

# VASEY RSL CARE NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter for the Vasey RSL Care Community

Summer 2022-23

## Volunteers: we need you!

**Volunteers are the icing on the cake! They add to the leisure and lifestyle programs in residential care where their gift of time and talents is so beneficial and greatly appreciated.**

Firstly, thank you to all our wonderful volunteers for the support you provide our organisation and for the kindness and care you so generously offer our residents.

Volunteering takes all shapes! While some people might volunteer on a regular basis, others offer to help occasionally with outings or events when they can.

"We love all types of volunteers!" says General Manager – Human Resources, Tamara Paton. "Every volunteer is unique and that's valuable because each resident is unique."

"Also, with pandemic precautions remaining in place, we often ask residents to stay in their own unit, which means the lifestyle team has to run separate activities in each unit, which is not easy.

"There are times when an extra pair of hands can really enhance the experience for our residents," says Tamara.

**If you are interested in volunteering, we'd love to hear from you! Call the Lifestyle Coordinator at your preferred aged care home – or for central office volunteering, call Krishna on 9810 5529.**

### Our Volunteers Help With:

- Running quizzes
  - Driving our minibuses
  - Doing manicures
  - Helping on outings
  - Helping with events - parties, commemorative services etc.
  - Organising craft activities
  - Helping residents with iPhones, iPads/PCs
  - Spending quality one-on-one time reading, talking or doing activities with residents
  - Doing the footy tips
  - Performing - playing a musical instrument, singing or dancing
  - Calling bingo
  - Bringing a pet to visit
  - Running religious services
  - Helping with gardening activities
- And in many other ways that add to the lives of our residents.



*"Do it! You'll never regret it. It's fantastic. You'll meet lots of lovely people and it gives you an extra reason to get up in the morning."* Sue, Volunteer - Brighton East



*"I just love going to speak to everyone and seeing them smile when we come in... that just makes my day."* Isla, Volunteer - Brighton (Star of the Sea College)



*"Volunteers extend our family. They are here because they want to be here - they love our residents, and anything I ask them to do they are always keen to do it."* Linda - Lifestyle Coordinator, Bundoora

# From Our CEO

## Management Changes

I'd like to begin with an update on our Executive Management Team: in September we said farewell to General Manager – Finance & Admin, Warren Haysom, and this month we say farewell to General Manager – Property Services, Steve Best.

Both have been with Vasey RSL Care for more than 20 years and have made major contributions to the organisation. Our thanks and best wishes go to Warren and Steve.

We have welcomed Milka Underhill, who has taken on a changed role combining finance with management of the extended admin portfolio now including the recently outsourced property services (*more information on page 10*).

## VIP Visit to Frankston South

In October, we hosted Victorian Minister for Veterans, the Honourable Shaun Leane and local member, Paul Edbrooke MP at Vasey RSL Care Frankston South, for a long-awaited visit to the Memorial Wall (largely funded by a grant from the 'Victoria Remembers' Funding) followed by afternoon tea with residents from the ex-service accommodation (*see opposite*).

## Chris Joins the Pollie Pedal 2022

Also in October, General Manager – Veteran Services, Chris Gray, spent two weeks on the roads of the ACT, cycling with MPs past and present and raising funds for Soldier On and the work they do to support the veteran community. Well done to Chris for going the full 1000km and exceeding his fundraising goal (thanks to your support!).

Chris was also in an elite group back in Canberra in November for the Prime Minister's Veteran Employment Awards. Chris was one of just three national finalists for the Employee of the Year but missed out on winning the award.

## Research Tour to Great Britain

I was finally able to undertake a research tour to Great Britain, a tour postponed for more than two years due to COVID-19. The tour took in a variety of aged care services and I was also able to add a visit to Belvedere House, an organisation offering support to veterans in need.



