

# VASEY RSL CARE NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter for the Vasey RSL Care Community

Summer 23-24

## Honoured to Welcome The Governor General of Australia and his wife to The V Centre

As the opening of *The V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program* approaches, it has been a great pleasure to take a number of groups and individuals through the refurbished facility: some of our most distinguished visitors have been Their Excellencies Governor General of Australia the Honourable General David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and his wife Mrs Linda Hurley.

Mr and Mrs Hurley greeted staff and guests from our ex-service accommodation.

As a veteran himself, Mr Hurley talked about the importance of the work of our organisation in supporting those who experience difficulties in adjusting to civilian life. Chair Mike O'Meara OAM and CEO Janna Voloshin spoke of the journey to reach this point and the difficult decision to close the Ivanhoe aged care home in order to re-purpose it for this important work.

General Manager Veteran Services Chris Gray led a tour of the new facility, visiting two of the participant apartments, communal areas in one of the four houses, the gym, art room and finally the large multi-purpose room. Mrs Hurley in particular noted that the atmosphere, even though not totally finished, is fresh and welcoming.

We are grateful to our building contractors South Road Construction and SJ Higgins who have gone out of their way to ensure that the facility is safe for VIP visits during the various tours.



*During his visit, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) addressed guests, pictured here with CEO Janna Voloshin and Board Chair Mike O'Meara OAM, and seated, from left are residents with Her Excellency Mrs Hurley.*

## From Our CEO

As we reach the end of 2023 and approach the start of another new year, it's a time of reflection for many people, including me.

I'm reflecting on our progress towards the goals in our Strategic Plan – and there has been much progress – and also on the important ongoing work we continue to do each year.

### Funding Success

Firstly, we are delighted to inform you that the Federal Government recently announced the successful organisations for the Veteran Wellbeing Grant (one Off) Program and we have been awarded \$1.2 million. This is a significant amount and will enable us to begin receiving participants in *The V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program* early in the new year.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Federal Government for showing their confidence in both our organisation and in our innovative program to bring real change for those veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The unacceptable rate of veteran suicide needs action and we believe this program can not only change lives, but potentially save lives.

As you may have read on the front page, we were very honoured to have distinguished guests visit The V Centre recently as word of this initiative reaches far and wide.

### Saluting Excellence Conference: a Fabulous Day

Secondly, in late November we held our annual Saluting Excellence Staff Conference at the Manningham Civic Centre – a great venue – and our theme this year was *'Empowerment: motivating and empowering ourselves and each other'*.

Staff who were nominated for Saluting Excellence Awards were acknowledged and the winners announced. I'd like to congratulate all our staff, whether they were nominated or not, winners or not. Our people are what make our organisation and I am proud to be here among such a fabulous group.

It is empowering and motivating to me when we all come together. And of course, none of this would be possible without our sponsors – our valued providers



and suppliers, who share our vision of the best possible care and services for our clients and residents and who support us to hold this event. Thank you to each one of you for your support.

### Veteran Home Care Tender

Earlier this year we tendered to become one of the government's providers of Veteran Home Care and we are delighted to announce that our tender was successful.

The veteran community is our 'raison d'être' and it is fitting that we are now one of the organisations the DVA refers clients to.

### New Ivanhoe Ex-Service Accommodation (ESA)

Our residents have now moved into our shiny new Ivanhoe ESA apartments and we held a house-warming in October. Despite COVID-related delays affecting the construction industry, we are very pleased that this was completed on schedule. (Read more on page 5).

### AGM and Annual Reports

At our AGM in November, we were able to present our achievements for the 2022-23 Financial Year to our members. It is pleasing to be able to report on a recovery in residential aged care and good headway against our strategic goals.

As well as our usual financial report, this year we developed an 'Impact Report', focusing on what has been achieved in each area of the business. It is easy to get caught up in the current projects, so it is important to take stock and reflect on what has been achieved, as we continue to work for the benefit of our community.

