.

Having worked in lifestyle roles at Westminster for 18 and 24 years respectively, they know a thing or two about how to engage residents.

"After talking with families and brainstorming with staff, we came up with several ideas and the ball started rolling," Diana says.

"The paints came out and it went from there."

One of the things that really stands out when touring the 16-bedroom support unit is the myriad of activities on offer for residents.

There is a mock laundry, which has been set up so residents can hang and fold clothes, as they would have done in years gone by.

"The ladies sit and one might be folding tea towels like she used to at home, while the other is sorting socks," Diana says.

"It is amazing how much it stimulates them because they are engaged in what they are doing.

"We have also introduced activities like peeling vegetables and the staff sit with them and involve them in conversation."

Other residents enjoy colouring in, sorting out tools and taking a walk through the garden.

Even a meander down the hallway provides stimulation, with textured rugs and fluffy materials cut into shapes and stuck on the walls to encourage touch.

"I feel like the residents' independence has increased because we have these activity stations and things left out for them to do all the time," Diana says.

"They have become so much more interactive.

"There's been such a change... as soon as you walk in the door, the whole atmosphere has been transformed."

To find out about Westminster Village Aged Care at Grange, and the Memory Support Unit, contact the Admissions Team on 8200 9207 or email admissions@unitingsa.com.au



IT'S OFFICIAL – WE ARE UNITINGSA

We celebrated our new name, UnitingSA, with more than 130 of our key supporters and stakeholders in November.

We were privileged to have in attendance the Honourable Susan Close, Minister for Education and Child Development, and the Honourable Mark Butler, Federal Member for Port Adelaide.

The public celebration, at Adelaide Entertainment Centre, was a chance to reflect on the organisation's impact over the years, from the Port Adelaide Central Mission in 1919 until today.

"From our beginnings when we helped fewer than 100 people a year, through to today when we support more than 10,000, we have adapted and grown to meet community need," UnitingSA Board Chair Gael Fraser told the gathering.

"That is why we have become UnitingSA – a name and brand that better reflects our organisation as it stands today."

CEO Libby Craft joined the stage to welcome the evening's special guest speakers, William and Hiroko.

"William came into contact with us through our Western Adelaide Homelessness Services when he found himself in a position where there was nowhere safe to sleep at night," Ms Craft said.

"Hiroko has received support through our Personal Helpers and Mentors program – one of our Mental Health Services helping improve people's health and wellbeing."

William and Hiroko shared their stories through a panel discussion with UnitingSA Executive Manager Community Services, Meredith Perry.

They each spoke about their struggles when they first came into contact with UnitingSA, and how our staff worked alongside them to help them improve their wellbeing.

Today, they are both thriving and we were privileged to have them share their journey with us as we celebrated our organisation's new chapter.

As Ms Craft said: "Although we have a new look, our vision remains – for a compassionate, respectful and just community in which all people participate and flourish."

Lift gives accessibility a boost

Our Employment & Training Support programs are now more accessible after a lift was installed at our Elizabeth site.

The new lift was officially opened on December 5 – a timely launch on the back of International Day of People with Disability.

"This will stand as a reminder that everyone needs to be included in this world and whenever there is an exception, we will do everything we can to make sure everyone can participate and flourish," UnitingSA Minister Les Underwood told the gathering.

"One of the lovely things about this lift is it is not on the side of the building out of sight.

"It's right in the centre of everything and becomes the focal point.

"There's a metaphor there that says in order for people to flourish, we want to make sure we bring them from the furthest margin right into the centre."

UnitingSA employee Sue Streich had the honour of cutting the ribbon to officially open the lift.

She spent almost 12 months working from our Paralowie site after an accident left her unable to use the stairs to access the Elizabeth offices and says the lift "has made a huge difference".

The project was made possible thanks to funds obtained through the Federal Government's Job Access program and the support of landlord Kel Spencer.





AN EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR IRENE

When Irene moved into Regency Green Multicultural Aged Care, one of the hardest transitions was having to leave her beloved cats behind.

She had lived with cats her entire life and the 73-year old struggled not having Bella and Durjie by her side.

She became depressed and didn't want to eat or drink, causing great concern to the staff who worked with her each day.

Noticing her distress, Regency Green's Director of Nursing, Ashok Sharma, arranged for Irene's cats to move to the Animal Welfare League (AWL).