It was a full agenda and I'll be talking about it over the next few issues: Part 1 includes one of the highlights – visiting the Royal Chelsea Hospital in London and meeting some of the 'Chelsea Pensioners', a term of affection for the men and women from this British institution. (*See page 11.*)

## Remembrance Day

On Friday 11 November we stopped for a minute's silence in memory of all who have served our country, and in particular all who have given their lives to protect our freedom: this is an important day for all our aged care homes and brings back sad memories for our residents.

## We need your help!

At the AGM on 17 November, the 2021-22 financial results were presented and it was another tough year and a disappointing financial result with residential occupancy rates remaining stubbornly low.

**Personal recommendation is the most trusted way to find out about good aged care – so if you're happy with the services we offer, please tell all your friends - and for home care too!**

## Saluting Excellence Conference

We have just had our annual staff conference – a day when we focus on the great work of our staff 24x7x365 and present the Saluting Excellence Awards. This day always makes me feel very proud of the quality of the care we offer and integrity and kindness of our staff.

On this positive note, I'd like to send you warm wishes for the festive season and hopes for a new year that brings us all some relief from the trials of the last three years.

*Janna Voloshin,  
Chief Executive Officer*





# Minister Leane and Paul Edbrooke MP Visit

In October, we were finally able to welcome the Honourable Shaun Leane, then Victorian Minister for Veterans, and local member Paul Edbrooke MP to visit the Memorial Wall which was largely funded by a grant from the 'Victoria Remembers' Funding.

Both expressed their appreciation for the honour it brings to our veteran community and to all who have served.

This was followed by a visit to our Frankston South Ex-Service Accommodation residents and an announcement of a successful funding submission of \$50,000 to support ex-service men and women in need. The Veteran Services Team will manage this project which will provide practical support and help to improve financial literacy and management.



# Cold or flu? Antibiotics do nothing.

**World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (AAW) took place from 18-24 November. This year's theme was 'Preventing Antimicrobial Resistance Together'. So why is this so important?**

When our loved ones are sick, all we want to do is help them recover – it is human nature.

"We find, especially in our aged care homes, that family members often ask our staff for antibiotic prescriptions for their loved ones when they get a cold or flu," says Infection Prevention and Control Manager, Monina Hernandez. "But colds and flu do not respond to antibiotics – and this is why."

Monina explains:

### What are 'antimicrobials'?

Antimicrobials are medicines used to prevent and treat infections in humans, animals and plants. Examples of antimicrobials are:

- **Antibiotics** that are used to treat infections caused by **bacteria** (such as a chest infection),
- **Antivirals** that are effective against **viruses**,
- **Antifungals** that fight **fungal** infections, and
- **Antiparasitics** which are used against **parasitic diseases** caused by **worms** and **amoeba**.

These antimicrobials are not interchangeable. Antibiotics are not effective against viruses, fungi

and parasites, and antivirals are not effective against bacterial, fungal and parasitic infections, and so on.

### Why is the correct use of antimicrobials important?

Incorrect use of antimicrobials through misuse or overuse can lead to antimicrobial resistance, meaning some antimicrobials can no longer be used to treat infections. Therefore it's vital to take antimicrobials only when they are needed, in the most appropriate way, for the shortest period of time.

### Why don't antibiotics work in cold or flu?

- Antibiotics work to treat infections caused by bacteria only.
- Antibiotics do not work against infections caused by viruses.
- All colds and flu are caused by viruses, NOT bacteria.
- Therefore, antibiotics do not work for colds or flu.

### Reference:

<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/antimicrobial-stewardship/antimicrobial-awareness-week>