Wishing everyone a safe and happy time over the Christmas and New Year holidays.

**Janna Voloshin,**  
**Chief Executive Officer**



# ‘Veterans’ Home Care’ from Vasey RSL Care

**In August, Vasey RSL Care was awarded a contract to provide the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) Veterans’ Home Care (VHC), a program that provides help for veterans and their dependants at home.**

Vasey RSL Care General Manager Community Services, Rich Davey, will manage the VHC program alongside our current provision of the Federal Government’s Home Care Package Program.

## What does VHC offer?

The VHC program provides home care services to maintain the health, wellbeing and independence of *eligible veterans and their families*.

The VHC service includes:

- domestic help
- personal care
- respite care
- home and garden maintenance (safety-related)
- lawn mowing (not required to be safety-related)

Veterans may also benefit from **Coordinated Veterans’ Care (CVC) Social Assistance** which is a short-term service to assist with re-engagement into community life through social contact, or accompaniment to a social activity.

## Who is eligible for VHC?

This program is only for those needing low levels of care, and not for those requiring high or complex care.

The target group for the VHC service are clients who:

- have a Veteran Gold Card
- have a Veteran White Card with an accepted service-related condition
- are living at home
- need low levels of care

## Enquire Now

To enquire about these services, please contact the **VHC Assessment Agency on 1300 550 450**.

For general enquiries about the VHC program call the **VHC Health Provider Line on 1800 550 457**.

“We are very pleased to be awarded this contract,” says Janna Voloshin. “As one of Victoria’s most experienced providers of care and services to veterans, it is perfectly aligned with our Mission to ‘Serve Those Who Served’.”

# Central Office Phone Options Update

**We have recently updated the Central Office phone system options in response to feedback received. If you phone our main switch on (03) 9810 5500, below is a summary of the options now available:**



1. Home Care	2. Veteran Services	3. Residential Aged Care	4. Other Services	5. Listen again
1. New enquiries 2. Current customers 3. Veterans Home Care 4. Statement & billing enquiries	1. Ex-Service Accommodation – General maintenance 2. New enquiries for our ex-service units 3. The V Centre 4. Statement & billing enquiries	1. Brighton 2. Brighton East 3. Bundoora 4. Frankston South 5. Statement & billing enquiries 6. Other residential enquiries	1. Property Maintenance 2. Media/marketing communications 3. Accounts/billing 4. Payroll 5. Recruitment 6. Other HR matters 7. CEO Office	

# Remembrance Day Commemorations

This is one of the most important days of the year for our community and it was commemorated at all of our aged care homes with solemn services of remembrance.



Vasey RSL Care Brighton East



Vasey RSL Care Frankston South



Vasey RSL Care Bundoora: messages of thanks and support from the children at Busy Bees Kindergarten.



CEO, Janna Voloshin, lays a wreath at the commemorative ceremony at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance.

**Lest we forget**





# Ivanhoe Residents Have Moved In!

The Vasey RSL Care Ivanhoe Ex-Service Accommodation changeover has now taken place. The residents from the units on Edwin Street, Forster Street and Huntingfield Place in Ivanhoe have moved into their new apartments at Samma Place, 109 Bell Street, and are getting used to their new surroundings.

On Wednesday 11 October, we held a house-warming party to welcome residents to Samma Place.

We were delighted to have Federal Member for Jagajaga Ms Kate Thwaites MP, present to give a welcome speech and meet residents (pictured with residents Bruce and Paul (with Fraser)).

Residents have access to courtyard gardens and a lovely communal facility on the tenth level. This has a dining and lounge area plus a barbecue area, small outdoor cinema and hot tub, all with fabulous views.

The Vasey RSL Care apartments are distributed throughout the building and all have a private balcony.

“This type of accommodation for our ex-service accommodation is new for us and is part of our strategy to offer a range of different styles of housing,” said Janna Voloshin, CEO. “One of the advantages is the opportunity for residents to live among the general community, while having each other’s support and camaraderie.”