From here, they were able to participate in the AWL's Cats Fly In Fly Out program, in which cats and kittens visit Regency Green each week to socialise with residents.

"As part of the arrangement, the AWL agreed to make sure Irene's cats were brought in here each week," Mr Sharma says.

"Straight away you could see the change happening in Irene.

"She started smiling, she started talking and eating – we could clearly see the difference in her."

Irene says "it was a great relief" when she saw her cats on those visits, but she still longed to have them permanently by her side.

Noticing her need, staff went out of their way to help make Irene's wishes come true – just in time for Christmas.

UnitingCare Wesley Bowden staff, who had previously supported Irene with home care, helped raise money to convert the courtyard near her room to a cat enclosure, with UnitingSA also contributing funds.

Kennett Builders and Adelaide architects Walter Brooke & Associates donated their time and materials to build a platform linking Irene's room with the outside enclosure.

Now, Bella and Durjie are enjoying exploring their new home, while their proud owner watches on.

"They seem to be settling in very well," Irene says with a smile.

"I am very grateful they are here with me."

IRENE

Irene's reunion with her cats isn't the only way Regency Green Aged Care is catering to people's pets.

There is also a resident who has her dog living with her, as well as an off-leash dog exercise area for family and friends to bring pets in to see residents.

UnitingSA's Executive Manager Aged Care Deborah Burton says the bond between people and their pets is vitally important.

"We want to make sure that bond is nurtured," Ms Burton says.

"Just because somebody is at the stage they need to move into aged care, it doesn't mean they should lose their companion.

"I have always had cats myself and I would like to think when I am older I will also be able to bring them with me wherever I move."

Regency Green is now on the lookout for other cat lovers who may enjoy volunteering their time to help Irene look after her cats, including cleaning their enclosure and feeding them.

Interested volunteers should call 8440 2148.

INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMUNITY RETURNS RESULTS THREEFOLD



For every dollar invested in our Communities for Children (CfC) program, the north-west Adelaide community receives an average benefit of \$3.28.

That's the finding of recent research commissioned by UnitingSA to better understand the financial impact of CfC on children, families and the broader community.

CfC distributes Department of Social Services funds to organisations – known as Community Partners – to provide early intervention and prevention programs for children aged 0–12 and their parents.

Programs and activities include parenting support, case management, home visiting services, and other support to improve social connections, family relationships, employment and educational outcomes.

Nova Smart Solutions undertook the Social Return on Investment (SROI) evaluation of the program over six months, conducting interviews, workshops and analysis to determine its overall benefit.

Nova analysed what the alternate costs would be to get the same results

for families in other ways – such as through paid education, mental health support and recreational opportunities.

The final report, published in October, explains step-by-step the way the research was conducted, including the assumptions made and financial proxies used, to reach the final dollar figure.

Connected Families program manager Craig Bradbrook was central to the evaluation, which he says is the first of its kind for a CfC program in Australia.

“The intention of the SROI evaluation is not only to have a figure we can communicate back to the department and our other stakeholders to say for every dollar we are investing we return \$3.28 – but each of the individual programs also has their own return,” Craig says.

“This helps us with the assessment of new grant applications and working out where we should be allocating our funding to.

“In saying that, the dollar figure is just one aspect of it and isn't the only tool we use to assess a program – there is context in everything.”

Craig says it is the personal outcomes for the people supported through CfC

programs that is the ultimate measure of success.

“If through processes like a Social Return on Investment evaluation we can improve the way we are working with people – if we can help them achieve their goals and dreams a lot sooner – then we've done a good job,” he says.

“It's as much about building the capability of the people working with clients as it is about supporting the clients to get to their goals.”

One such person is mother-of-four Marcia, who credits CfC with the full life she leads today.

When she first arrived in Adelaide from Sydney following a relationship breakdown in 2012, she knew nobody and had no idea what her future held.

Six months pregnant and with three children in tow, she spent her early days finding a house and then settling her two eldest children in school.

After the initial settling in was complete, she found herself at home with little support or friends.

“In that first year I just went to some local playgroups and I met different

people and one of them mentioned Seaton Central,” Marcia says.

“The programs were very flexible and you didn’t have to pay, which was a real benefit.

