

Opal HealthCare **Social Impact Report**

2020



Contents

4	Message from our Chair and CEO
5	Our approach to measuring impact
7	2020 highlights
9	Caring for people
13	Purposeful places
17	Community building
23	Promoting understanding
27	Caring through COVID

This report is printed on carbon neutral and FSC® certified paper.

At Opal, our purpose is *to bring joy to those we care for.*



Compassion: We strive to understand and meet the needs and feelings of those we care for. We act with kindness in everything we do.



Accountability: We take responsibility for our actions, commitments and the wellbeing of those we care for.



Respect: We are honest and transparent. We respect those we care for. We always show respect for each other.



Excellence: We work as a team to provide the highest quality care and the highest standard in everything we do.



The Royal Commission into Aged Care has highlighted the extent to which Australian society has often neglected the care of its older citizens. As a nation, we need to do better.

Opal HealthCare has the privilege of caring for older Australians living in residential care communities across our country. Our purpose is *to bring joy to those we care for* and never has this been more important than in a year where devastating bushfires and a global pandemic challenged and changed the lives of Australians everywhere.

The health and economic impacts of both events highlight the role business has to play in society and the importance of being an ethical, responsible and sustainable organisation. Opal HealthCare has a vital

role to play in the health and wellbeing of the communities in which we operate. We must be a sustainable organisation in order to deliver the dedicated care and living experience that older Australians deserve; provide relief and support for families with loved ones requiring greater levels of care as they age; and, attract, develop and retain the right team members living in the community to serve our residents.

Our first Social Impact Report sets a baseline for the positive impact delivered in 2020, outlines our future goals, and shines a light on older Australians who embody the philosophy of 'ageing is living' by continuing to play an active and contributory role in society.

We thank all of our Opal team for their energy, compassion, expertise and resilience throughout a remarkable year. Their contribution has touched the lives of countless numbers of individuals and helped to protect the health of our nation. It is poignant that the World Health Organisation named 2020 the Year of the Nurse and Midwife. We want to take this opportunity also to recognise and thank our dedicated Opal nurses for the positive impact they make every day on the lives of others.

Rachel Argaman
Chief Executive Officer

Prof. Peter Shergold AC
Chair

Our approach to measuring impact

Opal HealthCare provides residential aged care services to 6,800+ older Australians in 80 care communities across Australia and has over 8,600 team members. Our reason for being is to provide quality care for older Australians at one of the most vulnerable stages of life. Care that encompasses high quality clinical expertise as well as love, purpose and belonging, so our elders can continue to live with meaning as they age.

2020 marks the commencement of social impact reporting at Opal HealthCare. Importantly, our social impact goals are built into our business strategy and are seen as an integral part of what we do. We measure impact through the four domains outlined here, including an additional domain in 2020 focused on our response to the global pandemic.

Residential aged care is an essential social support, the impact of which includes and extends beyond those in our care. We support the families and friends of ageing loved ones as greater levels and complexities of care become necessary. We employ,

develop and train our team to deliver high quality care. And we work in partnership with primary and allied health services to innovate and relieve the burden of care on the community. These are just some of the many things we do to realise a more prosperous, inclusive future for older Australians.

Our approach to reporting addresses the ageing population in Australia, reforms happening in our sector, and understanding global trends that are shaping business now and into the future. It also recognises the responsibilities we carry and our impact and influence on our residents, families, team, stakeholders and the community.

Our actions are underpinned by the tone set from the top by the board and executive leadership team, and sound organisational governance and principles, including our Code of Conduct, Equal Opportunity, and Diversity and Inclusion policies.



What we measure



Caring for people

Helping people to live healthy lives as individuals and supported by their community. It encompasses the freedom and choices to define what health and wellbeing looks like for each individual, encouraging preventative health, creating pathways for healthy mental and social transition into care, nurturing the wellbeing of our team and increasing awareness about healthy ageing in broader society.



Purposeful places

Taking responsibility for our environmental footprint, maintaining environmentally sustainable buildings and creating places for older Australians that are accessible and available to be enjoyed by everyone, including intergenerational access, cultural appropriateness, safety and security.



Community building

Creating socially connected communities where people experience belonging, participation, self-worth, acceptance, equity and social justice. Strengthening intergenerational connections, working with local organisations and suppliers, and building stronger communities through local supply chain, employment, skills development and partnerships that deliver social good.



Promoting understanding

Building a culture of respect for older Australians and helping older Australians find and raise their own voice. Challenging stereotypes and evolving narratives by supporting older people to maintain a meaningful status in society.



Caring through COVID

Rapidly adapting our practices and policies to deliver care through a global pandemic, protecting the health and wellbeing of people, enabling families to maintain meaningful connections, accelerating innovation and the use of technology, specialist skills development, team wellbeing and contributing to the national response to the pandemic.