# 11 o'clock on the 11<sup>th</sup> of the 11<sup>th</sup>: Lest We Forget

BUNDOORA



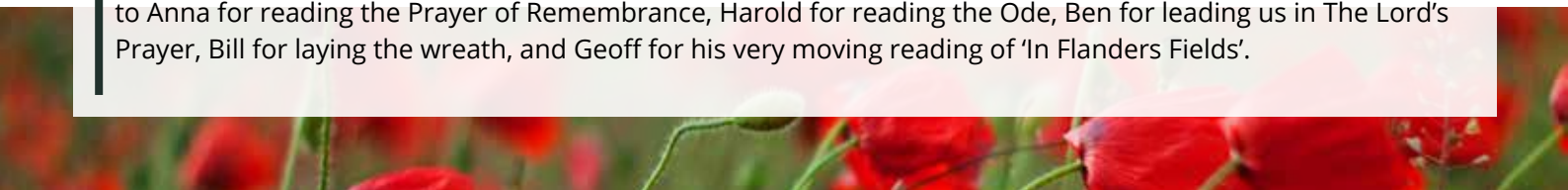
Residents and staff at Vasey RSL Care Bundoora commemorated Remembrance Day with a very moving service supported by Dawson our bugler, Bev playing the bagpipes, and Warrant Officer (WO2) Mark Clancy from the Simpson Barracks. Thank you to Liz for her reading, Eleanor for her poem, Gino for sounding the bell, Arnie for raising the flag, Terry for reading the ODE and Des, Wally, Graham and Ian for laying wreaths on behalf of the four sections of our home.



BRIGHTON EAST



Vasey RSL Care Brighton East residents, staff, friends and families gathered together to commemorate Remembrance Day. Many thanks to our guest speaker Reverend Kevin for his commemorative address, and to Anna for reading the Prayer of Remembrance, Harold for reading the Ode, Ben for leading us in The Lord's Prayer, Bill for laying the wreath, and Geoff for his very moving reading of 'In Flanders Fields'.





FRANKSTON SOUTH



Vasey RSL Care Frankston South residents and staff participated in our Remembrance Day commemoration service in Paxino courtyard. Our guest speaker was Lieutenant Kieran Skewes from Royal Australian Navy, while residents Beryl, Mamie, Geoff and Norma delivered poems and readings.



BRIGHTON

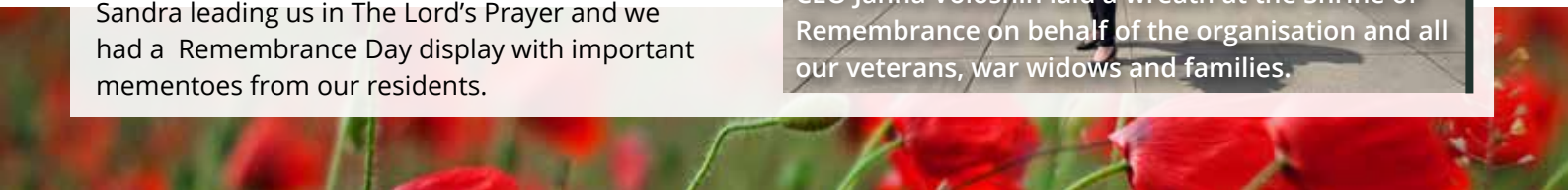


At Vasey RSL Care Brighton we held our service indoors with residents Annie and Pat helping lay the wreaths by the flagpole and resident Rev Sandra leading us in The Lord's Prayer and we had a Remembrance Day display with important mementoes from our residents.

SHRINE



CEO Janna Voloshin laid a wreath at the Shrine of Remembrance on behalf of the organisation and all our veterans, war widows and families.



# Congratulations to our 2022 Award Winners!

**Thirty-seven Saluting Excellence Awards were presented at Vasey RSL Care's staff conference, held this year at the newly refurbished and spacious Manningham Civic Centre.**

Now in their fifteenth year, the Awards recognise excellence among staff in line with Our Promises to our community – Traditional Values, Security, Person-Centred Care, Camaraderie, Dignity, Fulfillment and Quality, and a special category this year – Resilience.

A total of 239 nominations were received for 117 individual staff members, from aged care residents, family members, home care clients, ex-service accommodation residents and other members of staff.

“Congratulations to all nominees - you should still feel extremely proud to be one of this select group,” said CEO, Janna Voloshin.

Winners of the Jessie Mary Vasey Award for Excellence in Traditional Values were **Santosh Poudel** (Quality & Risk) and **Siew Ping Su** (Frankston South).