“They were so nice and welcoming and sweet and little by little we got involved in every single program.”

Seaton Central, run by CfC, offered a diverse range of programs and Marcia found herself attending most weekdays with her two youngest children, Luciana and Alessandra.

She took part in gardening programs, playgroups and a getting ready for school program – to name a few – and says it was crucial to reducing her social isolation and developing new skills.

When Seaton Central closed, Marcia and the kids started visiting Seaton Neighbourhood Centre, which CfC supports with funding.

“The programs there are also fantastic, as they are very well planned and the quality is good,” Marcia says.

“The kids have freedom but in a safe environment, which is important.”

Marcia has just completed her Certificate 4 in Community Services and is also the parent representative on the CfC Committee.

“It’s great because you feel like your opinion is important and that’s good for your self-esteem.”

She is now juggling her role on the committee with part-time book keeping work, raising four children and is looking to start volunteering in community services to work out what she would like her future career to look like.

It’s a long way from her early days arriving in Adelaide unsure of where to turn – and she says CfC and the programs it helps to provide has been a huge part of that journey.

“A lot of people could benefit from getting involved in the programs,” Marcia says.

“There are so many services being offered but a lot of people don’t know about them.

“You don’t feel judged or embarrassed asking for help there.

“I’m always recommending them to people I meet.”

To obtain a copy of *Communities for Children Program – Social Return on Investment Forecast Analysis*, email cbradbrook@unitingsa.com.au

“If through processes like a Social Return on Investment evaluation we can improve the way we are working with people – if we can help them achieve their goals and dreams a lot sooner – then we’ve done a good job.”



A CUPPA WITH SIMON PAVELIC



FUN FACTS

Favourite colour?
Blue

Favourite animal?
Dog

Favourite food?
Thai

Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party?

Lefty Kreh (the great pioneer of saltwater fly fishing), Graham Parker (arguably England's finest singer/songwriter) and Hermann Hesse (favourite author)

What three items would you want if you were stranded on a desert island?

A fly fishing rod, hammock and box of matches

In his role as UnitingSA's Manager Community Aged Care, Home Care & Independent Living, Simon Pavelic devotes his time to ensuring older people in the community have flexible support options. We sat down for a cuppa and to speak about the role of home care in enabling people to live independently for as long as possible.

Q. Why is home care important?

A. The number one benefit of home care is that it allows clients to receive personal care in the privacy and comfort of their own homes. Some of our clients have lived in their own homes for over 50 years and are very attached and connected to their family, friends, neighbours and broader community.

Q. How many home care residents do we support?

A. We currently have over 150 Independent Living Units and provide in home support to over 100 home care and transitional care clients.

Q. What home care services does UnitingSA provide?

A. We provide a broad range of services to our clients. Some of these include: medication management; nursing and allied health care; personal care and hygiene; meal preparation; social support; transport; respite care; and home help such as cleaning, laundry, home maintenance and gardening.

Q. What are the most popular or common supports people seek?

A. Some of the more popular services include hairdressing, massage, manicures and pet walking.

Q. How has home care changed in the past 10 years?

A. Without a doubt, the most recent reforms that came into effect on February 27th 2017 have been the biggest change in the past 10 years. It is now consumer directed care – the client tells us what they want and we work to make that happen.

Q. What is the biggest challenge of the new reforms?

A. The reforms mean the security of our allocated home care packages no longer exists. We are competing in an open market. There were 500 home care providers when we started and that's increased to nearly 1000. It's predicted to go to 9000 within the next five years. As an organisation we need to ensure we can remain competitive in a commercial business environment. It puts the onus on us as the provider to ensure people are receiving quality care and we are meeting their needs.

Q. How are we faring with that?

A. We are doing really well. In the past seven years we haven't lost a client through dissatisfaction. People come to us from other providers because they are unhappy with their service but until now, we haven't lost a client because they are unhappy with our services. We are a boutique service. Our staff live in the area and they come in and have a really good connection with our clients.

Q. How do you see home care changing in the future?

A. There is an ageing population and this is causing demand for aged care services, and greater pressure will be put on Federal budgets. The logical outcome will be more stringent means testing and the diverting of government aged care support funding to the most vulnerable. There will be an expectation that consumers will need to contribute to the cost of their care if they have the means. There will also be a significant growth in the demand for private services for those who can afford to pay.

