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Opal HealthCare acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

**COVER IMAGE**

Grand-friend Merle’s friendship with her Kinder-friend, Jaxon, has blossomed at Ashmore Gardens Care Community. Read more about their story on page 38.



*Residents at Bankstown Terrace Care Community who live in the memory care neighbourhood enjoy the stimulation and satisfaction of gardening.*





OUR VIOLIN VIRTUOSO

His passion for music has motivated Graham, at Applecross Shore Care Community, to improve his mobility and dexterity.

16



BEAT THE WINTER BLUES

Encouraging our residents to remain active, enjoy the outdoors and have some fun!

22



THE CATS' BIGGEST FAN

Meet Jean, a Geelong Cats' fan for most of her 107 years, flying the winner's flag at Highton Gardens Care Community.

28



GRAND-FRIENDS AND KINDER-FRIENDS UNITE

Ashmore Gardens Care Community's intergenerational program delights young and old alike.

38



MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

STORIES FROM OUR CARE COMMUNITIES

PERSONALISED CARE

- 14 Good medicine – the importance of regular medication reviews
- 16 A violin virtuoso for the ages

HEALTH & WELLBEING

- 20 For the love of food
- 22 Beat the winter blues by staying active

ENJOYMENT

- 26 Gone fishing
- 28 107 reasons why Jean's the Cats' biggest fan
- 30 Life isn't always perfect, but your hair can be

SAFETY & SECURITY

- 34 Feeling at home in a truly global community

LOVING COMMUNITY

- 38 Grand-friends and Kinder-friends unite
- 42 Supporting dementia care in Central West NSW

BEHIND THE SCENES

- 44 Celebrating our nurses on International Nurses Day
- 46 3 questions about – Sustainability

RECIPE

WORDS OF THANKS





Resident Gunther and his mate, Riley, love potting herbs together at Ashmore Gardens Care Community.

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



## Bridging the gap between the young and the young at heart

Paging through this issue of *Opal Moments* I was struck by the many beautiful images of our residents engaged in moments of joy with young people.

Being part of a Care Community means having meaningful connections with others. It's about belonging. We believe that human connection is at the heart of wellbeing and it's truly heart-warming to see relationships between young and old thriving across our Care Communities.

Recently, residents from Rutherford Park Care Community featured in a NBN TV news story about their friendships with children from The Hub Preschool. Each month our residents visit the school and are received by the youngsters with incredible love and excitement! Showing these priceless experiences on TV enables the general public to have a glimpse of the magic we see every day in our Care Communities. It's vital that we find ways like this to help older people remain visible and valued in society.

Similarly, in our feature on page 38, residents from Ashmore Gardens Care Community on the Gold Coast share their delight in friendships with 'kinder-friends' from the local kindy, who benefit from having grandparent figures in their lives.

## A career in aged care has never looked better

It is fitting that International Nurses Day in May was celebrated shortly after the Federal Government's announcement that it would fund a pay increase for more than 250,000 people who work in aged care.

Some months ago, we pledged to pass on the full increase to our eligible team members and we will honour our commitment. While the majority of our team are paid above award wages in order to attract and retain the best people, this increase to the award component will further recognise their service and contribution.

Our focus on finding the right people to work in our Care Communities is unwavering. We are confident that the pay increase will encourage more people to consider a career in aged care.

And a career at Opal HealthCare is supported by our sector-leading Opal HealthCare Academy, which offers structured career pathways, including entry-level training programs, paid scholarships and bespoke leadership and development programs across every aspect of residential aged care. If you, or someone you know, is interested in learning more about a career with us, visit our website: <https://www.opalhealthcare.com.au/careers>

Warm regards

Rachel



# Stories from our Care Communities



## CHISWICK MANOR CARE COMMUNITY NSW

Art is a relaxing activity. It's also a great way to express emotions without words, process complex feelings and find relief. Our resident artists at Chiswick Manor enjoyed this 'life drawing' class even more with a special guest, Sunday the pooch!



## BROADWATER GROVE CARE COMMUNITY QLD

On ANZAC Day we recognised the remarkable service of residents across our Care Communities. At Broadwater Grove, husband and wife, Bill and Val, who both served for Australia, shared fond memories of friends and family. They recalled their frequent train trips from Perth to Kalgoorlie or Port Pirie to Adelaide. Bill remembers them all, including how 'back in the day' his train ticket always included a meal.



## NORAH HEAD CARE COMMUNITY NSW

It's difficult to find a reason to smile after losing a loved one. No one knows that more than our dear resident Bill who recently lost his wife, who lived with him at Norah Head. An avid golfer, our team took Bill for a round of golf to brighten up his day. The smile on his face says it all.



## VARSITY VIEWS CARE COMMUNITY QLD

Our mums at Varsity Views enjoyed a delicious high tea while being serenaded by saxophone on Mother's Day. Each one of our special ladies received Mother's day gifts of perfume, chocolates and pampering treats as part of their 'Adopt a Grandparent' partnership with their local Community and Childcare Centre.



## SALE GARDENS CARE COMMUNITY VIC

Residents at Sale Gardens loved posing for photographs for a unique portrait exhibition titled 'Professions and Interests'. A local photographer captured the beautiful images and our team created a wonderful display, celebrating our residents' backgrounds. Teachers, golfers, receptionists, farmers, Telecom Australia workers, seamstresses, telephonists and more were represented! Opening night was abuzz with champagne and conversations about shared interests and happy memories.



## WARRNAMBOOL RIVERSIDE CARE COMMUNITY VIC

Residents at Warrnambool Riverside hit the 'jack'pot recently, enjoying a beautiful lunch at the Cobden Bowls Club. Their day out on the bus took them through the picturesque Warrnambool countryside, meandering through local towns and stopping at shops along the way, many of which they hadn't visited in years.



STORIES FROM OUR  
CARE COMMUNITIES

ORANGE GROVE CARE  
COMMUNITY NSW

When the weather’s warm, residents at Orange Grove enjoy walks outside taking in the fresh country air. These two romantics stole a kiss, cherishing their love with a red rose.



KILLARNEY VALE  
CARE COMMUNITY NSW

We may all come from different ships, but we’re on the same boat now! Our residents from Killarney Vale spent quality time together aboard the ‘Riverboat Postman’, enjoying a wonderful day out on the Hawkesbury River.



BAIRNSDALE PARKLANDS  
CARE COMMUNITY VIC

Everyone at Bairnsdale Parklands loves Pancake Day! Our residents enjoyed a sweet treat of poffertjes – delicious light and fluffy mini-Dutch pancakes. Big smiles all around!



TREEBY PARKLANDS  
CARE COMMUNITY WA

We pumped up the music at Treeby Parklands and our residents celebrated World Pride 2023 in style! They made their own colourful masks and costumes and paraded through our Care Community, picking up fellow residents from their rooms along the way.

SPRINGWOOD GREENS  
CARE COMMUNITY NSW

Residents at Springwood Greens said a bittersweet farewell to one of our favourite visitors who’s moving to Tasmania. Seven-year-old Violet became part of the rhythm of our Care Community, dropping in a few times a week after school. She’s loved teaching residents new games and developing meaningful friendships.







