



Residential Aged Care

Newsletter - December 2023

A message from the Group Manager, Kate Hawkins

As the year draws to a close, we take a moment to reflect on the journey we have shared throughout the seasons of the past year. In the tapestry of time, each day has woven a unique thread, creating a vibrant and rich pattern of experiences, connections and moments of joy. This year has been marked by the celebration of milestones, both big and small. From birthdays and anniversaries to personal achievements, each accomplishment has added to the collective tapestry of our community.

As we step into a new year, let us carry the lessons and memories of the past year with us. The bonds we've formed, the lessons we've learned and the shared moments of joy are the foundation upon which we continue to build a vibrant and caring community.

In the spirit of reflection and gratitude, we express our sincere appreciation for each resident, for every smile shared and for the moments of connection that make our community truly special.

Wishing you all a joyous holiday season and a new year filled with continued growth, companionship and the warmth of shared memories.

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Acute respiratory illnesses - continued monitoring

The Australia Federal Government is continuing to encourage Aged Care providers to have systems in place to monitor for acute respiratory illness. To ensure we comply with these requirements Anglicare Southern Queensland's residential aged care facilities continue to have visitor screening. This includes having all visitors sign-in at the visitor kiosks (located in reception) and RAT testing for regular visitors and staff in-line with National COVID-19 Health Management Plan for 2023 (page 13):

Twice a week (for surveillance screening), and not more than 72 hours apart for staff or on entry for each regular visitor*

We thank you for your continued understanding of these requirements.

*A regular visitor is defined as someone who visits a facility on a regular basis (i.e., a friend, loved one or someone who will have direct contact with a client).

Please remember to let us know if you are experiencing any symptoms. For visitors, it is important if you are feeling unwell to stay at home until you are symptom free.



Top tips to beat the heat this summer period

As our bodies age we have a decreased ability to retain water and a reduced sensation of thirst. Research suggests that one in five people living in care homes do not drink enough fluid and those with dementia are six times more likely to be dehydrated. The risk of dehydration is further increased due to the high temperatures being experienced across Queensland this Summer.

Adequate hydration plays an important role in maintaining our overall health, wellbeing and bodily functions. Water helps us to:

- regulate body temperature, blood pressure and blood sugar levels
- digest food
- absorb medications
- eliminate waste
- lubricate joints
- maintain cognitive function (memory, attention, and concentration).

Inadequate hydration can lead to an increased risk of urinary tract infections, constipation, infection and falls, as well as exacerbate existing health conditions such as hypertension, heart disease and diabetes.

Ensuring you and your loved ones consume enough fluids can all help to reduce complications and promote better overall health. Simple strategies to promote good hydration, including:

- drink more water than you think you need. Then drink some more
- find a cool place for yourself or your loved one
- avoid outdoor activities in the middle of the day and do them early
- don't feel well? Let a staff member know.

Anglicare's dedicated staff are also focused on encouraging adequate fluid intake especially during these hot weather conditions.



Aged care reforms update

We find ourselves at a pivotal moment in the evolution of aged care services, where significant reforms are not just necessary, but imperative. The landscape of aged care is changing rapidly, and it is crucial that we, as a community, embrace and champion these changes. Anglicare's aged care team has been focused and driven to meet the speedy reform timeframes. Below is a snapshot of some key focus areas the team has been working on.

Consumer Advisory Body (CAB) update

The Consumer Advisory Body is a group of residents, family members, and community representatives who work closely with our staff and administration to provide feedback, share insights, and advocate for the needs and preferences of residents. As part of the aged care reforms, all aged care providers were required to establish a CAB by December 2023. Anglicare recruitment for CAB members commenced throughout 2023 with several establishment meetings conducted.

Anglicare's CAB has provided feedback about staffing and the use of agency staff. Given this feedback, we thought it was important to share updates on what has been happening behind the scenes in this area.