Q. How does home care link in with the other services UnitingSA provides?

A. UnitingSA is like a one-stop-shop for our clients. Unlike standalone aged care providers, we are able to provide a range of different supports. These include financial hardship, mental health services and family support services.

Q. How do people find out more about our home care services?

A. By calling 8449 7805 or emailing HCPEnquiries@unitingsa.com.au



DEDICATED TO HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE THRIVE

Celina Van Nguyen always knew she wanted a career helping others but it was a volunteer role at age 21 that inspired her to pursue youth work.

She took up a live-in position helping four young refugees settle in to their new country and supported them with daily life.

Celina recalls how the teenagers, from Afghanistan and Africa, were so appreciative of the support.

“Learning about their experiences and seeing what they had and how grateful they were for things Australian children take for granted... it definitely pushed me harder to pursue youth work,” she says.

“I have a real drive and passion to help other people, especially when they are in crisis.

Five years on, Celina’s passion for working with young people saw her named a finalist for Youth Work SA’s 2017 Youth Worker of the Year Award.

“You don’t do it for awards but it’s been an honour,” Celina says.

“It’s nice to be recognised for the work that you do.”

The past year was one of incredible achievement for Celina, who joined UnitingSA early in 2017 to work in our Urban Youth and Flexible Learning Options programs.

In her role she partnered with Tea Tree Gully Council and Modbury Jets Soccer Club to introduce a new program for young multicultural women.

With a strong background in soccer, Celina’s sporting skills were put to good use coaching the weekly pilot program for 13 to 17 year olds.

She also became the first Urban Youth worker to run programs at the Adelaide Youth Training Centre, at Cavan, which houses young people who are in custody.

Celina visited the centre twice a week to run hourly after-school sessions to engage young people

in activities to build confidence and develop teamwork.

“I’ve always been really interested in juvenile justice,” she says.

“With the girls, we did a lot of art and craft while talking about their dreams and what their aspirations are outside of Cavan and how they can achieve that.

“With the older boys, I found sporting activities worked the best as it gets them working together as a team and engaging with each other.

“With the junior boys it’s very similar but we also started to do a pool session with them where I threw discs in the water and they had to link arms and stay connected while collecting them.

“It was great to see them talking to each other and building their team skills.”

Celina says this play-based learning has a lasting impact on behaviour and self-esteem and she is looking forward to building on the foundations she has laid with the young people at the centre in 2018.

Aside from the new programs, the bulk of Celina’s work is one-on-one case management, which has seen her support almost 30 young people in the community in the past year.

She receives referrals from schools, courts and other agencies and says she works differently with each client, “depending on their needs and goals”.

“I do a lot of complex cases – a lot presented as homeless or in crisis when I first started working with them,” she says.

“They might need support with housing or schooling, emotional regulation, self-esteem, mental health or peer pressure.

“Some of the clients have a combination of all of those and you find out where they would like to start and you work from there.”

Child, Youth & Family Services Team Leader Jasmin Kollias says she nominated Celina for the Youth Worker of the Year Award because she goes the extra mile to support young people.

“Celina embraces youth who have complex issues and facilitates their development beyond their issues from a strengths based place,” Jasmin says.

“She goes above and beyond what’s expected of her with the interest of vulnerable young people in mind.”

“I believe in giving people equal opportunities no matter what circumstances they are in.”
CELINA VAN NGUYEN

UnitingSA has a range of independent living options to provide older people the chance to join a vibrant community with all the support they need.



CAMARADERIE AT THE HEART OF RETIREMENT LIVING

There's a sense of community as you stroll around the grounds of our Independent Living Unit sites.

Despite most residents living by themselves, the camaraderie between neighbours means they never have to feel alone.

Just ask Sue, who moved in to Westminster Village at Grange almost three years ago.

Her sister was so envious of her new lifestyle, she and her husband moved into our nearby McCutcheon Grove West Village a few months ago.

"Moving here is the best thing I ever did," Sue says.

"I used to live at Findon but when my husband passed, I couldn't be there anymore – it was just too hard.

"I love it here – the neighbours are so great and we all look out for each other."

As if on cue, Beryl walks up to say hello, beaming her trademark grin.

She moved in to Westminster Village six years ago and echoes Sue's comments: "I like everything about living here. There are lots of nice, friendly people and we take care of each other."

