

From the CEO's Desk

Well it has been quite a journey these past few months! Many of you would have been receiving my daily update emails during our Covid outbreak, while others would have simply heard on the 'grapevine' about what was happening at Outlook Gardens.

From the other side of an outbreak, I can say that I have renewed respect and admiration for every member of our Outlook family – including our residents, families and staff members. It is very special to be part of this community!

While we have not yet returned to full 'normal life' at Outlook Gardens, we are certainly celebrating the little moments that remind us how far we have come. Just in the past few weeks, it has been wonderful to see residents begin to reconnect with one another – who would have thought that a simple game of (socially distanced!) Uno would seem so special!

Since our last regular newsletter, so much has happened – both at Outlook Gardens and in our world in general. I won't even try to capture it all here.

Instead, I'd like to close by expressing my thanks to everyone who has been and continues to be a part of our community. While much of what we have all endured is difficult, heartbreaking and exhausting – we have done it together.

Once we are thoroughly out of Covid restrictions and able to gather, we intend to have a remembrance service for those residents who passed away during this time. We will also find an appropriate way to recognise the service of our incredible staff.

Above all, thank you for your prayers. On many occasions we received notes, cards, emails and calls to remind us of the prayers of many. We were aware of so many individuals and churches across the globe who were praying regularly for our residents, families and staff...including many of our own residents from their hospital rooms, family homes or within the facility itself.

Dirk Schurink
Chief Executive Officer

From the Residential Services Manager's Desk

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the incredible support of so many people over the last few months. Our management and staff have appreciated the many expressions of support towards our community, and we are hopeful for an easing of restrictions soon.

I also want to personally thank families who took loved ones home during the outbreak. At the time we did not know that this would be a two month commitment, and we want to acknowledge our gratitude to these families, especially considering the high level of care and responsibility that is required to provide care at home.

In addition to the extra activity and changes around Covid there have also been some other significant events. Two of our RNs have commenced in unit manager roles – Baudena Kay (Grevillea/Banksia) and Susan Liu (Lavender). Many of you will already know them, and we look forward to introducing you in person as soon as restrictions allow.

Susan has taken on the role in Lavender due to Parisa's departure. We are excited to announce that Parisa is celebrating the addition of a baby girl, Evie, to her family! We love it when the Outlook Gardens family grows with new baby arrivals! Stay tuned for more announcements in the coming months...in the meantime, keep your eye on Lupe and Maxine...shh...

I've received a number of queries in light of the recent Aged Care Royal Commission findings. One of the areas identified by the report was that "the Australian Government should fund providers to ensure there are adequate staff available to deal with external visitors so that the Industry Code for Visiting Residential Aged Care Homes during COVID-19 (Visitation Code) can be modified to enable a greater number of more meaningful visits between people receiving care and their loved ones".

Like you, we are following this closely, and are looking forward to hearing the full set of recommendations as well as receiving more advice from the government regarding its implementation. We know that lockdown has been difficult both for our residents and families, and we all look forward to a time when visitors can spend time with their loved ones without restriction.

Inna Emelianova
Residential Services Manager

Some encouragement for today...

"Because of the present crisis, I think that it is good for you to remain as you are." (1 Corinthians 7:26)

These words were spoken by the apostle Paul to the church of God in Corinth during a particularly difficult period in which Christians were being pressured by an immoral and hostile people. The wisdom in these words resonated with me as I read them. How appropriate for the present pandemic *crisis* we are currently experiencing, to "*remain as you are*". I felt an immediate peace when I read his words and thought I would do some further investigating as to what '*remain*' means.

Remain means to: '*continue to exist, endure, abide, go on, carry-on, persist, stand, prevail, survive, live on and to be; outstanding after others*'. These are words of victory! As our Outlook Gardens family reunite after being separated for so long, it is a privilege to listen to the experiences each of you have encountered. In them, I see first-hand courage, strength, endurance, persistence, and people who are outstanding! Our Lord Jesus said:- (*John 16:33*) "*..... In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*" Since Jesus has given us this warning, the current pandemic has come as no surprise to those who believe. But that does not mean these events have not had an impact on our emotions and health. In these times of trial, it is so important to seek comfort in God's Word. God's Word is living, transforming, strengthening and it is the truth! I trust the following scriptures will bring you peace and comfort: -

Isaiah 40:31 "*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary: and they shall walk, and not faint*".

11 Corinthians 12:9 "*And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness*".

Isaiah 41:10 "*Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with my righteous right hand*".

God's Peace be with You

Cheryl Ebsworthy
Pastoral Care Worker



Some pics from June...



Looking back over the photos we have taken since our last newsletter, it has certainly been a varied few months! A couple of special events were still relatively 'normal'. In June we had a special Queen's Birthday high tea, and the men enjoyed a burger lunch in the Sunflower Lounge. We also had another few special lunches...but without pics, you'll have to take our word for it!



Michael is enjoying increased independence with the arrival of some new wheels!

During an outbreak...



In the midst of an outbreak, it's hard to recognise familiar people OR familiar places. Staff were working in full PPE, and any excess furniture was placed in storage to keep corridors and common areas clear. Here are a couple of photos to give a glimpse into daily life during an outbreak.

Of course, birthdays are still special—and Maria received a surprise flower delivery from her family .



Coming out the other side...