Awards for Excellence in Camaraderie went to **Rayphe Collins** (OH&S), **Tamara Paton** (GM - HR), **Nadia Wilson** (Quality & Risk) and **Heidi Mills** (Brighton East).



Excellence in Quality awards were presented to **Elsa Bramwell** (Home Care) and **Allan Chester Allanigue** (Brighton East).



Four staff members received an award for Excellence in Dignity: **Sue Douglas** (Frankston South), **Teena John** (Bundoora), **Lisa Raguz** (Bundoora) and **Rajinder Rani Kalia** (Brighton).

Awards for Excellence in Fulfillment went to **Lakmini Godawattha Liyanage** (Bundoora), **Dhriti Sudera** (Frankston South), **Leanne Saville** (Brighton) and **Anne Warden** (Veteran Services).



Two awards for Excellence in Security were presented:

**Natasha Sharp** (Bundoora) and **Wasina Sirithorn** (Bundoora).



Eight staff members received awards for Excellence in Care: **Selbin Chacko** (Frankston South),



**Jenni Beckett** (Frankston South), **Suman Suman** (Bundoora), **Nisa Thamel** (Frankston South), **Shiwalove Bhagat** (Brighton East), **Jacqui Cramer**

(Home Care), **Chorten Gurung** (Brighton East) and **Maree Browne** (Brighton East).

Finally, awards for Excellence in Resilience were

presented to **Nicole Groves** (Bundoora), **Julie-Ann Carr** (Frankston South), **Sanja Essa** (Senior Business Liaison), **Fran Ludgate** (Communications), **Neville Lin** (Brighton



East) and **Nik Patel** (Business Liaison).

## CEO Award

Congratulations to **Elsa Bramwell** on this year's CEO Award for Outstanding Achievement!

Congratulations and thank you to all this year's nominees and winners for the work you do for our community here at Vasey RSL Care.



**Conference Theme**

We chose the theme 'Resilience' for this year's conference, because after a third year of coping with the COVID-19 pandemic, our staff have demonstrated incredible resilience.

That doesn't mean they haven't found it frustrating, exhausting and emotionally draining – it means they have been able to draw on their own resources, remember self-care, reach out to help others, and in turn seek their help, and continue to be open to learning about themselves and others.

Chair, Mike O'Meara OAM, opened the day's proceedings and welcomed special guests and staff.

CEO Janna Voloshin, shared some of the challenges she has faced this year, including the loss of her dear mother early in the year, followed close after by the invasion of Ukraine, the birth country of husband, by Russia, her own birth country.

Janna talked of the ongoing covid battles in our workplace and the 'industry long-covid' that the aged care sector is facing - difficulties that require our resilience as individuals and as a community.

We were treated to a video presentation from Vasey RSL Care Bundoora - residents and staff rapped to 'Nice Nice Vasey', heavy-duty gold chains included.

Jodi Evans (Acting GM – HR) had us trying out some relaxation techniques while Chris Gray (GM – Veteran Services) talked about filling our 'resilience bucket' and sent us home with a goal to make time to do something we really enjoy, to help us 'refill our bucket'.

GM – Community Services, Rich Davey, talked about the progress in home care and what the future holds.

The highlight of the day was our keynote speaker, Joel Sardi (pictured).

In 2013, Joel was back in Australia on leave from active service in Afghanistan and in peak physical fitness, when he fell on a staircase and suffered a spinal-cord injury leaving him a C5 quadriplegic.

Joel does not sugar-coat what he went through, telling



his story with simple honesty. And he showed us what resilience can look like.

Joel is now married, has two little girls, and is working with a team on a groundbreaking online job platform **for** people with disability, created entirely **by** people with disability.

Joel left us with a very practical message - our **perspective** on a situation can be changed, our **narrative** can be changed and our **outcomes** will then change: 'Flip 4:1' – take something that has gone wrong and think of four positives from that one thing.