Caring for people

Nurturing wellbeing

6,800+

residents in our care communities

2,948

families provided relief through respite care, a total of 109,000+ nights

5,400+

days available for hospital transitional care

1,616

Opal registered and enrolled nurses

202

Opal team scholarships awarded for tertiary study

285

team participated in leadership development programs

9

wellness centres open across three states

14

wellness centres currently in development

16,777

hours of wellness centre care

Inclusion and diversity

8,600+

jobs provided



59%

41%

leadership roles gender balance

34 languages spoken by our residents and team



4 8 6 4

internship hours offered



Purposeful places

Design for better living

25

renovation programs to improve resident and visitor experience



194

residents using wearable room key technology across 4 homes

3,500+

Wi-Fi points installed across 80 homes to improve connectivity

Protecting our planet

3.25 mil

litres of water saved due to rain water harvesting

78

care communities with LED lighting, saving 4,296MWh of energy across Opal

60

solar powered care communities saving 4,281MWh of energy across Opal



13

green-rated care communities including 6 new homes opened in 2020

2

green-rated care communities under construction



Caring through COVID

Responding to the pandemic

727,045

Zoom minutes spent connecting residents and families, with 22,000+ participants

100+

local businesses in 40 regional areas engaged to support resident and team wellbeing

3,750

hours of team wellbeing program participation during COVID



Community building

Local employment and skills, strong community connections

80

communities served in four states across Australia

65

education providers involved in intergenerational programs

598

new resident places available to our elders

1,125

jobs created in new care communities (540 construction jobs, 585 care home jobs)

73

charities supported through 174 charitable events

3,938

new clothing items ordered by residents through our partnership with Thread Together

6

new or redeveloped care communities opened in three states

+

2

under construction

+

3

in development stage



Promoting understanding

Advocacy and helping older Australians find and raise their own voice

86

resident-led committees in our care communities

221

residents who have volunteered for our Helping Hands program in their care community

549

resident and team stories shared via social media

93

resident and team stories shared on the Opal website



80

adult learning programs available to residents and families

1,212

letters of love sent to residents via Opal website (Sept-Dec)

21,867+

COVID-specific team training hours

340

iPads used in care homes for resident and family connection



2020
highlights

**Caring for
our residents,
community
and society**



Reablement and restorative care

Since 2017 Opal HealthCare has provided in-home wellness centres, partnering with experts to provide reablement and restorative care services for residents and people in the local community.

In 2020 we opened four new wellness centres in two states in partnership with Concentric Rehabilitation and HCA. This brought the total number of wellness centres in operation to nine, with a further 14 centres in development across Australia.

This model is ground-breaking because it enables in-place specialist rehabilitation services for our residents and people living in the local community, who otherwise may not have access to the expertise, equipment and/or environment that best suits their care needs or wellbeing goals.

With ageing comes an inevitable physical decline. Through targeted reablement and restorative care programs we are often able to slow this decline so that a person has a better quality of life for longer. In many cases a person's health indicators and overall health outlook improve. As well as physical health outcomes, the benefits of socialisation through exercising in a group

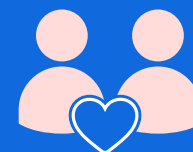
environment deliver positive wellbeing outcomes for residents. Sharon moved into Ashfield Terrace Care Community following a stroke that doctors feared would leave her requiring 24-hour care for the rest of her life. Aged only in her mid-40s, our team at Ashfield Terrace cared for Sharon's daily care needs and Sharon accessed our in-home wellness centre. Together with specialist clinicians from our partner organisation, Concentric Rehabilitation, our shared goal was to help Sharon regain as much movement, strength and autonomy as possible so that she could eventually move out of Ashfield Terrace and into an independent living environment.

Our Concentric team created a personalised program for Sharon focused on this goal, that was refined and augmented as she regained her strength and functionality. Sharon attended the wellness centre multiple times per week and in 2020, following three years of personalised and intensive restorative care, Sharon moved out of Ashfield Terrace and into an independent living apartment where she now resides with other adults in her age group.

Impact

Our wellness centres provide Opal residents and wider community members access to local, individualised, evidence-based specialist reablement and restorative care services that extend beyond traditional pain management and fundamentally change health outcomes.

- Improved physical health outcomes
- Improved mental wellbeing through socialisation and connection
- Greater access to health and wellbeing services for the wider community
- Greater choice of services for residents and community
- Positive customer experience for residents and families
- Reduced time and effort for residents and families spent commuting to off-site clinics

