

VASEY RSL CARE NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter for the Vasey RSL Care Community

Spring 2023

Deputy Prime Minister Visits Vasey RSL Care Ex-Service Accommodation Geelong

On 14 August, we were delighted to host a visit from Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Minister for Defence, The Hon Richard Marles MP, at our Geelong Ex-Service Accommodation (ESA).

With our Geelong ESA situated in Mr Marles's electorate of Corio, our residents are some of his constituents: the Deputy Prime Minister sat down with residents Ian McNaughton and Bill Westhead, both veterans, to talk about the issues affecting the veteran community.

Mr Marles met with CEO, Janna Voloshin and General Manager Veteran Services, Chris Gray to talk about the need for more support for the issue of veteran homelessness and its causes. This was followed by a tour of the Geelong ESA site, pausing in front of the Memorial to remember all those who have served.

"We were very pleased to have this opportunity to talk with the Deputy Prime Minister about our organisation and our focus on the ex-service community here in Victoria," said Janna. "Mr Marles had plenty of questions for us about our initiative, **The V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program**, and we appreciate his interest in this ground-breaking program."

Pictured Right: (from left) Ian McNaughton, The Hon Richard Marles MP, CEO Janna Voloshin, GM Veteran Services Chris Gray; (rear right) Bill Westhead.

Below: The Hon Richard Marles MP, Chris Gray, Janna Voloshin, Bill Westhead (rear), Ian McNaughton (front).



From Our CEO

The Winter quarter can often be a quieter time of year, but that has not been the case this year.

Progress with The V Centre

We have been very pleased to have meetings with Senator for Tasmania (and veteran) Jacqui Lambie MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Minister for Defence, The Hon Richard Marles MP, and Federal Minister for Veterans, The Hon Matt Keogh MP, to talk about the ways we support the ex-service community, and in particular, The V Centre Veteran Empowerment Program.

It is pleasing to find that word of The V Centre has reached those in a position of influence. We were invited to submit a further funding submission and we await the results of this, while continuing to advocate for support at all levels of government.

The response to The V Centre initiative from the ex-service community has been nothing but positive and we are continuing to move ahead, with renovations going well and recruitment of key staff now under way.

Saluting Excellence Awards 2023

Thank you to all who submitted nominations for staff members for the annual Saluting Excellence Awards: we appreciate you taking the time to do this. Award winners will be announced at the Saluting Excellence Conference in November.

National Homelessness Week, 7-13 August

Homelessness is a growing issue right across Australia and the statistics indicate that veterans are disproportionately affected with homelessness rates of 5.3% for veterans compared with 1.9% of the general population. (Source AHURI 2019)

Our Executive Management Team supported awareness of homelessness during National Homelessness Week by preparing some 'Rocky Road' and delivering it to the Mitcham Community Meal: this is a wonderful service that provides a hot meal to those "who need a decent feed, as well as someone to have a friendly chat with". Around 50-60 people attend each week.

New Ivanhoe Units Opening Imminently!

As we go to press, we are about to take possession of



our 27 brand new Ivanhoe Ex-Service Accommodation apartments at Samma Place on Bell Street, Ivanhoe. By the time you read this, residents from the current 17 Ivanhoe units will have moved in and we wish them happiness in their new homes!

This changeover gives us 10 additional units and the ability to house some of those on our waiting list.

This brings our total to over 300 ex-service units and increases our capacity to support veterans and their families with much-needed affordable rental housing.

New Bundoora Ex-Service Units

To the same end, we are working closely with the City of Darebin on our plans for 20 new ex-service units adjacent to our aged care home on Tower Avenue.

These will be individual units with private open space and most will have a garage. Energy-efficiency is an important aspect of any new build and these units will be powered by electricity with solar panels, energy-efficient hot water pumps, double glazing, LED lighting and water tanks. Garages will have electric vehicle charge points and insulated doors. We hope to start this build in 2024.

Royal Commission Melbourne Sessions

The final hearing block for the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide is taking place from Monday 28 August and submissions are open until 13 October. We encourage you to share your personal story (if you are able) and help change this unacceptable situation for the veterans of the future. More information: <https://defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/>

Aged Care Workers Day, 7 August

I'd like to finish by thanking our whole workforce for the work they do to provide care and support to our aged care residents, home care clients and ex-service unit residents. We are indeed fortunate to have a wonderful team here at Vasey RSL Care.