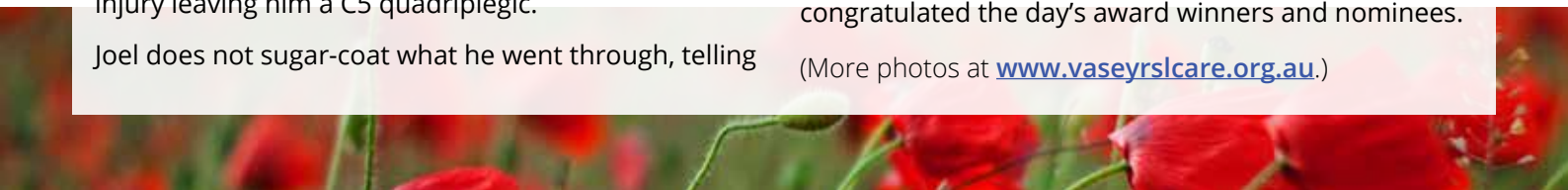


Another aspect of resilience is laughter and after lunch, Melbourne's own Lehmo tickled our funnybones. Lehmo has been out to entertain the ADF on their tours of duty in Afghanistan, Iraq, UAE, Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar and on board naval ships around the world.

He told us that the best moment for him was when a soldier came up to him after one of his shows and said, 'For two hours, you took me back to Australia.'

In closing the day, Mike O'Meara spoke of the conference being a highlight of the Vasey calendar and congratulated the day's award winners and nominees.

(More photos at [www.vaseyrslcare.org.au](http://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au).)



# New Code of Conduct for Aged Care

**In response to a recommendation from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety, the Australian Government Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission (ACQSC) introduced a Code of Conduct for Aged Care on 1 December 2022.**

The government states that the Code of Conduct will improve the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life for people receiving aged care, and build public confidence and trust in aged care services.

The Code sets out the legal requirements of aged care staff and their responsibilities to this vulnerable community: these are consistent with existing



obligations under the Aged Care Act 1997, including the Aged Care Quality Standards. They state:

“People receiving aged care should always be treated well and feel safe,” noting that aged care staff have the most

contact with people receiving care and their behaviour affects how people feel about themselves. It is therefore essential that they always act in a way that is respectful, kind and consistent with the behaviours set out in the Code.

**Aged care staff are bound by the Code and if they contravene it, they could be barred from working in the aged care sector. Similarly, the ACQSC will have powers to sanction aged care providers and revoke their provider status if they breach the Code.**

“The Code of Conduct reinforces what our staff are already expected to do”, says Janna Voloshin, Vasey RSL Care CEO. “We already have high standards expected of our staff, and while we believe this will be beneficial for the aged care sector as a whole, we do not anticipate any impact on our organisation or our residents or clients.”

# Annual General Meeting 2022

**The organisation’s AGM was held on Thursday 17 November, and as last year, the meeting format was hybrid with some attending in-person and some online. Thanks to our financial services provider, Shadforth, the in-person meeting took place in their offices in the CBD.**

Board Chair, Mike O’Meara OAM chaired the AGM and reported on some of the important events of the 2021-22 financial year, noting the rescission by RSL Victoria of their earlier decision to put Vasey RSL Care up for sale. This news is a relief for our community.

Mike reported on the issues faced by the aged care sector in a third COVID-19 year and the uncertainties affecting the financial markets and wider community, which contributed to a disappointing financial result.

CEO Janna Voloshin noted that resilience and commitment were key this year with the sector suffering from ‘industry long-COVID’, its symptoms being staff shortages, low occupancy rates and high expenditure to manage/prevent outbreaks.

Board Finance Committee Chair, Tracey Bannan reported on the financial results via Zoom, pointing out a further difficulty this year in the government’s requirement to write off bed licences, resulting in a \$2.8M write down.

There were two reappointments to the Board with Tony Carr and Dr Vanda Fortunato both returned. Dr David Fonda had been considering a Board role, but instead will continue on the Quality and Risk Committee only.