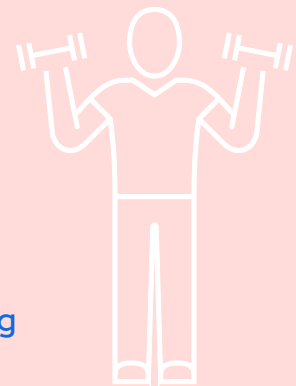




9 wellness centres operating in 2020

14

new wellness centres coming in 2021/2022



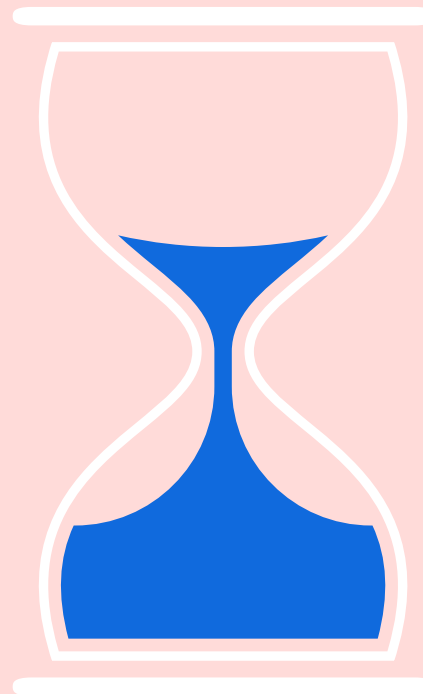
566

residents accessing wellness centre services

463



community members accessing wellness centre services



16,777 hours

of wellness centre care provided for residents



Transitional care for hospital patients

Many Opal care communities partner with local hospitals to provide transitional care for elderly hospital patients who no longer require acute hospital care but are not well enough to return home.

This reduces the pressure on hospital resources, especially during peak winter months, and means there are more hospital beds available for people in the community in urgent need of acute care. It also provides elderly patients with a supportive recuperation experience in a caring and homely environment that is well suited to their individual care needs.

On the Central Coast of NSW, four Opal care communities participated in the Care Awaiting Placement Program (CAPP) in 2020, caring for elderly patients who needed support while recuperating from illness. This translated to over 1,500 hospital beds made available to people on the Central Coast. In Victoria, Epping Meadows Care Community has a similar arrangement which alleviated pressure on local hospitals and amounted to almost 4,000 hospital beds available for urgent acute care.

“

Killarney Vale Care Community welcomed 12 patients through the CAPP in 2020 and it's a real privilege for us to be part of their care story.

Once they've been in hospital for so long, it's great to be able to offer them a welcoming and homely environment, where their care can continue for as long as they need, in a space that feels safe and friendly, with home cooked meals, lovely gardens and lake views. Should they find themselves needing to stay more permanently, through this program we've already taken much of the unknown away from the transition process.”

– Deanna Lomas, General Manager, Killarney Vale Care Community

”

This was even more significant given the prolonged COVID wave in Victoria in 2020. These programs also help to familiarise patients with the residential care environment, which is important in the event that they are not able to return to

their own home to live unassisted. Our flexible and responsive approach to community need through offering transitional care means the burden of care on families can be relieved, knowing their loved ones' care can be continued in a safe environment with clinical expertise at hand.

Impact

- 5,400 hospital beds available for urgent acute care patients
- More acute care hospital beds available in the wider community for those in urgent need
- Reduced burden on resources for local hospitals
- Improved recuperation experience for elderly patients
- Reduced burden of care on families
- Builds greater understanding of the benefits of residential aged care for elderly patients
- Patients benefit from the homely and sociable environment of residential care



Caring for our team

The wellbeing of our team is as important to us as the wellbeing of our residents. COVID impacted everyone in different ways during 2020, and we implemented a number of wellbeing initiatives to support the wellbeing of our team through this most challenging of times. In addition to access to LifeWorks, our Team Assistance Program which is available to team members and their immediate family on a confidential basis, delivered 15 voluntary resilience and wellbeing webinars for team, with over 3,500 hours of online learning completed.



Connecting through language classes

At Chiswick Manor Care Community, residents Teresa and Joseph started fortnightly Italian language classes for our team members in 2020. With 65% of residents of Italian heritage at Chiswick Manor, the classes built meaningful connections between residents and team and contributed to Teresa's and Joseph's sense of purpose.

Lifestyle Coordinator Nirav says, "It's a privilege to learn new skills from our

residents and it's rewarding to help our residents share their culture. Each team member plays a very important role in providing the best quality personal care that residents can receive. By speaking another language, we can provide even better personal care to our residents who are not familiar with English. Our residents tell us it's very satisfying to be able to accurately communicate their care needs by speaking their native language with us."



Smart design for better living



At Opal HealthCare we aim to make significant and purposeful changes to our care communities to actively reduce our environmental footprint. We do this in the design and construction of new developments and through retrofitting programs in existing homes. In 2020 we built and opened six new or redeveloped care communities to residents, using renewable energy sources and smart building design to improve our environmental footprint.

Our newly opened care communities in NSW (Meadowbank Grove, Killarney Vale, Wallarah Point, Narrabeen Glades), Western Australia (Treeby Parklands) and Victoria (Warrnambool Riverside) incorporate solar power generation, rainwater harvesting for greening gardens, double glazed glass, thicker walls for better insulation, and shadier outdoor areas – all of which contribute to a reduction in energy usage and a more comfortable environment for our residents.

In 2020, 55 care communities were retrofitted with solar power panels, significantly improving our environmental footprint by using clean energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Six additional care communities were fitted with LED lighting, creating further energy efficiencies and a more welcoming and safe environment for our residents and team.

Impact

Caring for our residents and their families also means caring for our environment. It's important that our physical spaces are as safe and enjoyable as they are sustainable. These initiatives look after our environment and enhance the safety and comfort of our team and residents.