*Janna Voloshin,
Chief Executive Officer*



Key Staff Changes at Vasey RSL Care

We have had changes to our leadership with two of our senior staff taking retirement. We wish them both a long and happy retirement and we welcome two new key staff to our team.

Anna – Residential Manager, Brighton East

In July, we farewelled Anna Borkowska, Residential Manager at Vasey RSL Care Brighton East, after 13 years with the organisation. Anna was heavily involved with the commissioning of our Brighton East home in 2011 and the relocation of 82 residents from three small homes. Anna has created a culture of inclusiveness and respect where staff, residents and family members feel heard.



Anna says, "Although leaving makes me feel mixed emotions, as I reflect on my time at Vasey RSL Care, I am filled with immense gratitude for having had the opportunity to be a part of this community. Your stories, experiences, and shared wisdom have enriched my

life. I want to express my deepest appreciation to each of you and your families for entrusting me with your care and allowing me to be a part of your lives."

We will miss Anna's warm smile, constant hospitality, and wonderful sense of humour. We wish her the very best as she enters a new chapter in her life and gets to cross things off her 'bucket list'!



Taking over from Anna, we welcome Carol Hamilton: Carol is a Registered Nurse and brings with her significant experience in the management and running of residential aged care homes. Welcome Carol!

Lee-Anne – General Manager Residential Services

In September, we will say goodbye to one of our long-standing Executive Management Team members, Lee-Anne Suryin. Lee has been with Vasey RSL Care for 15 years during which time she has worn many hats – Project Manager, Business Development Manager, General Manager Aged Care Services, Acting CEO and most recently GM Residential Services – and sometimes quite literally such as that of the Mad Hatter for Senior MasterChef.

Lee has also been MC at the annual staff conference on a number of occasions, provided a variety of characters at the Senior MasterChef contest and been involved in many aspects of the organisation.

Lee says: "It has been an incredible privilege to have been here for the last 15 years. Whilst it is sad to leave such a wonderful organisation, I know that I leave it in great hands, committed to providing the best possible service to those we care for. I am looking forward to spending more time with my family especially my beautiful granddaughters!"

We send Lee off with our very best wishes and know that she'll continue to use her energy, enthusiasm and skills in new ways. We are very grateful for the difference she has made at Vasey RSL Care.



We welcome Corinne Lyon who has taken over as General Manager Residential Services. Corinne joins us from the acute health care sector where she has held various executive leadership roles. She brings to us extensive strategic, leadership and change management experience.



New Consumer Advisory Bodies

From 1 December this year, existing aged care providers must establish and continue a *Consumer Advisory Body* that can help resolve any problems and improve care.

This is a new requirement resulting from the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety: aged care providers are required to have it in place by 1 December 2023.

The Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission’s fact sheet states: *“Consumer advisory bodies can help fix problems and improve your care. They give you a way to talk about care and service quality with others and share this with your provider’s governing body.”*

The intention of the advisory body is to ensure and strengthen positive consumer experiences and to provide valuable feedback to the governing body (our Board of Directors), giving community residents and clients a voice.

“We have made the decision to have five Consumer Advisory Bodies – one for each of our Residential Aged Care Homes and one for our Home Care Service,” says Annette Greenwood, General Manager Quality & Risk.

“This adds a further dimension to the consumer engagement activities already in place, such as the quarterly Consumer Engagement Forums, regular resident meetings with residential aged care community members, and regular surveys to all residents and home care clients.”

Membership of the Consumer Advisory Body is open to all aged care residents and home care clients, and their representatives.



It is important to have diversity on the Consumer Advisory Bodies so that all residents and clients are represented.

The advisory bodies will meet twice per year and minutes will be forwarded to the Board for their consideration and action.

“We are required to give every aged care resident and every home care client the opportunity to start or join a consumer advisory body,” says Annette. “Your Voice Matters – if you are interested, please speak to your Residential Manager (aged care residents) or to your Care Advisor (home care clients).”

General Manager Residential Services, Corinne Lyon is managing the process for residential aged care:

“We have reached out to our residents at each of our homes, seeking expressions of interest to become a member of the home’s Consumer Advisory Board. The memberships will be established in September with the first meetings planned for October. This is an exciting step forward, and builds on other ways our residents can provide their valuable feedback, to guide us on how we can improve our services.”