UnitingSA has five Independent Living Unit sites in the western and northern suburbs of Adelaide.

The smallest – Wesley Court, in Rosewater – is a community of eight units and the other sites range up to 38 units.

All of the accommodation is pet-friendly, low maintenance and self-contained, allowing people aged over 65 to live an independent lifestyle.

UnitingSA's Coordinator for Seniors' Living, Margaret Richards, says the units range from one to three-bedroom options, meaning there is something to suit all needs.

"People have to be independent to a point but they can still get home care while living in a unit," Ms Richards says.

"There is always a neighbour there to help out if they need and I am always at the end of the phone to provide extra support, assistance to obtain help at home or advocacy.

"Independent Living Units are a great option if someone is lonely because there are other people around them and some of our sites have really good social activities and groups.

"Residents can become as involved or not with the other residents as they like."

Ms Richards says she relishes working alongside the residents.

"They are all special to me. I help out where ever I can, even if it is just to let them know I am around if they need to have a chat."

To find out about vacancies in one of our Independent Living Units, email hcpenquiries@unitingsa.com.au or phone 8449 7085.

THE PERFECT IN-BETWEEN LIVING OPTION



Visiting Faggotter Grove Neighbourhood Group Home at lunchtime is a bit like dropping in on extended family.

The residents have their routines around who sits where, who says grace, who helps clean up and who is quick to dash off to recreational pursuits.

There is chatter and a few laughs as the residents enjoy the hot meal prepared for them daily, chased down by dessert.

"It's homely, the staff are lovely, they are good cooks and it's good to have the company of the other residents," says Mavis, who moved in almost five years ago.

Faggotter Grove in West Lakes Shore is a community of 12 residents, who each have their own bedroom, bathroom and kitchenette.

They share common areas including a dining room, lounge and laundry, making it the perfect in-between option for people who no longer want to live alone but aren't yet looking for full residential care.

UnitingSA's Coordinator for Seniors' Living, Margaret Richards, oversees residents' health and wellbeing to ensure they have the right support in place for their individual needs.

"They aren't ready for a nursing home but they might need some extra support and leave home for health or personal reasons," she says.

"The last four people to move in have all done respite for a few weeks and then wanted to stay.

"It's a wonderful place and it has such a homely environment, the residents and staff are lovely.

"I don't know anybody who has moved in here who doesn't enjoy it."

There are plenty of in-house activities at Faggotter Grove, including happy hours, barbecues, special event afternoon teas or lunches, as well as a Friday afternoon social group alternating between games sessions and movies.

Residents don't have to look far for options for things to do outside of their home either.

They have their own set of keys that unlocks the back gates to the

neighbouring shopping centre, tavern and church.

Celestine, who everyone calls 'Bub', knows a thing or two about life at Faggotter Grove, having moved in 22 years ago when she tired of living between her children's houses.

"We had a look and it was just the place for me," the 86-year-old says.

*"I love it –
I wouldn't shift
anywhere else."*

CELESTINE

"The residents are great, the staff are lovely and do everything they can to help.

"You can come and go as you like. What more could you want?"

For more information regarding respite and permanent admissions to Faggotter Grove Neighbourhood Group Home, contact 8242 1622.



Award for innovative aged care development

Wesley House Aged Care took out the Innovation in Development award at November’s Urban Development Institute of Australia’s (UDIA) SA Awards for Excellence.

Wesley House, at Semaphore Park, was recently transformed with a \$40 million redevelopment, creating 168 bedrooms with ensuites, large activity spaces, a hairdresser, café, secure memory unit and landscaped gardens.

More than 300 people attended the awards night at the Adelaide Convention Centre, where UnitingSA CEO Libby Craft accepted the honour.

“On behalf of our committed Board, dedicated staff and the community we serve, it gives me great pleasure to receive this award and recognition tonight,” Ms Craft said.

“As an organisation serving over 13,000 South Australians in need each year, we are committed in being efficient, effective, sustainable and environmentally sound.”

Ms Craft gave special thanks to Kennett Builders and Adelaide architects Walter Brooke & Associates, as well

as UnitingSA staff and “of course most importantly the residents – because as we know it is the people within our facilities that make them wonderful places”.

UDIA Awards judges praised Wesley House’s innovative design, especially its environmental focus.