Improved lighting

- Improves the living experience for residents
- Creates a more welcoming atmosphere with highest safety standards
- Warmer, brighter and more inviting lighting temperatures

Increased shaded areas outdoors using greenery and constructed shade

- Improved comfort for outdoor sitting areas for residents, families and visitors
- Encourages residents to spend more time outdoors, socialising and being mobile
- Helps keep our internal environment cool
- Reduces air conditioning power consumption



60

solar powered
care communities

+

98%

of care communities
now feature LED lighting

= 8,578MWh

reduction from power grid

That's enough to power

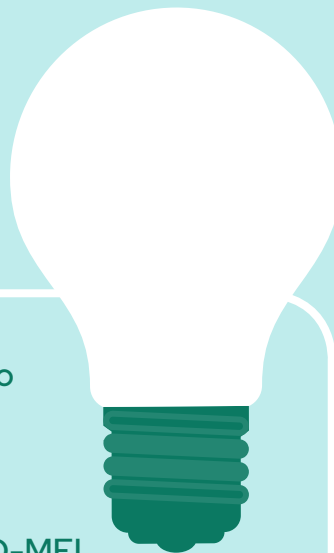
1,475

local households

Or, equivalent in emissions to

40,471

people flying economy SYD-MEL



**3.25
million**

litres of water saved due
to rainwater harvesting



13

green-rated care communities

Reduced environmental
footprint by

↓ 30%

due to solar power

Living spaces that enhance wellbeing

It's the people who live in it that make a house a home. We strive to create homely environments where residents feel safe, included and can express their individuality.

In 2020, as part of our approach to enabling a meaningful life in care for our residents, we focused on enhancing indoor and outdoor living spaces in a number of care communities so that residents can more actively engage in their interests as and when they choose, particularly residents who are living with dementia. This was especially important as COVID restrictions impacted our care communities and residents were not able to have visitors or leave the home for long periods during 2020.

Through close consultation with residents, our team designed and implemented activated spaces that help residents to connect with their identity and find purpose in each day.

Peter lives at Carine Parkside Care Community in Perth. In getting to know Peter, our team learned that he was expert at cultivating bonsai and recognised it was a true passion that he had been missing since moving into care. Our team created a bonsai garden complete with an irrigation system for Peter which he filled with the collection of bonsais that he had been nurturing over many years. His impressive collection is now on display at Carine Parkside and Peter enjoys sharing his passion with friends and residents.

Bathurst Riverview Care Community in regional NSW is home to many people from farming backgrounds who had lived and worked on the land before moving into care. In 2020 our team created a farmyard garden in the grounds to enable residents to stay connected with the habits and routines of a lifetime that provide comfort and purpose. Residents relish the opportunity to hand-feed the poddy lambs three times daily, collect eggs from the chickens, tend to garden beds (which are raised to accommodate wheelchairs) and harvest fruit from the citrus trees.

We now incorporate activated spaces into new developments. Our care communities that opened in 2020 feature purpose-built innovative and memory enhancing spaces, including sewing rooms, libraries, flower workshops, billiards and bar areas, and resident-use kitchens.

Impact

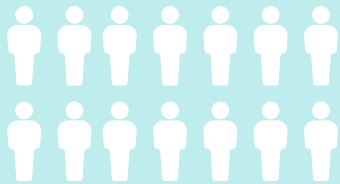
- Improved resident wellbeing through connection to identity, reminiscence and meaningful work
- Improved experience in transitioning from living at home to living in care
- Increased opportunities for socialisation
- Increased time residents spend being active and mobile
- Increased autonomy and self-initiation
- Greater choice in how to spend each day
- More accessible spaces that enable greater inclusion and belonging
- Improved mental health and physical wellbeing
- Welcoming spaces for intergenerational connections





12

major improvement
projects completed



1,035

residents benefitted



State-of-the-art technology helps residents feel safe and secure

Our new care communities, Treeby Parklands, Meadowbank Grove, Wallarah Point and Narrabeen Glades, feature brand new radio frequency identification (RFID) self-locking door systems with wearable technology for the convenient use of residents and team.

It is revolutionising personal safety standards as residents can confidently leave their rooms knowing the door will lock behind them, to be easily reopened using their personal RFID tag.

The system is customisable for each individual. It can be disengaged for residents who may have physical challenges in operating the door, or for those who prefer to leave their door open. It incorporates the highest in fire safety standards and accessibility. Many residents have embraced the technology and value the added level of personal security it provides. Wider consultation with residents and families continues as we look to increase usage in the future.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS,
STRONG COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Intergenerational friendships benefit young and old

After a successful trial in 2019, Annandale Grove Care Community and International Grammar School (IGS) in nearby Ultimo, participated in a unique intergenerational program in 2020. The Seniors & Teens Empathy Program (STEP) is based around the principle of story-sharing. Samantha Heron, program designer and founder of partner social enterprise, Heart and Soul Story, seeks to connect participants across generations to help them explore, share and examine their stories.

The aim was to foster empathy, promote a sense of community, increase resilience and wellbeing and help encourage inspired and soulful lives across generations.