General Manager Community Services, Richard Davey is managing the process for home care clients:

“We have sent information to all our Home Care clients about the new opportunity and we are beginning to receive interest. As with residential aged care, we will be arranging meetings for later this year and looking forward to feedback that will help us continuously improve our services to you.”

Find out more: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/consumers/consumer-advisory-bodies>



Aged Care Employee Day #thanksforcaring

At Vasey RSL Care, we are all part of a team that cares for older Victorians and we can all share in celebrating this special day.

At a Consumer Engagement Forum with our residential aged care community, we heard that one of the most important characteristics in staff is kindness.

“While we now actively include this as part of our criteria for staff recruitment, it’s clear to me that we already have a workforce that is very caring and kind,” says CEO Janna Voloshin.

According to the national body, ACCPA (Aged & Community Care Providers Association): “Aged Care Employee Day celebrates the more than 370,000 residential care, home care and retirement living staff who care for over 1.5 million older Australians”.



Aged Care Employee Day is all about saying thank you to each and every one of our staff, for being part of this team, for helping us work towards excellent care, support and services, and of course, for caring.

This year, we joined ACCPA’s action and produced a video to show our appreciation to all our staff – **check it out online:**

www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/news

Aged Care Employee Day Special Visitor

We were delighted to have a visit from State Member for Southern Metropolitan Region Mr Ryan Batchelor MP, with ACCPA (Aged & Community Care Providers Association) representatives Jane Williams and Danni Campbell-Manley at Vasey RSL Care Brighton East on Aged Care Employee Day.

Mr Batchelor presented a certificate of appreciation – for the whole organisation – acknowledging the dedication and the contribution staff make on a daily basis in caring for older Australians.

“Through your work and dedication to providing care and support, you have made a positive difference to the lives of those you serve, their families and the community at large,” the certificate states.

Receiving the certificate on behalf of Vasey RSL Care, CEO Janna Voloshin thanked Mr Batchelor for taking the time to recognise the wonderful work of the aged care sector, and in particular the staff of Vasey RSL Care.

Pictured (from left); Ryan Batchelor MP, James Williams (ACCPA), resident Rita, Danni Campbell-Manley (ACCPA), CEO Janna Voloshin and GM Residential Services Corinne Lyon.



Vietnam Veterans' Day – 18 August

Marking the 50th Anniversary of the ADF withdrawing from Vietnam, this year's Vietnam Veterans' Day was particularly meaningful to those who served during the long Vietnam War.

"We remember the sacrifices of the 523 Australians who lost their lives during the Vietnam War," says Janna Voloshin, CEO. "And we are forever indebted to the 60,000 Australians who served during the ten years of our involvement in the Vietnam War."

More than 15,000 young men were conscripted into the Australian Army to serve in Vietnam: twenty-year-

old Australian men had to register for national service between 1965 and 1972. Of these, over 200 died and more than 1,200 were injured.

"I'd like to thank our residents and staff for organising these services of remembrance and honouring the Vietnam Veterans in the Vasey RSL Care community."

Vasey RSL Care Ex-Service Accommodation Cheltenham

Residents and friends marked the day with a memorial service, supported by Michael North representing the Vietnam Veterans Association Australia, and the 5/6

Royal Victorian Regiment who provided the Catafalque Party.

Guests included Vasey RSL Care CEO, Janna, General Manager Veteran Services, Chris, and Amanda from the Veteran Services team.



Vasey RSL Care Bundoora

Residents commemorated the day with a service and special guests, including Rob Winther from the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, Lieutenant Chase Fletcher from the Simpson Barracks and David Cretney, who played the bagpipes.

Rob Winther presented our Vietnam Veterans with certificates and medallions and spoke about

the mistakes made in the past with the lack of acknowledgement for Vietnam Veterans.

The service was followed by afternoon tea, where residents had a chance to chat with guests.





Left: the colours of the Vietnam medals, from left, Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75; Vietnam Medal; Australian Defence Medal.

Vasey RSL Care Brighton East

Residents, family members and staff held a memorial service in the gallery, pausing to reflect on the bravery, teamwork and endurance the Australian forces



displayed throughout the Vietnam War. An Honor Roll was read and a wreath laid by family members of our Vietnam Veteran community.