Board Chair, Mike O’Meara OAM and Janna thanked the building developers, Samma Property Group, who have been a delight to work with throughout the project. They presented certificates of appreciation to Simon Abdelmalak from Samma Property Group (far right), Vince Madaffari and Lincoln Gwadu from Electrolux (below right) and Elli Febey from Harvey Norman

(below far right) for their support in kind in setting up the new apartments.

*From top right: Samma Place frontage to Bell Street; residents, guests and staff at the house-warming.*

*Left: the Level 10 barbecue area (above left) and outdoor movies and hot tub for residents’ use.*



# The Saluting Excellence Staff Conference and



**Congratulations to all staff who were nominated for a Saluting Excellence Award this year and special congratulations to our winners:**

**Jessie Mary Vasey Award for Excellence in Traditional Values:**

Ash Sood (Frankston South), Nicole Groves (Bundoora)

**Excellence in Quality:**

Don Agra (Brighton East), Nadia Wilson (Business Systems), Vishma Pathak (Business Liaison), Santosh Poudel (Quality & Risk)

**Excellence in Care:**

Chorten Gurung (Brighton East), Arcelina Lawrenson (Bundoora), Divya Talwar (Brighton), Roshani Rokka (Bundoora), Bronte Azzopardi (Bundoora), Shelly Nayyar (Frankston South)

**Excellence in Resilience:**

Amanda Gibson (Community Services), Viola Chiorny (Brighton East), Julie-Ann Carr (Residential Services), Mark Ryndich (Finance)

**Excellence in Security:**

Wasina Sirithorn (Bundoora), Aarti Goel (Brighton East)

**Excellence in Fulfillment:**

Leanne Saville (Brighton), Ashmita Pandit (Brighton East), Ruwan Bogodaarachchige (Frankston South), Nyapini Diu (Frankston South)

**Excellence in Dignity:**

Mia Mcasey (Brighton), Josephine Smethurst (Frankston South), Manuela Udriste (Brighton), Tajinder Johal (Brighton)

*Continued opposite...*





# Awards 2023 - All About Empowerment



We were treated to a wonderful program with our MC, Geoffrey Bardwell, and included Keynote Speaker, Sadhana Smiles (L), motivational speaker Tim Jack Adams (below left), and from the Australian National Veteran Arts Museum (ANVAM), Tanja Johnston (bottom left).



CEO Janna Voloshin told us about what empowers her, including her new friend, Golda, aka GPTChat!



Our residential team presented their video 'I've got the power' and three brave staff, Evalyn Kaaya, Roshani Rokka and Shelly Nayar shared their personal stories of empowerment in our Empowerment Chat Show.

All this was made possible, thanks to our wonderful sponsors...

*(from opposite)*

**Excellence in Camaraderie:**

Kellie Bugeja (Bundoora), Charles Ramsay (Brighton), Rajinderpal Kaur (Brighton East), Siew Ping Su (Frankston South), Jodi Evans (HR)

**Overall Award for Outstanding Achievement:**

Linda D'Sylva (Bundoora)  
Bindu Simon (Brighton East)  
Anne Warden (Veteran Services)

**Team Camaraderie Award:**

This is a new award this year and builds on the previous Magnet Award. It is calculated using multiple measures including length of service, reliability, completion of required training and business sustainability measures.

This year's winner was: Brighton East. Congratulations!



Thank you to All Our Sponsors. Major Sponsors:

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# Managing the Heat this Summer

On 19 September, the Bureau of Meteorology formally announced an El Niño event for Australia during the 2023/2024 summer. This means that parts of Australia will likely experience warmer and drier conditions with minimal rainfall, increasing the risk of heatwaves and fire danger. Get prepared now!

## Be Prepared

It is wise to prepare ahead for days of extreme heat and know how to look after yourself.