With visitor restrictions due to COVID, the program was facilitated over nine weeks utilising video conferencing systems for the students and residents. Embracing technology was a challenge that everyone, including our elders, enjoyed - many of whom had never used an iPad before. After a few weeks of information sessions to familiarise participants with the virtual technology, the students enjoyed getting to know our residents through a series of introductory conversations, where they quickly found common ground together. Be it through a shared passion for music, travel, animals or history, the bond between students and elders strengthened through

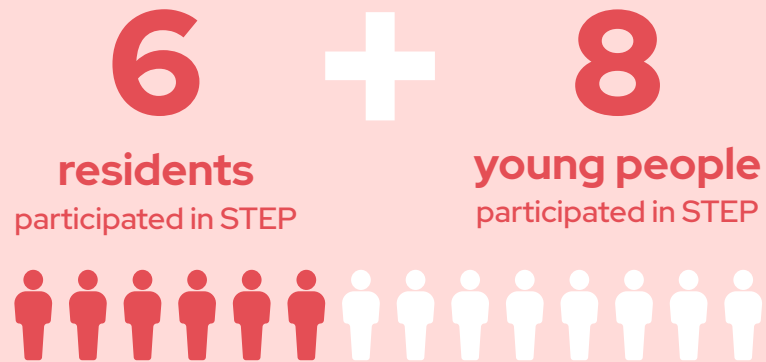
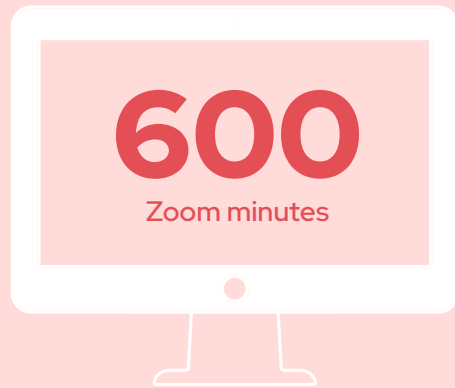
the program, which involved set activities as well as open conversation and storytelling.

The students, their parents, our residents and team joined together virtually to conclude the program with a heartfelt session in which insights were shared and friendships celebrated. Those friendships have continued beyond the structured program with students and residents continuing to connect in their own time.

Due to the success of the STEP program it will be extended to more Opal care communities in 2021.



STEP program



Impact

- Residents' mood improved, and an increased willingness to be involved in other group activities was observed
- 75% of residents surveyed felt more socially connected as a result of being part of the program
- 100% of residents would recommend the program to other residents
- Students reported improved confidence and social skills in talking and connecting with adults
- Students gained knowledge through learning from the personal and lived experience of older Australians

“

“Talking to the residents was a highlight of our year. We are honoured they took the time to talk with us and share their wisdom. We will never forget your beautiful words and we hope to be able to see you in person at some point.”

– Madiba, year 10 student, IGS

“Whilst nothing will ever replace the warmth and comfort of face to face connection, we can now see the incredible potential that technology offers us to bring community back together, allowing the cheek, laughter and joy of youth into our aged care communities.”

– Samantha Heron, Psycho Social Facilitator / Founder Heart and Soul Story

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COMMUNITY BUILDING

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS,
STRONG COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Internships build skills and cultural connection

We are proud of the extraordinary diversity of our residents and team across Opal. We employ a significant number of people from different cultural backgrounds including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as well as migrants and refugees. As part of our training and development pathways, we offer internships in a variety of career streams at our care homes through tertiary education partners and in Home Office.

One of our important partnerships is with CareerTrackers and CareerSeekers. CareerTrackers enables Indigenous Australian students to undertake internships at Opal to gain valuable work experience that supports their tertiary studies, so they graduate from university with a knowledge of what it is like to work in their particular field.

CareerSeekers supports Australia's humanitarian entrants who are attending university or looking to restart their professional career in Australia in a similar way.

Over 4,864 hours of work was offered to CareerTrackers and CareerSeekers interns. We employed eight interns who worked in five different teams for an average of four months.

Our interns bring cultural perspectives to Opal HealthCare which helps to improve our team's cultural competency, and understanding of the practices and beliefs of the cultures that make up our care communities. In turn, we are continually improving the way we care for residents and families from different cultural backgrounds, and the way we provide cultural support for our team. Our interns have assisted in educating and promoting the importance of having a culturally inclusive work and home environment. The shared value for interns is being able to learn and participate in meaningful work that supports their tertiary studies, in a safe and welcoming professional environment.

“

“I joined the Opal HealthCare team as a Communications and Community Engagement Intern. I was welcomed with open arms and have built strong networks, visited a care community, and shared my cultural knowledge. Building my skill set at Opal is giving me valuable experience and has opened my eyes to the importance of aged care in society.”