## Personalised Care

We discuss the importance of regular medication reviews to support person-centred care. And we recognise the esteemed musical career of Graham, resident violinist at Applecross Shore Care Community.

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# Good medicine

## The importance of regular medication reviews

As we get older, we may find ourselves progressively taking more medications to manage various health conditions. And as our bodies change we may become more sensitive to different medicines. That’s why regular medicine reviews are a good idea.

About two-thirds of Australians aged 75 years and over are taking five or more medicines, including over the counter and complementary medicines.

‘Polypharmacy’ is a term commonly used in aged care because older people often have several chronic conditions requiring multiple medicines to prevent or control symptoms. It’s defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as the concurrent use of five or more medicines<sup>1</sup>.

Taking medications as prescribed by a healthcare provider is essential for maintaining good health, but a regular review helps to understand whether all these medications are still necessary.

### Why reviews matter

Clair Ramsden, Opal HealthCare’s Director of Clinical Services, explains the importance of medication safety for older people, and that risks associated with medicines increase as we age.

*“Our bodies change in many ways as we age, and some health conditions also create further changes in our body,” says Clair.*

*“People can become more sensitive to the effects of medicine, and in some cases, become more prone to side effects and medicine interactions.”*

People taking five or more medicines daily can be twice as likely to experience side effects compared to other people. They’re also more likely to be taking medicines that could interact with each other<sup>2</sup>.

### Asking for a medicines review

Reducing the risk of harms from polypharmacy in older people requires a collaborative approach. At Opal HealthCare we use a variety of strategies and interventions to support appropriate medicines use.

*“A resident’s doctor might have already considered their age and increased risk of side effects or interactions, but it’s worth considering asking some important questions,” Clair says.*

*“For example:*

- Why do they need to take this medicine?*
- Are there side effects and what should they do if they notice any side effects or symptoms?*
- Does this medication interact with their other medicines, both prescription and non-prescription?*
- Is there a way to reduce the number of medicines they’re taking?”*



In our Care Communities, we recommend reviewing medicines every six to 12 months, but Clair says a medication review can be requested by a resident or their representative at any time, especially when changes are made, including starting new or stopping medicines.

*“The review gives the resident or their representative the opportunity to ask our care team, the GP and/or pharmacist about their medicines and how to manage them well,” she says.*

*“Their doctor will use the results of the review to develop a medication management plan with the resident.”*

### Making a difference for John

John\* lives at Katoomba Views Care Community. With a diagnosis of dementia and Parkinson’s disease, John was taking nine different medications every day. He often appeared drowsy and was increasingly susceptible to falls.

Our team requested a Resident Medication Management Review (RMMR) with John’s GP and pharmacist. We discovered that a couple of his medications were interacting with his Parkinson’s medications, causing him to be drowsy and to experience poor balance. A decision was made immediately to deprescribe some of his medication that was no longer necessary.

Care Manager, Rossini, says following the review John is more alert and participates in more activities around the Care Community.

*“John now walks well and with purpose around Katoomba Views interacting with other residents and our new dogs Bluey and Andre,” she says.*

*“He also enjoys quiet activities. John was a mechanic and he loves tinkering with a switchboard, hinge and lock.”*

Making time to observe the tiny details of John’s behaviour, and taking action to review his medication program has made all the difference.

It’s important to remember that taking medications as prescribed by a healthcare provider is essential for maintaining good health, but it’s always a good idea to discuss any concerns or questions straight away.

For more information, talk with your Care Community Care Manager, doctor or pharmacist.

\*This case study shares the lived experience of a resident and the name has been changed to protect privacy.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, ‘Polypharmacy, 75 years and over’, accessed on 11 April 2023, [https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-04/fourth\\_atlas\\_2021\\_-\\_6.1\\_polypharmacy\\_75\\_years\\_and\\_over.pdf](https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-04/fourth_atlas_2021_-_6.1_polypharmacy_75_years_and_over.pdf)  
<sup>2</sup> Healthdirect website, ‘Medication safety for older people’, accessed on 11 April 2023, <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/medication-safety-for-older-people>



# A VIOLIN VIRTUOSO FOR THE AGES

Graham watches the strings section in the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO) as the violinists raise their bows and begin to play. It's classical music, his favourite.

It's a weekday morning at Applecross Shore Care Community. Graham is thrilled to have the orchestra members visit in person. With over 50 years' experience as a professional musician, Graham knows what he's listening to. In fact, he's taught most of the players in the WASO quartet. His eyes glisten with pride and pleasure.

Some hours later Graham is still overcome with emotion.

*"Oh, it was wonderful," Graham says. "Two of the group were violinists and were my students. I almost had a tear in my eye listening to them. It was that good!"*

## A lifetime devoted to music

Graham's love of music began as a young man. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Music at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. Soon after, he joined the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra as a violinist.

*"I enjoy playing the violin and making music," Graham says. "...Even if it's music written for some other player or composer."*

Graham later travelled to London to study with the great Frederick Grinke, a violinist world famous for his performances of 20th-century English music. In London, Graham played at Covent Garden with the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House and later the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

In 1957, Graham married his beloved Patricia, a lady who hailed from Perth, Western Australia. Patricia was keen to return home and Graham gladly followed. He joined WASO as a soloist and stayed with them for 15 years.

## An enthusiastic teacher

Graham's passion for music inspired him to share it with others. In 1972, he began teaching at the School of Music at the University of WA.

Graham later founded the first West Australian Youth Orchestra.

Among a list of achievements too extensive to include here, special mention should be made of his 'Distinguished Service Award' from the Australian Strings Association in 2003.

## Regaining dexterity

When Graham moved in, our team at Applecross Shore Care Community recognised how much his passion for music brings meaning to his life. But with his dexterity diminishing, Graham was struggling with no longer being able to play the violin.

Lifestyle Coordinator, Rebecca, encouraged him to engage with our team at Applecross Shore's Wellness Centre.

*"As people age, they often experience physical and emotional effects resulting from illness, injury or loss of ability," says Rebecca.*

*"Our wellness centre supports reablement, rehabilitation and restoration by improving mobility and motor skills. Our goal is to improve quality of life, emotional and physical wellbeing, and promote independence."*

*"We're encouraging Graham to try regular exercises to improve the dexterity in his hands. We're hoping, in time, that he might be able to play a little again. He's already improved enough to be able to hold his violin to his chin."*

As Graham works on lifting his bow once again, he takes comfort in listening to his beloved music. Be it teaching, lecturing, performing, composing or conducting, the violin will always be his life's work.



# Health & Wellbeing

We explore the joy of food in our Care Communities and how good nutrition supports physical and mental health. And we head outdoors to help residents keep their spirits up through the cool months of winter.





# FOR THE LOVE OF FOOD

Food is one of the great pleasures in life. It can be an expression of love. A point of connection. A celebration of culture. For residents living in our Care Communities, mealtimes are a daily highlight – so we strive to make our dining experience both nutritious and enjoyable.