New Board Member Lucy Saaroni, an Australian Army Reservist with experience in risk management, project management and community work, was welcomed as a new Board Member.

**Full details:**

<https://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/news-and-events/>





# Thank You Cheltenham & Bentleigh RSLs

**We'd like to pass on a huge thank you to Cheltenham Moorabbin RSL and Bentleigh RSL for their generous gift of four smart new outdoor tables/chairs for the barbecue area at Vasey RSL Care Ex-Service Accommodation Cheltenham.**

They look fabulous and make the area more useful and attractive. Now all we need is for the Melbourne weather to join the party.

Some of our lovely residents can be seen below, together with Chris Barrile, President Cheltenham Moorabbin RSL (standing far right) and Tammy Gardner, Veteran Support (standing second from left);

Vasey RSL Care CEO Janna Voloshin (standing second from right) and General Manager Veteran Services Chris Gray, (standing back left).

"Thank you to everyone at Cheltenham Moorabbin and Bentleigh RSLs – this was a fabulous surprise and came at a perfect time of year," said Chris Gray.

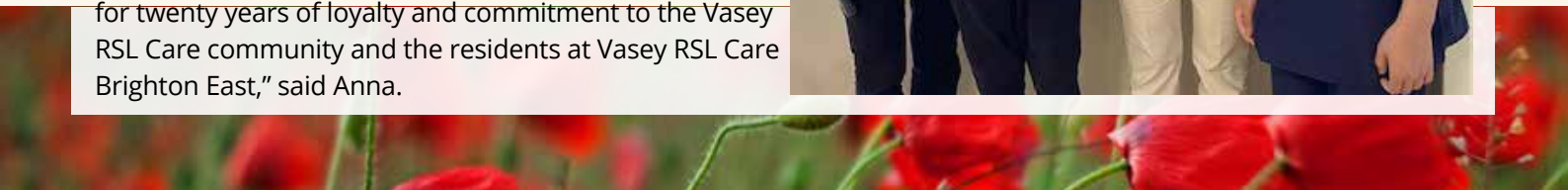


## Celebrating 20 Years at Vasey RSL Care

**Congratulations Patsy on 20 years' service!**

Patsy is a valued member of the team at Vasey RSL Care Brighton East and is pictured with Residential Manager, Anna and co-workers Elizabeth (left) and Shivalove (right).

"We'd like to wish Patsy all the very best and thank her for twenty years of loyalty and commitment to the Vasey RSL Care community and the residents at Vasey RSL Care Brighton East," said Anna.



# Increasing Awareness of the Germs we Carry

Since the advent of COVID-19, we have all become much more aware of germs! Monina Hernandez is our Infection Control and Prevention Manager and she works across staff and residents to ensure effective infection prevention and control practices to reduce the risk of transmission



Recently, Monina organised a short hand hygiene session for residents at each of our aged care homes to highlight the importance of hand hygiene for everyone.

Monina asked residents to raise their hands if they washed their hands that day and to keep them raised if they thought their hands were clean. Using a 'glitterbug' lotion as a non-toxic visualisation for real



germs, Monina had rubbed some glitterbug onto the front cover of a magazine. She then asked residents to pass it around, look at the cover and see if it was clean. Most residents passed the magazine around but a

few chose not to touch it. Most commented that they thought it was clean.

After this, Monina used LED light to look at the hands of those who had touched the magazine and parts of their hands glowed where they had come in contact with the

glitterbug. Similarly, she used LED light to look at the hands of those who did not touch the magazine – no glowing hands.



'Fomites' are items that are possible carriers of infection. The magazine was the fomite in this demonstration, but fomites can be hand rails, chairs, doors handles, utensils, clothing, taps and any other inanimate object that might carry germs.

"I used this as a take-off point to discuss fomites, which is just about anything lying around in the environment, eg, the magazine," says Monina.

This activity demonstrates how easy it is to pick up germs from any object in the environment.

"How can you ensure that you will not put those bugs into your mouth or into your nose?" Monina asked residents.

Someone answered, "Wash your hands!"