– Kim, 2020 CareerTrackers Intern

”

Impact

For Opal communities

- Increased cultural understanding among Opal team
- Increased understanding of the cultural backgrounds, practices and beliefs of residents and families
- Improved experience for people from Indigenous backgrounds in our care

For interns

- Practical application of academic knowledge
- Learning transferable skills
- Increased understanding of ageing and aged care
- Improved confidence and skills
- Exposure to workplace mentors
- Ability to grow professional networks
- Ability to contribute to building cultural respect and knowledge in the workplace

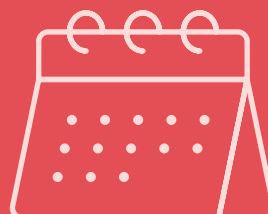
CareerTrackers and CareerSeekers



4,864
internship hours offered



8
interns



4 months
per internship

Areas of work



Communications and community engagement, clinical services, people & culture, finance, customer experience, on-site care community team

Cultural groups represented by interns

CareerTrackers

- Gadigal People of the Eora Nation
- Wiradjuri
- Kalkadoon
- Dharug

CareerSeekers

- Iraqi peoples



COMMUNITY BUILDING

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS,
STRONG COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Resident-led community giving



We understand that when a person moves into residential aged care, their ability to continue to contribute to others and to society benefits their wellbeing.

We also recognise the importance of residents remaining strongly connected to their local community. With a variety of skills and driven by a sense of purpose, many residents actively seek opportunities to engage with different organisations, charities and local businesses in order to support society.

Residents and team in our care communities regularly engage in different ways with charitable organisations, for example donating home-made baked goods, potted plants, knitwear and craft items that can be used and enjoyed by others.

Across our homes, residents have a variety of organisations and charities they choose

to support. Our team endeavour to provide the resources residents need to undertake their initiatives. Knitting is immensely popular, and thousands of beautifully crafted items have been donated to others over the years through our care communities.

Residents at Kirra Beach Care Community have been knitting beanies for premature babies at the Mater Mother's Hospital in Brisbane since 2012. Team members and families donate the wool and additional wool is purchased when needed. Residents have knitted 6,000 beanies in the past nine years, of which 320 were made in 2020. Residents find meaning and purpose in contributing to the community. With strong social networks and a desire to give back, our residents play a valuable role in supporting the wider community.

Impact

Supporting local communities through charitable giving promotes pride, unity and a sense of fulfilment among residents.

- Satisfaction of setting and achieving personal and shared goals
- Improved mental and physical wellbeing
- Greater socialisation
- Reduced isolation and loneliness
- Improved community connections
- Increased social support for local community





80

care communities involved
in community giving

174

charitable giving
events across Opal

73

organisations or
causes supported

Job creation in community

Through opening six new and redeveloped care communities in three states in 2020, Opal HealthCare provided over 1,125 new jobs in regional and metro centres. These opportunities included construction roles, and Opal team roles including nursing, maintenance, administration, general services, lifestyle and management.

As these new homes fill, further employment opportunities become available, contributing significantly to economic development, health and wellbeing in those regions.



Skills training and development

Lateef Subhani moved from India to regional NSW with a desire to further his education, improve his English and work in nursing. Having considered working in a hospital, Lateef instead chose a role as Assistant in Nursing at Narrandera Homestead Care Community.

With the support of the General Manager and team, Lateef worked and studied hard, progressing to Enrolled Nurse and then to Registered Nurse. Lateef says he gains more clinical and social experience in our care home than he would have in any hospital. Vicki Hopper, General Manager at



Narrandera Homestead says, "Everyone deserves equal opportunity. If people have the will and compassion for a career in care, they should be given a chance, regardless of their background, language skill and education. We look after and support our community and we value diversity."

PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING

ADVOCACY AND HELPING OLDER AUSTRALIANS
FIND AND RAISE THEIR OWN VOICE



Maintaining independence through work

At Opal we are advocates for the people in our care. Older Australians should be able to contribute their skills, experience and wisdom to society as they age.

People actively seek meaning and purpose in their lives in order to enrich and fulfil their sense of self, and meaningfulness has been positioned as a fundamental psychological need that strengthens an individual's self-worth and life experience. When individuals are pursuing a profound purpose or engaging in work that is personally important, they experience significant positive effects.

Opal's Helping Hands program enables residents to engage in meaningful work in their care community doing jobs which enhance their wellbeing and challenge perceptions of ageing in society. Many residents relish the opportunity to participate be it folding napkins for meal service, tending the garden, delivering mail to residents, answering telephones at reception, or interviewing candidates for positions in Opal care communities.

In 2020, residents at Narraweena Grove Care Community in Sydney opened the Narraweena Grove General Store. Residents operate the store, from managing the roster of resident volunteers to stock selection, cashier management and stocktaking. It has become a thriving part of life in the home and provides a valuable service for residents.

At Alfred Cove Care Community in Perth, Yvonne, who is 100 years young, provides administrative support to our reception team and phones family members of residents every two months to conduct a customer service and care check.

Neville, at Warrandyte Gardens Care Community in Melbourne, is the resident representative for care team job interviews. He was involved in eight interviews in 2020, explaining roles and responsibilities to prospective Opal employees. He is an integral part of communicating the culture of the care home, giving insight into what great care looks and feels like for residents, and providing vital feedback to the leadership team that informs hiring decisions.