A healthy diet is essential at any age, but can be especially challenging as people age.

*"As we get older, our sense of taste and smell can deteriorate," says Stephanie Hechenberger, Head of Operational Excellence at Opal HealthCare. "Some studies estimate that over 75% of our sense of taste is linked to our sense of smell. This can have a significant impact on our perception of flavour."*

Appetite can also decrease with age, just at a time when our bodies need more nutrients. Along with physical activity, a well-balanced diet with the right amount of food intake can help people maintain their independence and a positive outlook on life.

*"Our requirements for protein, calcium, vitamin D, vitamin B6 and riboflavin increase," Stephanie says. "Good nutrition helps boost immunity, fight illness-causing toxins, and reduce the risk of various health conditions. And when your body feels good, you feel happier inside and out."*

## Supporting our residents to eat and live well

At Opal HealthCare, we believe a healthy diet includes enjoying fresh, tasty food, wholesome ingredients, and eating in the company of friends and family.

Each Care Community has a dedicated and qualified chef who, together with our resident food committees, creates seasonal menus based on residents' preferences, ideas and recommendations. Our menus and food preparation also consider:

- **Food texture** – for some residents, especially those who have difficulty swallowing, texture is an important part of their enjoyment of food
- **Serving temperature** – has a significant impact on the dining experience, particularly when eating smooth foods, like souffle or icecream, which are best served nice and hot or very cold



- **Dialling up flavours and enjoyable aromas** – salty, sweet and umami flavours can make meals more enjoyable, especially as the senses, including taste and smell, can dull as we age

Sometimes it takes encouragement for residents to be interested in eating, so our team enable residents to participate in the food experience in different ways – such as tending edible gardens where produce goes into resident meals, assisting with food preparation or setting tables in the dining room, and participating in the resident food committee so that individual tastes are catered for in our menus.

Learn more about our food and dining experience at <https://www.opalhealthcare.com.au/care-communities/life-in-our-homes/dining>

## Pota cooks up a storm

For many people moving into care, having meals and snacks prepared for them can be a welcome reprieve from shopping and cooking. For others, like Pota, who lives at Stanmore Place Care Community, it can feel like a loss of independence.

General Manager, Ranjit, and his team recognised Pota's passion for food and encouraged her to start cooking meals for herself and a few lucky extras!

*"Cooking has been a large part of Pota's life," Ranjit says. "She's a very independent person."*

Ranjit takes Pota to their local butcher to shop for meat, and our team encourages her to plant herbs and vegetables in the garden.

*"She's cooked spaghetti with lamb," Ranjit says. "It was delicious! And the smells made everyone's mouth water."*





# BEAT THE WINTER BLUES BY STAYING ACTIVE

Not so keen to get outside and exercise in the cooler months? You're not alone. For many of us as the winter chill sets in and the sun fades behind clouds, we retreat to warmth and comfort indoors. But encouraging a few simple habits helps our residents to get outdoors and have fun while they're at it.

## Health & Wellbeing

Even when it's cold, spending time being active outdoors is an effective way to boost physical and mental health at any age. It's true that people who spend time outdoors often experience less depression and anxiety<sup>1</sup>. That's because the natural environment provides a calming effect, reducing stress and anxiety levels. Fresh air, greenery and sunshine are mood boosters. They're known to increase feelings of happiness. To help feel more grounded and centred. To focus on the present and let go of worries or concerns about the future.

For our residents, spending time outdoors can be an excellent way to:

- maintain balance and flexibility
- reduce the risk of falls and injuries
- absorb vitamin D
- connect with others in a social setting
- build friendships with fellow residents

In older people particularly, a little exercise goes a long way. Some of the many ways our team encourage our residents to exercise outdoors include:

### Walking

It's low impact and excellent for mobility. A stroll around the garden or down the street offers mental stimulation, physical benefits and a sense of agency.

Residents and team at Bairnsdale Parklands Care Community in Victoria took this to the next level, forming a team for the 'Relay for Life', a local event raising funds for the Cancer Council.

Lifestyle Coordinator, Caroline, says together our residents, team, family and friends completed every lap of the course and raised \$450 in the process.

*"It was an amazing day," says Caroline. "A great opportunity to get everyone walking and raise money for a good cause. Our residents had such a great time they're getting ready to do it again next year."*

<sup>1</sup> University of Minnesota, 'How Does Nature Impact Our Wellbeing?', Taking Charge of Your Health and Wellbeing website, accessed on 10 May 2023, <https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/how-does-nature-impact-our-wellbeing#:~:text=In%20one%20study%20in%20Mind,to%20more%20calm%20and%20balanced>

### Gardening

A favourite pastime for many residents – it's also one of the best ways for older people to stay active. While some don't think of gardening as exercise, it's an effective way to maintain strength and dexterity, while incorporating light aerobic activity in daily life.

At Katoomba Views Care Community in NSW, Lifestyle Coordinator, Kerry-Anne says our residents have been lovingly adding new herbs and flowers to their garden.

*"We've just installed new raised garden beds making it easier for residents to garden without having to bend down," she says. "And we've brought in some gardening experts to educate us on different types of plants."*

### Hanging out al fresco

Sharing a meal or playing a game outside with friends can be a great pick me up. For residents, a change of scene often creates a sense of 'going out' in the community, especially those with restricted mobility. And a healthy dose of vitamin D does wonders for morale.

Bankstown Terrace Care Community's bubble machine is a hit with young and old alike. A simple way to give everyone a laugh while enjoying fresh air outside.

### Exploring the old and the new

Bus trips offer the anticipation of going somewhere new or different, and the physical stimulation of going out – both powerful motivators to get up and about. Our Opal HealthCare buses are modified for our residents' needs so they can enjoy an excursion in comfort and with carers on hand.

For residents at Springwood Terrace Care Community in Queensland, Tygum Park in Waterford is a popular destination. Lifestyle Coordinator, Deborah, says they love going there for morning tea.

*"Our residents are in awe of the wildlife. Last time we watched a flock of cockatoos flying around, and the curious water hens coming to see what we were doing. The smiles on residents' faces speak louder than words!"*

If you'd like to discuss exercise or wellbeing plans for you or a loved one living in our care, contact your local Care Community.





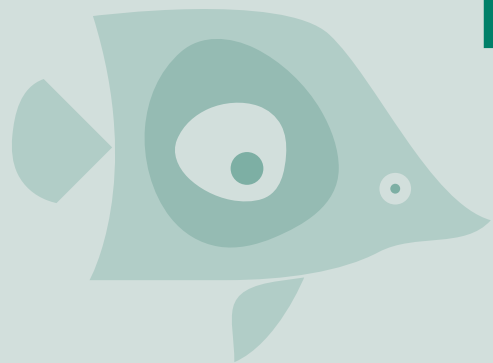
## Enjoyment

We travel to Victoria to learn more about our residents' favourite pursuits, like fishing in Gippsland, and we meet a very special Geelong Cats fan. We also visit Janice at North Lakes Terrace in Queensland, who's involvement in our Helping Hands program is making a difference for new residents moving into care.