**Hand hygiene is one of the easiest ways for us all to help reduce the spread of infection – washing or sanitising frequently throughout the day is an important activity for us all to remember.**

## Changes to our Property Services

Vasey RSL Care is in the process of changing from managing property services internally to using a specialist property services management and maintenance organisation called MDFM. This decision was the result of multiple factors, including changing ex-service accommodation (ESA) needs with new sites in regional locations and new initiatives in the metro region and increased challenges in securing trade services, resulting in delays in ESA refurbishments.

MDFM has over 40 years' experience in commercial construction and maintenance work, and has the

resources and infrastructure to manage our properties and our compliance and safety requirements as these grow and change in support of our strategic plan.

Our 100+ sub-contractors, who provide a wide range of services, will continue to provide their services under the management of MDFM.

We are working to ensure a smooth transition across all areas of the business and we do not anticipate any adverse effects for our aged care or ESA residents.



# Learning from Others: Research Tour to the UK

**Part 1: a research tour taking in a range of services for veterans and older people across the UK finally took place in late October: CEO, Janna Voloshin, noted some similarities, as well as some key differences.**

"I had been looking forward to this trip in early 2020 but as with so many things, it had to be rescheduled!

"The tour began in London and focused on providing an understanding of the UK Aged Care System. We were fortunate to meet with the National Care Forum Policy Director, the CEO of Care England and the CEO of their Home Care peak body.

"This meeting took place at the Royal Chelsea Hospital which is home to the 'Chelsea Pensioners', well-known in the UK and easily recognised at public occasions by their red uniforms – more on them in a minute.

"We learned that in the UK, aged care is part of their social support program, delivered by what we know as local councils (noting that the UK generally has only two levels of government). Each council or borough has a different budget as their income from rates differs, so one area can be very different to the next. Around 20% of their social support funding goes to aged care.

"This made me realise how much easier our system is with aged care funded federally, and especially now the AN-ACC system is in place.

"The UK is facing the same staffing challenges that we are here, but with 165,000 vacant posts in the UK, again, Australia is faring better.

"It was very interesting to meet with Mary Cridge, Deputy Chief Inspector of Adult Social Care at the UK's Care Quality Commission (CQC) which is responsible for quality assessments in health care, aged care, disability and even medical practice. Their approach to assessment is refreshingly positive, being: everybody is considered good until they find something different and further investigation is required.



"Assessment is driven by five key questions:

1. Is it safe?
2. Is it effective?
3. Is it caring?
4. Is it responsive?
5. Is it well-led?

"Visiting the Royal Chelsea Hospital was a highlight of this trip: it is an amazing place, located in the heart of London right on the River Thames, with a dining room like something from Harry Potter. (top)

"Founded over 300 years ago to **'Look after soldiers broken by war and age,'** that purpose still remains today.

"The Royal Chelsea Hospital is an integrated aged care service solely for older veterans, housing around 300 (and only 18 female) who are 67 years plus. It is for non-officer ranks only and does not house partners, spouses or war widows.

"The respect shown to Chelsea Pensioners is a shining example of dignified care for those who served."

*Next time: Janna visits innovative aged care in Bristol.*



# Conference Major Sponsors 2022: Thank You


## Will You Support Our Heroes?

'Hero's Wish' honours veterans and war widows by fulfilling their dreams and adding to their treasured memories.

To make a donation to Hero's Wish, please complete the form below and send it to:  
Ms Janna Voloshin, CEO, Vasey RSL Care, PO Box 203, Hawthorn VIC 3122



I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support Hero's Wish.

My cheque, payable to Vasey RSL Care, is enclosed

Please debit my credit card: number\* | | | | | ■ | | | | ■ | | | | ■ | | | |

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Alternatively, donate online: [www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/heros-wish/grant-a-heros-wish/](http://www.vaseyrslcare.org.au/heros-wish/grant-a-heros-wish/)

\* Please provide these details so we can process your donation. \*\* Provide address &/or email if you would like a receipt sent.