Impact

- Enhances wellbeing, sense of self, independence and connectedness for residents
- Greater satisfaction for families knowing their loved ones have a voice
- Improved experience for residents and their families when transitioning into care (alleviates feelings of loss or isolation)
- Promotes an inclusive and connected culture and provides valuable support to the care community and society
- Challenges negative perceptions of moving loved ones into residential aged care
- Increased community understanding about the value of older Australians in society



Resident-led committees

Ensuring residents have a voice in the way their care home operates is part of our care in all of our homes. Resident-run committees enable residents to take an active role in consultation, influencing and decision-making in the home. At Murdoch Gardens Care Community in Perth, residents meet prior to the release of each new monthly lifestyle program to discuss and provide feedback on planned activities and leisure initiatives. The resident committee will then approve venues, schedules and entertainers. This means residents have agency in the way decisions are made and the services that are available to them.



Teaching culture through art

Annandale Grove Care Community in Sydney is home to people from many diverse cultures. Resident, Aunty Cindy Doolan, found a common interest in artistic endeavours with our care community general manager, Lorenzo. They chose to commemorate NAIDOC week by creating a series of paintings representing the culture, colour and journey of Aboriginal people. Aunty Cindy closely tutored Lorenzo in the art of dot painting and together they created a beautiful collection of artworks which are proudly displayed along a gallery wall in the care community. Cindy found great fulfilment and pride in sharing her culture in this way, and residents and

visitors have gained greater awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal culture through being exposed to her work.



Building a culture of respect for older Australians

As a provider of residential aged care, we believe Opal has a role to play in building a culture of respect for older Australians so that all Australians continue to be valued and included in society as they age.

Qualitative research in Australia shows older people are deeply affected by ageist attitudes. Respect is a key factor in determining quality of life for older people. Those who feel respected as they age tend to have greater life satisfaction, which in turn enhances their sense of usefulness and involvement with their family, community and significant others.

Research has found that older people feel respected when:

- Younger people take time to listen to their stories
- Others seek their counsel
- Their achievements are recognised
- Important milestones are recognised
- They are visible in society

The research also indicated there may be factors that are causing the way respect is

expressed to change. These include smaller families, time pressure, individualism, dual-career marriages, higher incomes of younger people, divorce and separation, along with changes in technology.

At Opal we are using easily accessible digital media technology to share stories of our elders in the wider community via our website and social media channels. Our aim is to build awareness among younger people of the diverse skills, experiences and knowledge of those in our care; to educate people about the ways in which our residents contribute to others in society; to recognise important milestones in the lives of our residents; and to inspire others by sharing stories of our residents' achievements.

Our digital reach and engagement with our residents' stories grew significantly in 2020 with audiences in Australia and overseas, giving voice to our elders in ways that seek to challenge negative attitudes or stereotypes, and build greater understanding across the generations.

We continue to develop our digital capability to enable greater advocacy for and on behalf of our elders.

Impact

- Greater access for society to stories of lived experience for older Australians
- Greater awareness of older Australians living in residential care
- Challenges negative attitudes / stereotyping towards older people
- Contributes to building a culture of positive ageing, where skills, knowledge and experiences of older Australians are valued by younger generations
- Improves wellbeing for older Australians by being a visible, connected part of community