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# Gone fishing



A shark glides by right in front of their noses, stealthily stalking its prey. Rows of sharp teeth flash before their eyes and the group are mesmerised. A brush with deep water destiny? Or just another exciting under-sea experience at Paynesville Gardens Care Community?

The Underwater Adventure show is the brainchild of local Gippsland business Submerged Entertainment Australia. Each week, they livestream to Paynesville Gardens, so residents can watch real time footage of divers exploring waterways anywhere from the Gippsland lakes to Sydney Harbour.

Residents learn from the comfort of their armchair, as divers explore marine life, sea wrecks and other mysterious items left in the watery depths. Because it's livestreamed, residents can use a live chat option to submit questions to the team in the broadcasting studio or ask the divers to swim over and investigate a particular fish of interest.

## Creating a space for learning and relaxation

Claire, Lifestyle Coordinator at Paynesville Gardens Care Community, says the program offers residents a wonderful opportunity to explore and learn more about life underwater. It's a fun way for residents to connect with each other through a shared learning experience. And, spending time watching fish and other sea creatures swim by creates a fascinating and relaxing atmosphere.

*"Many of our residents are from the local area and grew up near the lakes, fishing and enjoying the water," says Claire.*

*"The Underwater Adventure program gives them an opportunity to relive those days.*

*"The divers explore different waterways. They recently shared vision of the seahorse colony in Paynesville, and sometimes they go on treasure hunts. One time they found a bottle from the 1800s and brought it back to our Care Community to show our residents."*



## Making friends

Ian lives at Paynesville Gardens Care Community and was always an avid fisherman. He loves spending time with his fellow residents watching the divers explore.

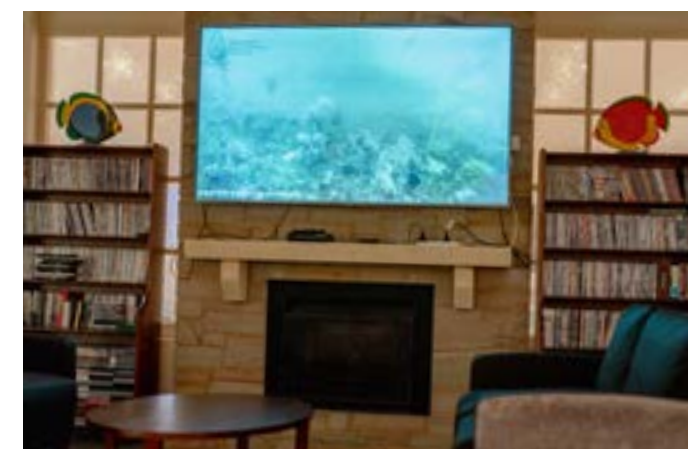
*"I enjoy learning about the different kinds of creatures living in our waterways," he says.*

*"It's definitely a great conversation starter. The group's getting bigger each week and more people are coming along to see what's happening.*

*"We love to reminisce a bit about fishing trips. Sometimes we're asked what kind of fish we're looking at, so that encourages more conversation, with team and other residents having a guess at the type of fish."*

After each session, you can guarantee there'll be a couple of 'old fisherman' talking about the fish they caught way back when, and wondering what the next undersea adventure will reveal.

In a hamlet like Paynesville, which owes its prosperity to the lakes and waterways, continuing to enjoy its natural beauty and wonders brings great pleasure to our residents.





# 107 REASONS WHY JEAN'S THE CATS' BIGGEST FAN!

Footy scarf on. Banner raised high. Jean watches the Geelong Cats take a mark and kick the winning goal for the 2022 Australian Football League (AFL) Grand Final. Her beloved blue and whites are victorious and she couldn't be happier.



These days, Jean doesn't make the trek to the MCG, but our team at Highton Gardens Care Community in Geelong, Victoria, have brought the game to her.

## Aussie Rules for Jean

Over 8.9 million Australians support an AFL club. For many Australians it's a true passion, but few can claim Jean's unwavering dedication. She's been a firm fan for most of her 107 years. Raised by a footy mad father, Jean's been cheering on the Cats for over a century!

*"I still remember my first ever game and the excitement I had,"* Jean says.

*"Growing up, my father worked on the railways. I remember we would pack sandwiches and a thermos and go to the football with the family – my mother, father and two sisters,"* Jean says.

She's watched thousands of players over the years but when it comes to her favourite, she's clear. It's 'God'.

*"Gary Ablett Snr,"* says Jean without hesitation. *"Great player and sportsman."*

## Celebrating milestones

In honour of our many Cats fans at Highton Gardens Care Community, the club recently brought the AFL Premiership Cup to visit our residents. A television news crew from Channel 7 came along to film Jean and her friends admire the trophy.

The visit preceded Jean's 107th birthday, so our team gifted her a very special surprise – a Geelong Cats guernsey with the number 107 on the back.

Wrapped in her Geelong Cats scarf and wearing her new footy gear, Jean held the cup with pride. She counts the win and the visit among her best memories.

*"It was such a proud moment in my life,"* Jean says.

*"To be part of and to watch Geelong win the Premiership Cup in 2022 was fantastic. The things that bring meaning and purpose to my life are being with my family... and football!"*





# Life isn't always perfect, but your hair can be.

Great hair doesn't happen by chance, it happens by appointment. That feeling of freshly washed hair and a fantastic blow-dry never fails to lift the spirits. Add a nice hot cuppa and it's heaven! Supporting our residents to look and feel their best is an important part of a meaningful and enjoyable life.

Janice lives at North Lakes Terrace Care Community. She's a big believer in looking and feeling your best, and she runs a tight ship! As Janice looks through the day's schedule for her Care Community's Hair Salon, she identifies which of her fellow residents will need a reminder and some help walking to the Salon.

## Helping Hands in our Care Communities

Janice is one of our beloved 'Helping Hands', who volunteer across a range of areas within our Care Communities. The program supports and encourages residents to engage in meaningful work in their Care Community. Performing jobs that are meaningful enhances a person's wellbeing and challenges perceptions of ageing in society.

Janice volunteers at the Hair Salon on Wednesdays and Fridays, tidying up and cleaning, as well as escorting residents to and from their room for their appointment.

## An advocate for North Lakes Terrace

General Manager, Kamal, says Janice is a valued advocate for residents at North Lakes Terrace. Supporting them, whether they're new or have lived there for some time, brings Janice much joy.

*"Janice and her husband Barry have lived with us for over two years and recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary," says Kamal.*

*"Janice is also a member of our resident food focus group, providing us great feedback and advice on how other residents feel about the menu – and what they'd like to try next.*

*"She's the first one to welcome new residents to our Care Community – she really 'sells' the place!"*

## Sharing her experiences

Janice recently participated in a presentation to new residents and families, sharing her wisdom and experiences about moving into aged care. She knows how emotional it can be for families to help their loved one make the transition, but she also believes it's an opportunity to find new sources of enjoyment.