### Stock up on Food and Medication



- Have some extra stocks of packaged/tinned food so you don't have to go out on hot days.
- Make sure you have enough of your regular medications to last you during a heatwave. Store them safely at the recommended temperature –

some items must be stored in the fridge.

### Be Prepared for a Power Outage

- On very hot days, there can be power outages due to high power use. You can be prepared by having a torch and spare batteries where you can easily get them if the power goes out.



- Make sure you keep your mobile phone charged or have a back-up phone that doesn't require electricity.
- Consider getting a battery-

operated radio so you can listen to the news and weather updates.

### Be as Healthy as you can be

- See your doctor and make sure that any medical conditions you have are as well-controlled as possible.
- It is important to maintain your aerobic fitness and maintain a healthy weight so that your body copes as well as possible with the heat.

### Prepare Your Home



- If you have fans, awnings, a cooling system etc, check to make sure they are in good working order before the hot weather comes. Have your cooling system serviced if needed.

- Consider other ways to make your home more comfortable in extreme heat conditions.
- Ceiling fans, interior block-out curtains, external awnings/blinds, cooling/air conditioning, shade cloth and insulation all improve the comfort of your home and your ability to cope with heat.

## On hot days...

### Dress Appropriately

- Wear loose-fitting clothing, if possible made from natural fibres like cotton or linen.



### Keep Yourself Hydrated

- Drink plenty of fluids – especially water; avoid too much tea or coffee and avoid alcohol.
- Put a jug of water in the fridge so you have cold water readily available.
- Note: if you are on fluid restrictions, check with your doctor how much you can drink in hot weather; consider alternatives such as ice cubes.



### Keep Your House Cool

- If you have a cooling system, switch it on *before* your house heats up and keep it at a comfortable temperature.
- Close curtains/blinds/awnings to block out the sun.
- If you are using fans, make sure there is adequate ventilation.
- Open windows *only* when the air outside has cooled down.

### Eat Little and Often

- Eat smaller, lighter meals more often.
- Choose cold foods such as salads and fruit.
- Make sure food that needs refrigeration is put away quickly.



### Stay Where it is Coolest

- Find the coolest area in your home and stay there.
- Use wet towels to cool yourself.
- Avoid activity; postpone outings.
- Avoid going outside unless unavoidable.
- If you must go out, stay in the shade, take a bottle of water with you, wear long-sleeved loose-fitting clothing and a wide-brimmed hat.





# Big Thank You to Mildura RSL Sub-Branch

**We were thrilled to receive a donation of \$100,000 from the Mildura RSL Sub-Branch for The V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program earlier this year. Executive General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray visited Mildura to personally thank them for their support for this important new initiative.**

Chris met with Mildura RSL General Manager, Kim Archibald and committee members in late November to thank them for their generous contribution.

Kim stressed the importance of investing in this program and emphasised that this is the first of its kind for the veteran community.

“We are so excited to have the opportunity to be a part of championing this program: this is a vital part of our role as an RSL sub-branch,” he said.

Chris said, “We are incredibly appreciative of this donation from the Mildura RSL sub-branch. In the face of the current national housing crisis, it is heartening to see organisations like Mildura RSL stepping up to make a real difference. We cannot thank them enough.”



*Committee Members are pictured (from left): Brad McGlashan (Committee Member), John Braniff (Treasurer), Kim Archibald (General Manager), Paul McDermott (President), Scott Richards (Secretary), Josh Fraser (Committee Member).*

Continue reading article:

[www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/news-and-events/](http://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/news-and-events/)

# The Dining Experience: Independent Review

**Food is something that is important to us all – and our aged care residents are certainly no exception. Ensuring the highest possible quality of food provision and nutrition is part of our commitment to excellence in care and services.**

To assess the quality of our residents’ dining experience, we recently engaged an external organisation to conduct an independent review for us. They evaluated the nutrition and dining experience at all four of our aged care homes and identified areas that could be enhanced.