Vasey RSL Care Frankston South

Residents, families, residents from the Frankston South Ex-Service Accommodation and staff took part in a service of commemoration for Vietnam Veterans' Day. Vietnam Veterans took part in the service and laying wreaths in memory of lost comrades.

We welcome students from Derinya Primary School who participated in the service, and 11-year-old Henry who played the drum for us.



Infection Prevention Corner

Self-Care is Person-Centred Care using 'Standard Precautions'

Safe, high-quality care is based on person-centred care. Person-centred care respects the preferences and values of the individual and responds to their needs, while delivering safe care.

One way to deliver safe care is through 'Standard Precautions'.

What are Standard Precautions?

Standard Precautions refer to a set of infection control activities that help protect our community from harmful germs from other people, from items in the surroundings and from the environment itself.

Standard infection control precautions apply to everyone.

What are examples of Standard Precautions?

Examples of Standard Precautions that everyone should make an automatic part of their life include:

- Hand hygiene – hand washing to keep your hands germ-free.
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as wearing a mask over your nose to protect you from inhaling harmful germs when someone coughs or sneezes.
- Cough etiquette – covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you sneeze or cough, throwing the used tissue into a bin and washing your hands with soap and water to remove harmful germs from your hands.



- Carers being careful when using sharp items such as syringes and disposing of them in the proper sharp disposal bin.
- Wiping down shared items, such as blood pressure equipment with disinfectant wipes.
- Wiping down tables after use.
- Cleaning shared areas regularly.
- Proper handling and regular washing of sheets, pillowcases, and other linen to keep individuals comfortable and beds germ-free.
- Proper disposal of rubbish.



What other examples of Standard Precaution activities do you do regularly?

Why are Standard Precautions important?

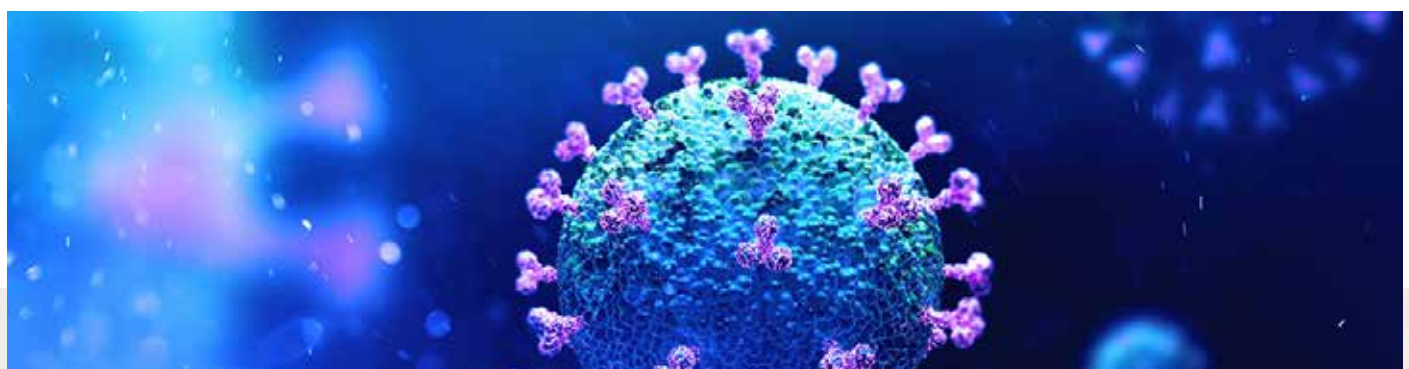
They are important because these practices protect us as carers from getting infections and prevent carers from transferring germs to residents or clients.

They help us go about our daily activities without becoming unwell.

They keep us germ-free and healthy and help us focus on the activities that give us meaning in our daily lives.

Reference:

Department of Health Victoria. (2021). Infection control – standard and transmission-based precautions. <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/infectious-diseases/infection-control-standard-and-transmission-based-precautions>





Celebration of Centenarians at Frankston South

Vasey RSL Frankston South held a wonderful celebration for nine of their residents who had reached 100 years – and more – and entered their second century. Congratulations to all!



From top left: Geoff, Margaret M, Bill, Joyce and Joy. Second row: Margaret S, Len, Joan and Buzz.