*"I see folk change when they move into North Lakes Terrace Care Community. Smiling eyes...happy smiles... which brings contentment to them and their families," she says.*

*"Attitude, perception and acceptance, to me, is the formula to life and living, and that happens here.*

*"It's comforting to see that folk here, who have lived, served, loved and been loved are treated with due respect, dignity and courtesy in their ageing years."*

And with Janice's help, their hair looks fabulous too.



# Safety & Security

Bankstown Terrace Care Community in NSW is thriving with multicultural people and interests. Learn how our team supports and celebrates our residents' cultural backgrounds to provide person-centred care.







# FEELING AT HOME IN A TRULY GLOBAL COMMUNITY

## Safety & Security

Lydia shuffles the mah-jong tiles, carefully explaining the meaning of each tile – north, south, east and west – to her fellow players. With a cheeky glint in her eye, and a flutter of her red fan, she picks up their 'mistakes' and encourages them to make a different 'move.'

Lydia's in her element, sharing a game she's loved since her childhood living in China, with her friends at Bankstown Terrace Care Community.

### A sense of belonging

It's estimated by 2026, one in every four people aged 80 years and over will be from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background<sup>1</sup>.

At Opal HealthCare, 39 different languages are spoken by residents and team, indicative of our many and varied life experiences. We recognise that having knowledge of and respecting our residents' cultural background is crucial to providing person-centred care.

Donna, General Manager at Bankstown Terrace Care Community, explains how our team works with each resident to understand their specific cultural, spiritual, social, dietary and linguistic needs.

*"We spend time with each resident to understand their personal story and background, their likes and dislikes, and what makes them uniquely themselves," Donna says.*

*"Focusing on these details is particularly important when caring for residents who come from a CALD background. They may gradually forget English, which is often a second language, and revert to their 'mother tongue.' We try to learn about each resident's beliefs and values, and support them to access cultural events, celebrations and connect with people who share their cultural background."*

### Celebrating cultural events

Celebrating cultural holidays is part of the rhythm of life at Bankstown Terrace.

*"We celebrate Greek Easter, Macedonian Easter, Chinese New Year, Italian Day to mention a few," Donna says. "If it matters to our residents, it matters to us. We try and find a way to celebrate that special event with everyone in our Care Community."*

### Food that tastes like home

When residents have specific dietary requirements or preferences because of their religious or cultural background, our team strives to accommodate their individual needs.

Chef Sujit enjoys cooking a broad range of cultural cuisine, be it a flavoursome curry, a tasty moussaka or a tray of lamingtons. Tuesdays and Thursdays are vegetarian days in acknowledgement of our residents with a Hindi background. Our resident 'food focus group' works with Chef to agree each season's menu.

### Lifestyle activities promote understanding and inclusion

Living well means being able to take part in hobbies or interests of a lifetime. At Bankstown Terrace, lifestyle activities reflect those different interests. On the day we visit, there's a tai chi session underway. The Care Community choir is rehearsing. And Lydia's mah-jong game is in full flow.

Lydia reminds us that our residents are all part of one eclectic and loving Care Community.

*"It makes me feel good to share my culture with my friends," she says. "I am interested in all international people!"*

<sup>1</sup> Australian Government Productivity Commission, 'Caring for Older Australians', accessed on 5 May 2023, <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/aged-care/submissions/sub360.pdf>





## Loving Community

We share a heart-warming story from Ashmore Gardens Care Community where Grand-friends and Kinder-friends are building beautiful bonds of friendship. And we bring Dementia Care Connections to Dubbo in NSW, supporting carers, families and clinicians in the Central West with a community workshop on dementia care.

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# GRAND-FRIENDS AND KINDER-FRIENDS UNITE

Human connection is at the heart of wellbeing. Nowhere is that more evident than in the friendships blossoming between young and old at Ashmore Gardens Care Community.

Strong ties with family, friends and the community promote happiness, security, belonging and a sense of purpose. They help us build our sense of identity and learn skills necessary to thrive.

At Ashmore Gardens Care Community on the Gold Coast in Queensland, our team and residents are involved in a special intergenerational program. Informed by principles developed by the Australian Institute for Intergenerational Practice, it brings together residents as 'Grand-friends', and children as 'Kinder-friends', from local childcare centre, Enrich Early Education.

Evidenced by research, it's an opportunity for both groups to interact, stimulate and learn from each other, build awareness and understanding between generations – and in doing so, form meaningful relationships.<sup>1</sup>

Krissie, Lifestyle Officer at Ashmore Gardens, says the benefits were evident immediately.

*"Our residents look forward to the children's arrival. When the kids come in you can just feel the energy lift," says Krissie. "And the children enjoy spending one-on-one time with their Grand-friend, sharing morning tea, or taking part in an activity."*

## Promoting socialisation

When people of different ages socialise and interact with one another, feelings of social isolation or loneliness lessen.

Resident, Merle, enjoys everything about the program. *"It's lovely to engage with the children doing different activities,"* Merle says.

*"They can be so creative! I have grandchildren and great grandchildren myself, so being around children regularly is a highlight. I'm busy making each child a little knitted finger puppet to give them at the end of the year."*

<sup>1</sup> Giraudeau & Bailly (2019), Intergenerational programs: What can school-age children and older people expect from them? A systematic review, National Library of Medicine, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31543729/>



Encouraging learning

For children and youth it’s an environment for learning that cannot be replicated in the classroom.

Our team seeks feedback from everyone involved each week. What did they like? What didn’t they like? And residents are encouraged to volunteer something they’d like to teach the children.

So far residents have taught them how to cook gnocchi, plant basil in the garden, how to mix colours for painting and of course, singing.

Resident Bob loves to sing.

*“It’s magnificent being included in this program and I really enjoy singing with them,” Bob says. “I like to bring things to show and tell, and the children ask me questions about it.”*

Increasing empathy and understanding

Breaking down stereotypes and promoting respect for diversity helps grow healthy minds, regardless of age.

Each week, our merry group enjoys morning tea together. Grand-friends share fruit platters. Kinder-friends bring biscuits which they politely serve their Grand-friend. It’s an opportunity to connect over delicious food and pick up a few table manners as well!

Resident Angela is always enthusiastic .

*“The children are so lovely to me,” Angela says. “I especially like it when we eat together. It’s a special occasion.”*



Improving health outcomes

Krissie monitors each resident’s overall wellbeing throughout the program. So we know that hanging out with the kids is both fun and beneficial for their health.

*“At the beginning and conclusion of the program, I ask each resident to complete a Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS),” says Krissy.*

*“This self-assessment tool is made up of 42 items to be completed over five to 10 minutes, each reflecting a negative emotional symptom. The main purpose of the DASS is to isolate and identify aspects of emotional disturbance, for example, to assess the degree of severity of the core symptoms of depression, anxiety, or stress.*

*“Since starting the program, we’ve seen marked improvements across the board for all our residents. And if they miss out because of illness, they’re so disappointed.*

*“They love talking about it with their friends which has led to more residents joining in. They’re a part of our Care Community, and they’re an integral part of our broader community.”*

A parent’s perspective

Rhiannon’s daughter joined the program in 2022.