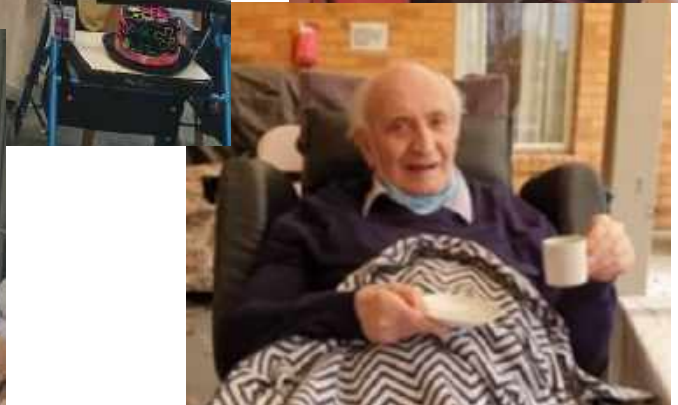
Milkshakes are a nice surprise, and even better when you can choose your own toppings!



Even though the hairdresser can't visit, some of our residents have enjoyed having their hair styled by activities staff



When you can't go to Happy Hour, we bring it to you! Happy music, drinks and snacks had everyone dancing or smiling in the doorways of their rooms!



When the weather is bad, hot soup is so good! These lovely ladies enjoyed helping to prepare chicken and vegetable soup. Together with fresh homemade bread—what a perfect lunch!



Birthday blessings to all who are celebrating a birthday in October, November and December, as well as those who already celebrated in September

The following residents are celebrating Milestone Birthdays

November Nettie Van Der Marel—90th birthday

Even though birthdays can't be celebrated in the conventional way, they are still special, and we wish all who are celebrating a special and blessed day!

Village Happenings

Life has been fairly quiet in the village recently, with the same social restrictions as the rest of metro Melbourne. Usually the Community Centre would be buzzing with regular social activities, and we miss not being able to gather like we usually do. However, we are looking forward to coming months when we can recommence our morning teas, kiosk, happy hours, bowling and all the other activities that usually keep us so busy. Hopefully by the time the next newsletter comes out, we will be spending time enjoying one another's company again! Until then, we stay in touch by phone and a wave on the way to the letterbox.

Despite the restrictions, there are two pieces of news from the village that we would like to share:

Firstly, we welcome Con Daniels who has recently moved into unit 28! We look forward to spending more time together when restrictions allow. Over the coming weeks there will be a few more new faces arriving too, so keep an eye out for some new neighbours.

Also, it is wonderful to have had the roof installed on the new gazebo—this will bring much-needed shelter from both the sun and the rain, and we look forward to using this area as restrictions are lifted and life returns to normal.



New Medicare or Pension Card?

If your family member receives a Medicare or Pension card with a **changed expiry date**, please provide the details or a copy to Reception or nursing staff so we can update our records.

New Clothes? Don't forget to label them!

If you or family members are bringing new clothes, please leave them in a named bag at reception or with care staff to be **labelled**. Of course, you can also choose to label clothes yourself with a laundry marker. Unfortunately we cannot take responsibility for lost clothing if it is not labelled.

Lost something?

If you or your loved ones are missing clothing items, please ask Reception or care staff.

Like everyone over the past few months, we have learned that it is the everyday things that are taken for granted. As residents returned to Outlook Gardens, it is wonderful to see them gather in dining rooms and enjoy one another's (socially distanced!) company again.



Recognise this face? Pietro is a TV star after popping up on the "images of 2020" segment on A Current Affair recently,. Our staff did a double take! This pic was taken at one of the hospitals who helped care for our residents during the outbreak.

Staying Connected

We know that it has been a long time since things have felt 'normal' and you have been able to come and go freely to visit your loved one. At this stage, we continue to monitor Covid cases in our local area, and respond accordingly to current statistics and government advice. We are committed to keeping you informed of any changes, and upholding resident and staff safety while still keeping you connected with your loved ones.

Just a reminder of some of the other ways to maintain contact without face to face visiting:

Email: Send a message to admin@outlookgardens.com.au, and include some photos for your loved one. We print them off (together with your message) and pass them along

Skype: Each wing is equipped with a device and a Skype address to receive your calls. If you would like to arrange a Skype call, call reception (9795 7566) to schedule a time with the nurses' station

Grevillea: skype2@outlookgardens.com.au

Banksia: skype3@outlookgardens.com.au

Lavender: skype4@outlookgardens.com.au

Magnolia: skype@outlookgardens.com.au

Phone: If your loved one doesn't have their own phone, please feel free to call reception. The best times are between 9.30am & 5pm, and not between 12pm-1.30pm (this stays clear of medication rounds, meals and breaks, so staff are more available to assist with calls)

Parcels/letters: Parcels and letters can be posted or dropped at reception during office hours

Smartphone communication: If you and your loved one both have compatible smartphones, phone apps such as WhatsApp, FaceTime or Viber will enable you to send messages and make video calls

Waving through the window: Just let us know when you are coming, and we will arrange a great window view! With a mobile phone, you can also have a conversation through the glass

Thank you!

We have received countless emails, letters, encouragement notes and phone calls over the past few months, and even some special treats (flowers, lollies and chocolates) for our staff. One family organised prayer meetings over zoom, and we were aware of so many others who were praying too. Pictured here are just a few of the cards we have received, and your email encouragements were compiled and emailed out weekly to all of our staff. Our staff were also very humbled to know that so many people were concerned for their wellbeing and that of their own families.

We are so grateful for all of the expressions of support and kindness from so many people. We knew it before, and it was confirmed time and time again throughout this outbreak—we are part of an incredible community! From our family to yours—THANK YOU.