With nine residents reaching or already over 100, this was cause for celebration!

Families and friends joined the party, which included party food, champagne and birthday cake, as well as some sage advice from our centenarians.

Overall, they advised us to be active, eat good food, work hard, be happy and strong. However, we had some conflicting advice with one resident recommending drinking wine and having parties, while another said no drinking and spend time with your family. One of our gentlemen suggested finding a good wife to look after you – that might not go down so well in the twenty-first century...

Congratulations to all our centenarians and thanks to the lifestyle team and staff for a lovely celebration.

National Homeless Week, 7-13 August

During National Homelessness Week (7-13 August), the Vasey RSL Care Executive Management Team showed their support for some of those in our midst who are doing it tough.

The increasing rates of homelessness in Australia are a cause for concern, with rental costs pushing some people out of their homes and many others into rental stress.

To highlight the issue in the veteran community, members of the Executive Management Team and HR staff prepared some 'Rocky Road' and delivered it to the Mitcham Community Meal, and spent some time chatting to guests.

The Mitcham Community Meal provides a free hot meal once a week to around 60 people needing a good meal and a friendly chat, with numerous clubs and groups taking turns preparing the food.

"This is just a small way we can bring attention to the problem of homelessness in our community and express our commitment to addressing the issue," says CEO Janna. "A Rocky Road through life is just what many of these people are experiencing."



From left: Jashan (HR), Krishna (HR) and Rich (GM Community Services); Corinne (GM Residential Services – new), Lee-Anne (GM Residential Services – retiring) and Milka (CFO); Tamara (GM HR) and Janna (CEO); Chris (GM Veteran Services), Janna, Lee-Anne and Tamara at Mitcham; Chris and Lee-Anne chat with meal guests at Mitcham.

Edinburgh Shield 2023: Winners' Presentation

Vasey RSL Care are proud to continue our major sponsorship of the Victorian Duke of Edinburgh Shield – a state-wide bowling competition held concurrently at 15 venues across the state with around 90 teams and 1,500 bowlers taking part in total.

This year's Shield took place in April at Sale, Eaglehawk, Echuca, Moama, Rich River, Barham, Mathoura,



Deniliquin, Finley, Cobram, Barooga, Yarrawonga Mulwala and Benalla.

Congratulations to winners Altona 2.

Runners up were Lakes Entrance 2, with Waverley 2 coming in third place.

The winner's shield was presented by GM Veteran Services, Chris Gray, to the Altona 2 team at the presentation dinner in June (pictured above with Chris (l) and shield organiser Tim (r)).





Ceridian Volunteers Lend a Hand at Brighton E.

A group of volunteers from Ceridian joined us earlier this year to provide some hands-on support at our Brighton East and Bundoora aged care homes.



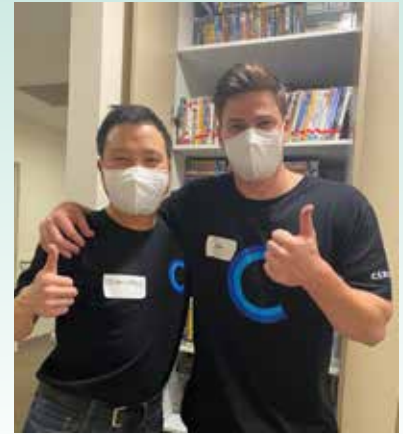
We would like to send a big thank you to these members of Ceridian's staff who chose to spend time at Vasey RSL Care on their corporate volunteer day.

Ceridian is providing our new HR software which will be rolled out next year.

Lifestyle Assistant Rosie, was very appreciative of the transformation they achieved in the lifestyle

storeroom, cataloguing and sorting the DVDs, books and other resources.

"It's amazing how a few hours from a great collaborative team can make such a difference," she said.



Not Just a Job

Vasey RSL Care is a mission-based organisation that works to 'Serve Those Who Served'. Working here gives meaning and purpose – offering care and support to veterans and their families in our ex-service units, residential aged care and in their own homes.

- Residential aged care: nursing, caring, support, management and admin.
- Home care: nursing, allied health services, support coordinators (based at central office in Hawthorn).
- Veteran Services and Central Office admin.



Sign up for job alerts: www.vaseyrslcare.org.au
Click on the 'Join Our Team' link.