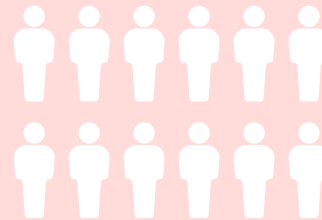


549 stories shared via social media



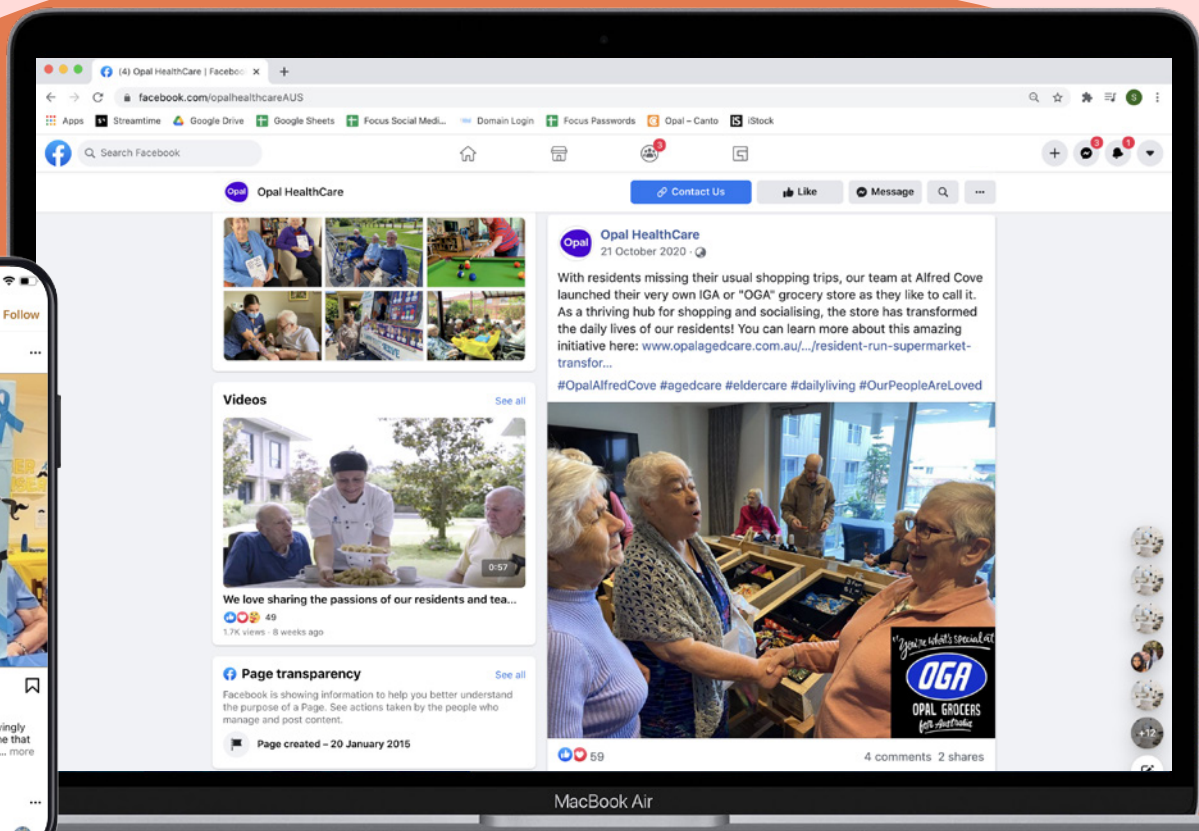
93

stories shared on the Opal website



500K+

people reached via digital channels





Connecting families during COVID

Life as we knew it changed significantly for everyone in 2020 but particularly for residents living in aged care, when extended periods of visitor restrictions impacted their ability to see family and friends and access services such as general practitioners and pastoral care. We accelerated our technology program during COVID to ensure residents and community members could maintain connections in safe and meaningful ways.

340 additional iPads were rolled out across our homes (to augment existing 1,018 iPads) and 558 team members were trained to use applications including Zoom, Skype and FaceTime. Residents embraced the opportunity to learn to use iPads through COVID and have continued to engage in meaningful relationships with the people who are important to them. Families living near or far regularly check in on their loved ones, and our team access medical advice through virtual consultations that are both timely and safe.

These new ways of communicating have become part of life in our homes and are enjoyed by residents, team, families and the wider community.

Savi at Wahroonga Place Care Community in Sydney was thrilled to enjoy quality online conversations with her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren who live in America. Elva at Berkeley Vale Care Community on the NSW Central Coast, has regular family chats via Skype with her daughter, son and great grand-daughter – connecting in three different locations on one call.

Joseph lives at Blacktown Terrace and has always been deeply involved in his parish. Pre-COVID, his church group visited our home to conduct monthly church services for residents. During COVID, Joseph and others watched live services via an iPad connected to a big screen in the lounge room, enabling them to continue to practice their faith and support their wellbeing.



During two COVID outbreaks in Victoria, our team accessed GP consultations via telehealth using iPads. Typically two to three resident consultations were required each week to ensure continuity of care for residents who would normally have seen their doctor in-person.

Impact

- Improved wellbeing for residents
- Improved satisfaction and wellbeing for families
- Reduced loneliness / isolation for residents and families
- Improved access to medical services via telehealth
- Continued access to community services (e.g. churches, interest groups)
- Improved autonomy for residents in connecting with loved ones



727,045

Zoom minutes connecting residents and families

340

additional iPads provided for resident connections

75+

telehealth consultations during lockdowns

558

team members trained to use iPad applications

Opal's learnings help inform national COVID response

Through five COVID outbreaks in Opal care communities, our learnings were shared with local, state and commonwealth health departments to help inform and improve Australia's response to the pandemic. Opal invested time and resources in deeply analysing and applying the healthcare advice provided by government to the particular circumstances of residential aged care. In doing so, we have contributed valuable learnings to health authorities relating to older people living with conditions of ageing, including dementia and various comorbidities, where delivering care during COVID requires specialist skills.

Through COVID we developed and delivered a structured, multifaceted approach to communication to ensure families received information and updates at least daily and often multiple times per day. We fostered deep relationships with supporting organisations, including the Australian Defence Force and local health units. Those enduring partnerships continue to improve care delivery for Opal residents and others living in residential aged care today. Our report, 'Learnings from a COVID Outbreak', which tabled learnings and insights from an outbreak at our Bankstown home in April, was a voluntary submission to the Royal Commission into Quality and Safety in Aged Care's enquiry into COVID. We participated in numerous round table discussions and presented at webinars with health department officials at local, state and commonwealth level. Sharing

Opal's learnings helped to inform and improve the national response to COVID in residential aged care.







We're here to help older Australians and their families every step of the way.

Call 1300 362 481 or visit opalhealthcare.com.au

Ageing is living