*“The intergenerational connection has been amazing. From the very first day, Imogen came home and told us about her new best friend, Gunther, and how funny he is.*

*“She looked forward to visiting him with her daycare every week and constantly asked “do I see my Grand-friend today? Is it Gunther day?”*

*“She adored all of the Grand-friends but Gunther really stood out for Imogen. She loved his walker and his accent and just being around him – and we soon heard feedback that the feeling was mutual.*

*“With Imogen changing schools this year, she was very upset at never seeing Gunther again, so now we visit in our own time, separate from the daycare visits. Gunther has met everyone in the family – mum, dad and our son!*

*“Watching Imogen light up when she sees Gunther, and how happy he gets when he realises who she is, is just beautiful to watch.”*



# SUPPORTING DEMENTIA CARE IN CENTRAL WEST NSW

## Opal HealthCare's Dementia Care Connections comes to Dubbo

Clinicians, carers and health professionals from Dubbo and the Central West of NSW came together to learn more about dementia at an Opal HealthCare Dementia Care Connections workshop in May.

It followed a sold-out concert by Dubbo's remarkable Sing Out Choir – an all-inclusive choir which uses the power of music to support and enable people living with dementia.

The free workshop was led by Simon Pedzisi, Opal HealthCare's Head of Dementia Care, and focused on:

- Psychosocial impacts of dementia
- Nursing and clinical factors
- Impact on wellbeing
- A person-centred approach to dementia care

*"The workshop was excellent. Just amazing. I learnt so much about dementia, about what I had thought were 'aggressive behaviours' but now I know how to deal with it."*

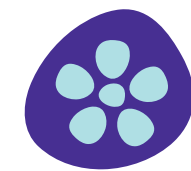
Jillian

### Five takeaways to support a loved one with dementia:

1. The average length of stay for a person living in residential aged care is 1,000 days, and even though there is no cure, we can reduce the impact of dementia through a **Person-Centred Care approach**.
2. Disorientation is a common symptom of dementia. By understanding more about a person's life history we can make adaptations to their environment, routine, care plan and the way we engage with them, to improve their wellbeing and alleviate distress caused by disorientation.
3. Changed behaviours are a way that individuals living with dementia communicate their needs.
4. Adapting the environment (physical, social, and/or emotional) can improve an individual's ability to cope with dementia.
5. Changing our approach and communication can improve the way we can connect with someone living with dementia. Using compassionate language, rather than labels like 'aggression' or 'being difficult', enables us to consider what's causing the distress.

*"To be honest, I came to today thinking I wouldn't learn anything but it was brilliant! This has reignited my passion and drive to innovate and improve things for people living with dementia."*

Rusan



### Dementia Care Connections

**Dementia Care Connections** is a community outreach program Opal HealthCare provides free of charge to people living, or caring for someone, with dementia. We run regular webinars and in-person sessions facilitated by experts in dementia from Opal HealthCare.

For information about person-centred care, including case studies from our Care Communities, visit our website <https://www.opalhealthcare.com.au/aged-care-explained/dementia-care>

For upcoming Dementia Care Connections events, please email [communications@opalhealthcare.com.au](mailto:communications@opalhealthcare.com.au)

*"It was brilliant! I've come from the palliative care sector and I've had my father at home. As a family this session's really made me rethink my approach when it comes to dementia care."*

Jane







# Celebrating our nurses on International Nurses Day

*“Nursing and caring is a vocational role – for those who are called to be among the most important ‘protectors’ in our society. Those who care and support, who tend and treat people at their most vulnerable.*

*“Society and the cohesion of communities depends on these roles of responsibility – which hold us together and remind us of what is important: People. People are what matter and always will be.”*

Rachel Argaman, Opal HealthCare CEO



International Nurses Day was an opportunity to pause, recognise and thank our 1,800 nurses across Opal HealthCare. For their care and compassion. For bringing our purpose and values to life every day. For truly making a difference in the lives of our residents, their families and the community.

We celebrated with cupcakes and a cuppa across our Care Communities, taking a moment to reflect on the extraordinary contribution nurses make to our residents and in society.

The theme for International Nurses Day in 2023 was ‘Our Nurses. Our Future’, bringing to light the significance of the role of the nursing profession in our ever-changing world.

## Nursing careers at Opal HealthCare

A career in nursing at Opal HealthCare comes with training and development programs designed to help our nurses expand their knowledge, skills and practical experience so they can truly succeed.

We offer bespoke learning programs in partnership with our tertiary education partners, including the University of Wollongong, Western Sydney University, Torrens University Australia, University of Tasmania, University of Sydney and ACIPC Ltd.

For experienced nurses, or nurses just starting out in residential aged care, there are plenty of opportunities for a fulfilling career at Opal HealthCare.

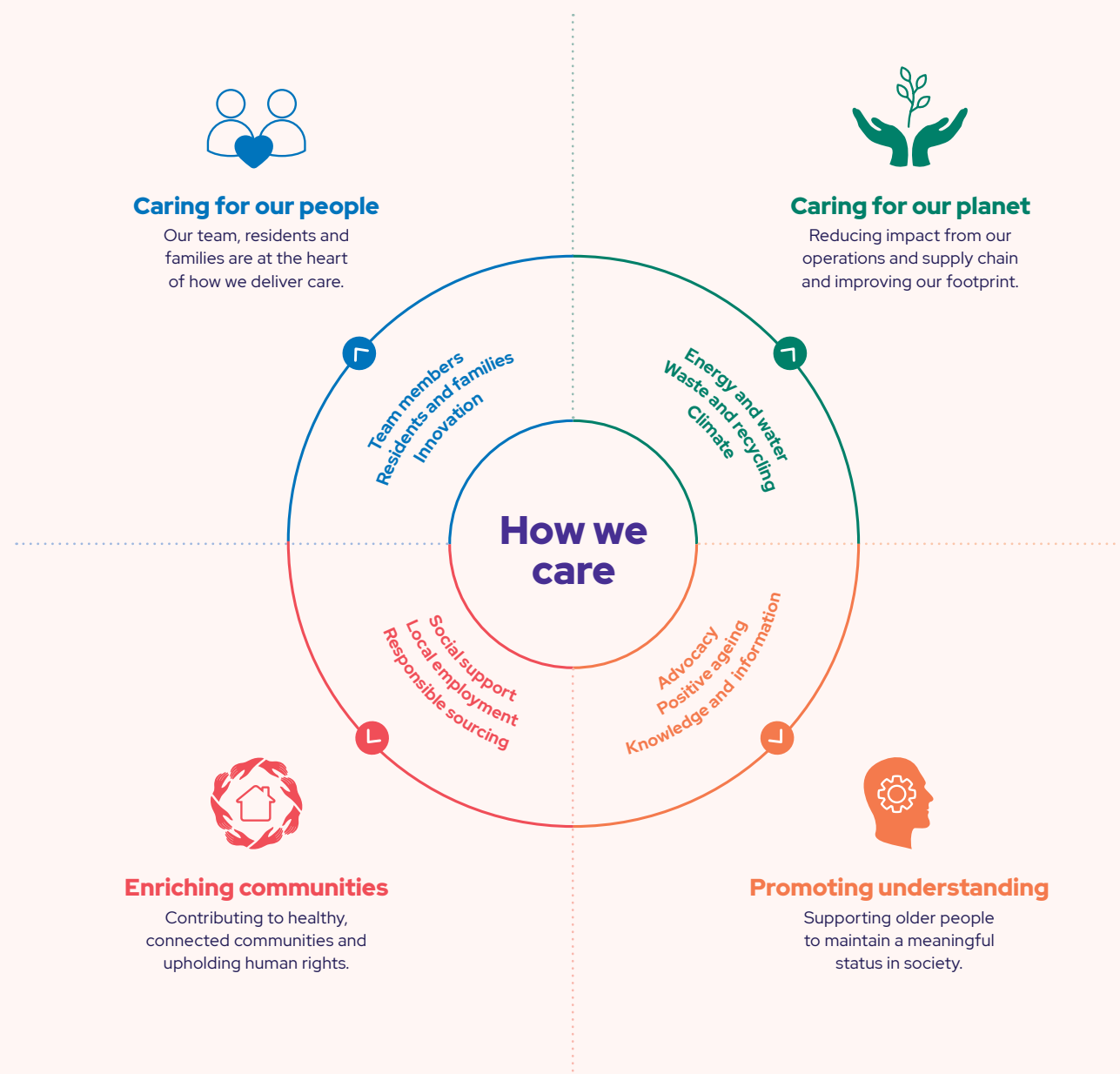
To learn more about our nursing and health services career pathways and programs visit the **Opal HealthCare Academy** via our website.