Their review included interviews with residents and staff at each site to understand their expectations and satisfaction levels. We are very appreciative of their participation and feedback.



We received a report including a comprehensive summary of their findings including recommendations on how to improve the residents’ overall dining experience.

“While I am pleased to report that overall the results were positive, for example noting that residents felt food quantities were plentiful, there were a number of areas they identified to make the experience more enjoyable for residents,” said Corinne Lyon, General Manager Residential Services.

An action plan has been developed and a new working party is addressing the required actions.

We have also obtained guidance on how to support residents with dementia to ensure they have a positive dining and nutritional experience and this has been incorporated into the action plan.

Finally, we will be developing a Food and Nutritional Dining Experience Work Guide.

We look forward to bringing you an update on all this in the new year.

# Infection Prevention Corner: to Pee or Not to Pee

**Urinary Tract Infections or UTIs become more common with increasing age. Women are more likely to get a UTI than men while problems with incontinence and some medications increase the chances of a UTI among older people.**

## What is a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)?

A UTI is an infection caused by micro-organisms or germs (usually bacteria) which affect any part of the urinary system.

A UTI can affect one or both kidneys, the two tubes called ureters, the bladder, and the urethra or the tube urine passes through as it leaves the body.

## What are the types of UTIs?

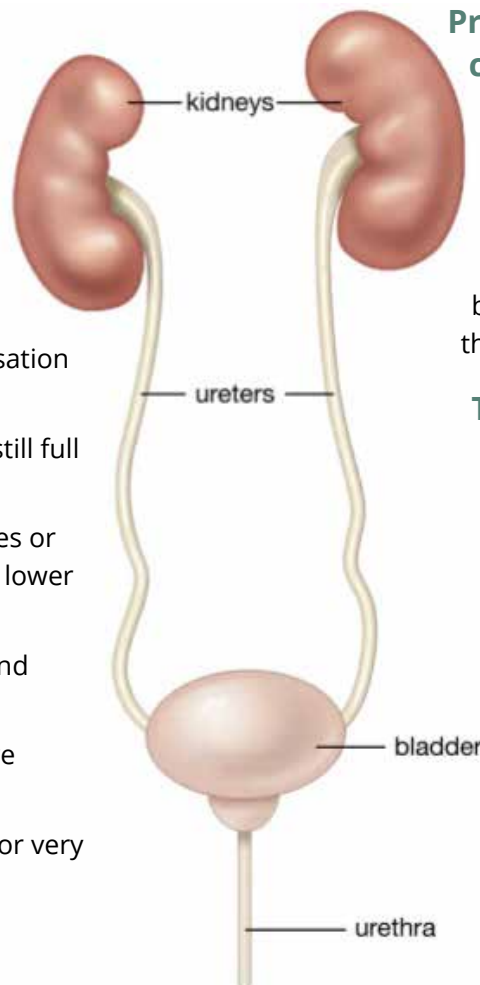
UTIs commonly occur in the bladder (cystitis) but may also occur in the urethra (urethritis), the kidneys (pyelonephritis), or a combination of these.

A UTI may also affect the vagina in the form of vaginitis. If untreated, UTIs can lead to kidney infection which may be very serious, which is why it is important to prevent UTIs.

## What are the signs and symptoms of UTIs?

Symptoms are:

- wanting to urinate more often and urgently, passing only a few drops of urine
- burning pain or stinging sensation when urinating
- a feeling that the bladder is still full even after urinating
- pain in the lower back or sides or feeling uncomfortable in the lower abdomen
- feeling unwell with nausea and fever
- experiencing confusion (more common in older adults)
- having cloudy, dark, bloody, or very smelly urine



## How can a UTI be prevented?

- Keep hydrated – drink plenty of water and fluids to flush the urinary system
- Don't hold on to that pee! Go to the toilet as soon as you feel the urge to urinate
- For women, seek treatment for vaginal infections such as thrush
- For women, wipe from front to back (urethra to anus) after going to the toilet
- Try to avoid constipation
- Do not delay treatment – seek medical attention when experiencing any signs and symptoms of a UTI

## Prevent a UTI to prevent complications

Early treatment of a UTI can help prevent permanent kidney damage, narrowing of the urethra in men, and sepsis and septicaemia (conditions in which bacteria have entered the bloodstream), which are both life-threatening complications.