Workforce

Workforce shortages since COVID-19, have been a challenge in the aged care sector. Reforms are addressing this issue by exploring innovative recruitment strategies, offering incentives for those entering the field, and providing pathways for career progression. A well-supported and adequately staffed workforce is fundamental to delivering quality care. The Anglicare residential aged care team have been concentrating on innovative ways to ramp up our aged care workforce. This has included:

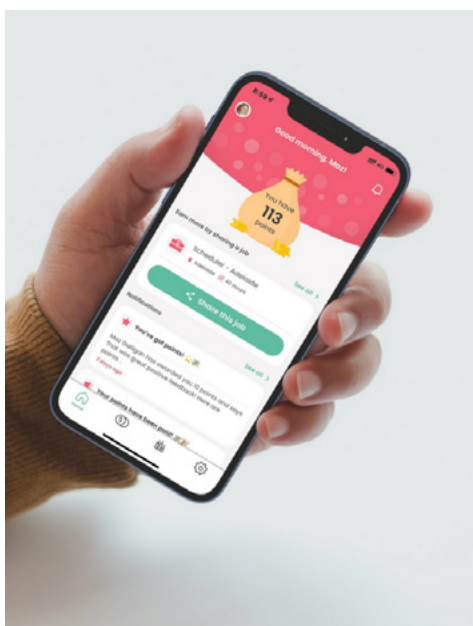
- focused marketing campaign (Onboard with Us)
- introducing a staff referral rewards program (referring workers to work at Anglicare)
- implementing a 'Train our Own' model (Traineeship).

Since the initiatives began, our residential aged care teams have observed a reduction in the use of agency staff and the introduction of nearly 90 new permanent staff (across our eight homes) in three months. We appreciate your patience and support while these new staff members orientation to their new roles.

While we have been working on how to get more people to work for Anglicare, we have also been concentrating on how to keep staff. The recent mandatory quality indicator reporting has demonstrated we are making great gains in this area with Anglicare retaining staff better than the industry benchmark.

Your experiences, insights, and suggestions are invaluable in shaping the direction of our community.

To join the Consumer Advisory Body, residents or their loved ones and family members can visit anglicaresq.org.au/cab and register their interest or contact us – call 1300 610 610 or email cab@anglicaresq.org.au





Bringing the spirit of Christmas with menu favourites

The Christmas menu for residents, family and friends is a delightful spread of festive flavours and traditional favourites. Indulge in the succulent roast turkey and glazed ham, perfectly seasoned and accompanied by a cranberry sauce. To complement the main course, enjoy a medley of sides including crispy roast potatoes, flavourful baked pumpkin, cauliflower bake, and vibrant green beans. For dessert, there are two tempting options to choose from. Dive into the rich and comforting Christmas Pudding with its luscious brandy custard or enjoy a slice of french vanilla cheesecake.

The cost for family members this year for lunch will be \$35 per person. Please book in advance. As you can understand we cannot provide for more than two guests per resident on Christmas Day so please discuss with the facility if you have any other questions or concerns.

If you would like to bring in your family Christmas feast, please talk to the lovely staff who will be able to prepare an area for your occasion.



Companion dogs update

Companion dogs in aged care can play a crucial role in enhancing the wellbeing and quality of life for elderly individuals. These dogs, often trained as therapy or assistance animals, provide emotional support, companionship and various health benefits to seniors. However, it's essential that aged care providers establish and follow procedures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved, including the residents, staff and the dogs themselves. This also includes staff dogs/pets.

We thank you all for your patience while we enhanced our companion animal procedures and practice. If you have questions or would like any further information, please speak with your Facility Manager.

Feedback

We value your feedback and encourage you to contact us if you have any ideas for improvement.

If you have any feedback about the care or services you receive, we are here to listen. If you have any concerns, feedback and/or compliments about our service you can speak with our Facility Managers. If you don't feel comfortable raising a concern directly with us, you may also contact the relevant Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822.

Public Holidays

Christmas Day: Monday 25 December 2023

Boxing Day: Tuesday 26 December 2023

New Year's Day: Monday 1 January 2024

Australia Day: Friday 26 January 2024

Good Friday: Friday 29 March 2024

Easter Monday: Monday 1 April 2024

ANZAC Day: Thursday 25 April 2024

Labour Day: Monday 6 May 2024



Laughter is a wonderful way to bring joy and connect during the holiday season.

Why was the snowman looking through the carrots?

He was picking his nose!

What do you call an elf who sings?

A wrapper!

Why did Santa go to music school?

Because he wanted to improve his wrapping skills!

What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations?

Tinselitis!

What do you call Santa when he takes a break?

Santa Pause!

Why did the Christmas tree go to the barber?

It needed a trim!

What do you get if you cross a snowman and a dog?

Frostbite!

Why did the gingerbread man go to the doctor?

He was feeling crumbly!

What do you get if you cross a snowman and a cat?

Frosty Paws!

Why did Santa bring a ladder to Christmas?

Because he wanted to go up the chimney!