*“As a society it’s our moral obligation to ensure that people are valued and well-cared-for as they age. At Opal HealthCare, it’s more than an obligation. Creating social impact is the core of our business.”*

Prof Peter Shergold OAM, Chair of Opal HealthCare

## 3 QUESTIONS ABOUT Sustainability



### 1. What does sustainability mean at Opal HealthCare?

The effects of Opal HealthCare on people and wider society, and the sustainability of our organisation are inextricably linked. So, our **Social Impact framework** encompasses everything we do to be sustainable and create a better world. It’s founded on ESG principles and aligns to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

It means:

- Enabling residents to receive the care they need and live with love, purpose and belonging
- Supporting residents’ families and caregivers
- Caring for the wellbeing of our team
- Providing meaningful work with diverse career opportunities, supported by training and development necessary for high quality care
- Improving our impact on the environment by reducing waste, conserving resources and minimising our carbon footprint
- Innovating to continually improve our care, services and buildings
- Ensuring strong governance, leadership and management across our organisation
- Helping to build a culture of respect for older people in Australia

### 2. How will Opal HealthCare’s 2025 Social Impact Goals be delivered?

**Commit:** Our Board and executive leadership are committed to social impact as our core business, and a set of goals to advance and accelerate our impact. Our goals are informed by the views of our stakeholders and embedded in our organisational strategy.

**Act:** Our goals are delivered through the way we manage our organisation, our operations, and engaging our team, partners and suppliers. Action plans are in place for each goal to help uphold commitments and drive change.

**Monitor and report:** We evaluate progress using relevant data and systems to ensure reporting is consistent and sound. We have a solid backbone of systems and are implementing new ones where necessary to improve care, services and governance and deliver change programs.

### 3. Can residents get involved?

Absolutely! Many residents already help us deliver a positive social impact every day. They have a desire to make a difference – plus skills and resourcefulness that we all learn from. Any contribution, small or large, is valued. Our team are here to help, for example, by:

- Socialising our Social Impact Goals with residents so they can decide what they’re interested in and how they’d like to participate
- Setting up activities or connections that enable residents to contribute, either individually or as part of a group
- Supporting residents to join an existing committee or start a resident-led committee in their Care Community to focus on a particular interest, for example recycling, edible gardens or community giving programs

For more information on our Social Impact framework, or to read our **2022 Social Impact Report**, visit our **website**.



## THE GOOD COOK

Easy oven baked beef ribs  
that are beautifully seasoned,  
slow-baked, tender and juicy.  
Fall-off-the-bone perfection!

*Recipe by Chef Shane, Kawana Waters Care Community, Queensland*





# BEEF RIBS WITH POTATO MASH

## INGREDIENTS

50g oil	Preheat oven to 180°C or 160°C (fan-forced).
2kg bone-in beef short ribs	Season ribs with oil, salt and pepper on all sides. In a large non-stick fry pan, over high heat, seal ribs in batches on all sides. Once browned, transfer ribs to a large oven dish or casserole dish and set aside.
2 heads garlic, cut in half	
150g celery	In the fry pan, place garlic heads cut-side down in beef fat. Start to soften and brown them in the pan. After 2-3 minutes, add chopped onion, carrot, and celery and sauté for 2-3 minutes to gain some colour and flavour.
150g carrots	Transfer the mixture to oven dish, along with tomato paste, red wine, beef stock and thyme. The liquid should come approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up the side of the oven dish when ribs are on their side.
50g tomato paste	
500g red wine	Roast for 1½ hours covered or with a lid, after which, remove the cover and cook for another hour, or until flesh is pulling away from bone lengths, and liquid has evaporated by half.
500g beef stock	
4-6 sprigs fresh thyme	
3-6 asparagus spears per serve	Test the meat using a spoon or fork to gently push the meat away from the bone. The meat may require another 30 minutes – or until desired meat texture is achieved. Remove from oven and set aside at room temp uncovered for up to 10 minutes.
Season to taste	

## POTATO MASH

250g mix of sweet potatoes and chat potatoes	When the meat is in its final 15-20 minutes of cooking, prepare the potatoes. Boil potatoes in a large saucepan until they start to collapse and skin is falling off the flesh. Strain immediately. Return potatoes to dry pot and turn off heat. Mash well, with butter and crème fraiche. Season with pepper and salt to taste.
50g butter	
50g crème fraiche	
20g parsley, finely chopped	Evenly portion mash on each plate, piling 2-3 ribs per person on top of the mash. Spoon over as much or as little sauce and vegetables as you desire.
10g chives, finely chopped	
1 lemon, finely zested, juiced reserved	Sprinkle over parsley, chives and zest to serve.
Season to taste	Serves 4-6 people

If you have a favourite recipe you'd like to share, send it to us at [recipes@opalhealthcare.com.au](mailto:recipes@opalhealthcare.com.au)



# Words of thanks

Our Care Communities often receive thank you letters from families and friends expressing their gratitude for our team. Here are some letters.