## To pee or not to pee? Pee!

To prevent UTI complications, don't hold on to that pee!

## References/Find out More

Health Direct. (n.d.).

Urinary tract infection (UTI).

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/urinary-tract-infection-uti>

Kidney Health Australia (2018).

Fact sheet Urinary Tract Infections

<https://kidney.org.au/uploads/resources/KHA-Factsheet-urinary-tract-infections-2018.pdf>



# Is it a Scam? How can you tell?

Christmas and the holiday season are times for relaxing with family and enjoying some time off – but scammers don't take time off – and when we are relaxed, we can let down our guard. So don't get caught out.



## Scammers want your money. Their tactics are:

- To trick you
- To get you to give them your personal contact details, your trust, or access to your PC

They don't care about you: they have no morals.

It's up to you to be wary and to be cautious.

## Methods

Scammers need to get in touch with you to try to scam you, so they may phone you, send an SMS or an email, or target you through online dating or social media sites.

## Phone Scams

Watch out for callers who:

- Say you have been 'specially selected'.
- Use time-limited urgent offers.
- Won't answer your questions about their business.
- Request that you 'confirm your personal information' (*Don't confirm anything*).
- Ask you for a payment.
- Use threats if you don't comply with their requests.
- Claim you have a virus on your computer and they need to access it.
- Claim to be a friend or relative in need of money, or some sort of authority.

Phone scams rely on you taking action to enable the scammer to get something from you, whether it's information or access to your PC or your finances.

## Hang up if you are not 100% sure the call is legitimate.

It is better to be safe than sorry. (Legitimate callers who need to get in touch with you will find other ways to contact you.)

You can google the number that called, but some scammers disguise the number they call from.

If you like, you can call the organisation direct. Find out if they called you and if not, you're done.

Then, if they called your mobile number, you can block that number.

For both landlines and mobile phones, you can contact Australia's 'Do Not Call Register' on 1300 792 958

(Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm). However, this will only prevent calls from within Australia and you can still be targeted by overseas scammers.

## SMS Scams

As with phone scams, SMS scams require you to take some action. Generally there will be a link in the SMS. *Don't click it* (even if it looks genuine).

Scammers create fake websites that look like legitimate ones but may use a capital i in place of a lower case L for example. Can you tell the difference between Telstra and Telstra? No.

In general you will be asked to provide information. *Don't give any.*

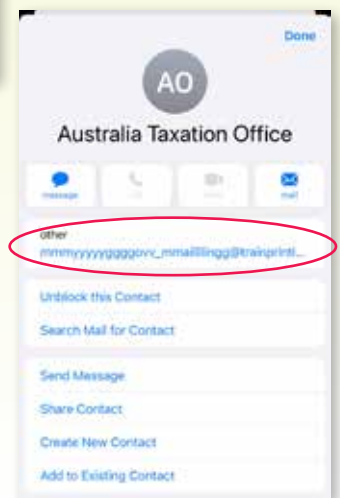
As these generally come from mobile numbers, it's impossible to tell if they are legitimate. If you are at all unsure, just delete them.

## Email Scams

You may receive an email which looks genuine, eg:



It looks like it's from the ATO, but if you click on the 'From' name, (**don't click on the link!**) you'll see what the email address *really* is.



Delete and block. Don't be their next victim.

## Remember

**If the offer is too good to be true, it actually is too good to be true.**

**Trust your instincts: if you have any concerns, just hang up/delete.**

**There are some unscrupulous people out there who don't care who they hurt. People from all walks of life get caught out. Be wary. Be cautious. Be Safe.**