“Judges thought the provision of a 250 KVA generator that not only maintains power to the facility during black outs, but activates during periods of high demand reducing augmentation and network charges, complemented by a 130 kW solar power system to maintain critical power supply was commendable,” they said.

“Implementation of multiple environmental, sustainability and redundancy systems ensures long-term viability of this development.”

It was the second major award Wesley House received in 2017 – the first was in June when it was named joint winner of the Aged and Community Services SA&NT Award for Excellence in Aged Living Design.

The redevelopment was completed over three years and was officially launched with a celebration last May.

Celebrating with song and laughter

Residents at Regency Green Multicultural Aged Care celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival in October – a harvest festival traditionally celebrated in China and Vietnam.

Members of the community joined our residents for a morning of music, dance, food and laughter, with nine performances on the day.

“There was one Chinese song that must have been a very popular one because out of nowhere the whole room started singing and clapping and stamping their feet,” Regency Green Activities Officer Margaret Renn says.

“As a multicultural facility, it was such a wonderful thing to see.”

The Mid-Autumn Festival traditionally takes place between September and October on the night of the full moon, which is a symbol of harmony and unity.



Pancake Day funds have lasting impact

Funds raised through last year’s UnitingCare SA Pancake Day have helped put food on the table for dozens of families and individuals who would usually miss out.

UnitingSA used part of its \$3000 donation to buy supermarket vouchers. They were given to people who are usually not eligible because their visa status means they are unable to access government-funded financial assistance.

The funds also went towards upgrading a shed at UnitingSA’s Child, Youth & Family Services, where donated clothes are sorted and stored for distribution to people in need.



VOLUNTEERING BRINGS PERSONAL FULFILMENT

It is people like Kim who make it possible for thousands of people in need to receive the support they desperately need each year.

She is among our generous volunteers working at 58 Dale St, Port Adelaide, providing emergency assistance to people doing it tough.

From food parcels to supermarket vouchers, clothing to swags, and referrals to other supports, the team makes sure everyone who steps inside the centre is heard – and helped.

“We deal with the immediate problem and then go onto the more serious problems,” Kim says.

“We get people come in who are homeless or on the verge of being homeless so we try to give them as much physical assistance as we can with food, clothing, sleeping bags – and then we also refer them to Western Adelaide Homelessness Services.

“If families are in situations with domestic violence we refer them to the Strengthening Families program.

“If someone is having trouble paying a bill we can refer them to our financial counsellors.”

Kim became a volunteer almost three years ago, after 20 years working in aged care took its toll on her back and left her unable to continue.

She says the role has given her purpose and a feeling of achievement.

“You feel a sense of accomplishment and wellbeing being able to be of assistance to people who are in quite dire circumstances,” she says.

“I think everybody that’s got the time or they are able to do volunteering work to give back to the community should give it a go.”

UnitingSA is always on the lookout for more volunteers in its emergency assistance team, as well as other areas such as aged care.

To find out more about our volunteering opportunities visit unitingsa.com.au or contact Jane Parker on jparker@unitingsa.com.au

A celebration of health and wellbeing

Our Mental Health Services team returned to Light Square in October for the annual Festival of Now – Australia’s only festival celebrating Mental Health Week.

The event, which UnitingSA started six years ago, has grown into a community collaboration and celebration of positive mental health and wellbeing.

“The most important thing about days like today is it has less to do with

mental health and more to do with human connection and that’s when mental health is at its healthiest,” UnitingSA consumer consultant and peer worker Kez Robelin says.

Kez helped create the ‘Together Tree’, which was central to UnitingSA’s display both at the Festival of Now and Stall in the Mall earlier that week.

People were asked to write down things that help keep them strong, healthy and happy, and place them at the top of the tree.

They also wrote down things in their life they had either let go of or wanted to let go of in order to become healthier, such as a toxic friendship, bad relationship or difficult moment.

“The Together Tree was a great way to start a conversation with people and it also provided a visual representation of those things in our life that influence our health and wellbeing,” Kez says.

“It was a fabulous day and it wouldn’t have been possible without the support of Kristy, Greg, Tamika, Hiroko, Sarah, Michael, Andrew and Jo-Anne, who helped run activities, make salads and everything in between!”



UNITING SA *Together We can*

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