**CARSELDINE GREENS  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
QUEENSLAND

*We would like to thank the whole community for the love and care given to both our parents. We will miss visiting you all. It takes a very special person to care for residents and everyone here has done the most wonderful job in caring for our parents over the years. We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.*

**ORANGE GROVE  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

*To the wonderful team at Orange Grove, thank you for caring for Dad over the past four years. We have appreciated the care you provided, and the way your team worked together to bring joy to the lives of your residents. We saw genuine affection for Dad in the patient way you cared for him. We are so grateful to you all for making Orange Grove Care Community a happy home for Dad.*

**MANLY HILLSIDE  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

*I'm happy that my mum loves it there and she is doing so well. Every time I visit, the interaction between your team and my Mum always makes me smile. Thanks for everything you do.*

**MORNINGTON BAY  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
VICTORIA

*On behalf of the family, we would sincerely like to thank everyone involved in caring for Dad, especially over the last five or so weeks. We know all your team went above and beyond their duties to make sure Dad was comfortable in his final days.*

**KANWAL GARDENS  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

*To all the wonderful team who always welcome me with a smile! Your hard work and dedication are appreciated. Thank you for looking after my mother, showing her kindness and support at a time in her life when she needs it the most. Heartfelt thanks to you all for giving my father the respect, compassion and help he deserved during the last two months of his life. I will never forget how you were all there for me and my family.*

**NORTH LAKES TERRACE  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
QUEENSLAND

*We would like to say thank you to your team for welcoming our dad into respite. He has settled into living at North Lakes Terrace Care Community better than we could possibly have expected. He's thriving on the activities and the extra company. We appreciate the compassion you have shown to our family.*

**ASHFIELD TERRACE  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your tireless efforts these last couple of years. And throughout being so personable, kind, and open to all. The Care Community is beautifully run, and the team are lovely and gentle, which is a blessing.*

**CARINE PARKSIDE  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

*I am writing to express my deepest gratitude to your team for their mercurial skills in setting up the table and room for my Mum's 100th birthday. Everything we needed was made available and they were so obliging with any requests we made. Your team relieved a lot of the stress for me prior to the event and I am very appreciative.*

**WESTERN PORT BAY  
CARE COMMUNITY**  
VICTORIA

*Thank you for accommodating our dad in respite care. Although the transition into care has been difficult, we feel that he's fit in well to the Care Community. Your team has been exceptional, and we'll return when he needs further care in the future.*



# Our Care Communities

General enquiries 1300 048 519

## NSW — Sydney Metro

Annandale Grove Care Community	02 8585 1900
Ashfield Terrace Care Community	02 8799 7000
Auburn Glen Care Community	02 9643 3200
Bankstown Terrace Care Community	02 9708 9400
Bayview Treetops Care Community	02 9979 9066
Belmore Place Care Community	02 9784 3100
Blacktown Terrace Care Community	02 9852 9600
Bossley Parkside Care Community	02 9426 1500
Canterbury Place Care Community	02 9784 2111
Chiswick Manor Care Community	02 9370 0600
Katoomba Views Care Community	02 4780 0600
Killara Glades Care Community	02 8467 3200
Manly Hillside Care Community	02 8925 6400
Meadowbank Grove Care Community	02 8878 5200
Mona Vale View Care Community	02 9910 7100
Narrabeen Glades Care Community	02 9910 7600
Narraweena Grove Care Community	02 8978 3100
Quakers Hillside Care Community	02 8818 6500
Stanmore Place Care Community	02 8594 6900
Wahroonga Place Care Community	02 9372 3800
Winston Hillside Care Community	02 9865 1800

## NSW — Central Coast, Hunter and North Coast

Berkeley Vale Care Community	02 4337 0000
Cameron Park Care Community	02 4944 1300
Coffs Harbour Grange Care Community	02 6659 4800
Kanwal Gardens Care Community	02 4393 1888
Killarney Vale Care Community	02 4345 2700
Maitland Grange Care Community	02 4015 3000
Murwillumbah Greens Care Community	02 6670 9700
Norah Head Care Community	02 4352 8900
Raymond Terrace Gardens Care Community	02 4980 0000
Rutherford Park Care Community	02 4015 3800
Tingira Hills Care Community	02 4904 0100
Tweed River Care Community	07 5590 2800
Tweed Valley Care Community	07 5599 6900
Wallarah Point Care Community	0408 265 643

## NSW — Blue Mountains, Western Regional and South Coast

Bathurst Riverview Care Community	02 6334 7000
Denhams Beach Care Community	02 4412 3400
Dubbo Homestead Care Community	02 5852 1600
Mudgee Grove Care Community	02 6370 6200
Narrandera Homestead Care Community	02 6959 5300
Orange Grove Care Community	02 6363 4300
Shoalhaven Place Care Community	02 4429 1200
Springwood Greens Care Community	02 4754 6000

## Queensland

Ashmore Gardens Care Community	07 5510 1800
Berrinba Greens Care Community	07 3809 1400
Broadwater Grove Care Community	07 5557 7700
Burpengary Gardens Care Community	07 3481 6100
Calamvale Parklands Care Community	07 3723 0400
Caloundra Place Care Community	07 5390 0200
Carseldine Greens Care Community	07 3500 9300
Kawana Waters Care Community	07 5390 5100
Kirra Beach Care Community	07 5587 5500
Morayfield Grove Care Community	07 5495 9000
Nambour Gardens Care Community	07 5444 9700
Newstead Grand Care Community	07 3024 3500
North Lakes Terrace Care Community	07 3384 2700
Oxley Grove Care Community	07 3716 9700
Springwood Terrace Care Community	07 3722 9400
Varsity Views Care Community	07 5554 8100

## Victoria — Gippsland

Bairnsdale Parklands Care Community	03 5153 7200
Inverloch Coast Care Community	03 5671 6000
Lakes Entrance Care Community	03 5179 5500
Paynesville Gardens Care Community	03 5153 8400
Sale Gardens Care Community	03 5142 1600



## Victoria — Melbourne Metro and Surrounding Regions

Altona Gardens Care Community	03 8325 7600
Croydon Grove Care Community	03 9723 8088
Epping Meadows Care Community	03 8405 5200
Highton Gardens Care Community	03 5223 0900
Keilor East Manor Care Community	03 9337 7343
Meadow Heights Care Community	03 9303 6800
Mornington Bay Care Community	03 5958 6600
Somerville Gardens Care Community	03 5977 9922
Templestowe Grove Care Community	03 9846 4900
Wantirna Views Care Community	03 9847 2500
Warrandyte Gardens Care Community	03 9844 8000
Warrnambool Place Care Community	03 5563 0600
Warrnambool Riverside Care Community	03 5559 0600

## Western Australia

Alfred Cove Care Community	08 6330 0400
Applecross Shore Care Community	08 6159 9800
Armadale Place Care Community	08 9234 3300
Bunbury Gardens Care Community	08 9726 6300
Carine Parkside Care Community	08 9378 5500
Geraldton Shore Care Community	08 9921 5010
Melville Parkside Care Community	08 9424 0500
Murdoch Gardens Care Community	08 6332 6200
Mandurah Coast Care Community	08 9550 2500
Treeby Parklands Care Community	08 6172 2400



# Ageing is living

When your local Care Community is supported by Opal HealthCare, you can feel confident that we're doing all we can to deliver high quality eldercare.