

Media Release

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Excellence recognised at inaugural Age Services Awards

The outstanding achievements of the age services industry in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory were recognised at the Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) Excellence in Age Service Awards, sponsored by Hesta, in Sydney last night.

LASA CEO Sean Rooney said the achievements by organisations, teams and individuals highlight the dedication of an industry passionate about providing quality care for older Australians.

“Our industry has countless unassuming professionals, volunteers and organisations who don’t generally look for thanks or praise. It is their dedication and professionalism that make up the backbone of our industry,” Mr Rooney said.

“The awards celebrate and showcase the significant contributions being made to improving the quality of life of older Australians and promote community involvement in age services.

“I congratulate all the nominees, finalists and winners of LASA’s 2018 NSW/ACT Excellence in Care Awards for their outstanding efforts and the contributions they make daily, not only to our industry, but to the lives of the older Australians they care for,” Mr Rooney said.

LASA’s 2018 Excellence in Care Awards have promoted and recognised excellence across all fields of the NSW/ACT aged care industry. The three award categories are: Organisation, Team and Individual.

The state level award recipients will now progress as finalists to the national awards to be presented at LASA’s National Congress in Adelaide from 28-31 October this year.

The 2018 NSW/ACT Award winners are:

Organisation Award – The Whiddon Group

Team Award – Goodwin Health and Wellness Centre Team

Individual Award – Claire Abbott, Nurse Practitioner, Peninsula Villages

Congratulations also to the following finalists: Alisa Monaghan (integratedliving Australia), Dale Feeney (The Whiddon Group Laurieton), The Whiddon Kyogle team (The Whiddon Group), Goodwin’s Influenza Vaccination Program (Goodwin Aged Care Services), Goodwin Aged Care Services and Berrigan & District Aged Care Association Limited.

LASA’s 2018 Excellence in Care Award nominations were reviewed by a panel of industry experts. LASA would like to thank all the judges for their time and dedication and a special thanks to **HESTA** for making the awards possible. Profiles of each award winner are provided below.

Organisation Award – The Whiddon Group

The Whiddon Group (Whiddon) is a not-for-profit organisation that has been providing care and support services to older people for over 70 years. In 2015, Whiddon launched MyLife, a new, wellbeing-focused, model of care. Prior to launch, a review of care planning practices identified a gap around consistent evaluation, goal setting and structures in the wellbeing area.

Importantly, some RNs said they were not confident initiating and conducting conversations around emotional and social needs with residents. The Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT) is an internationally recognised, robust tool that measures social-care-related quality of life. It links closely to the seven outcomes in MyLife by measuring quality of life against eight wellbeing domains. The eight domains of wellbeing cover four lower-order-needs (accommodation, food, safety, personal care) and four higher-order-needs (social interaction, occupation, control over daily life, dignity). The four-lower domains are traditionally much easier to support, whereas the four-higher are more challenging for providers to support well.

The 15-month trial took place across 2016-2017 in partnership with ASCOT founders, University of Kent. The main goals were to test the value of using ASCOT to care planning, and the sustainability/effectiveness of the methodology.

The integration of ASCOT in care planning, and the “circle of care” interview methodology that allowed people with dementia to participate, represented an innovative practice in care planning. RNs led conversations with residents, engaged family members and the dedicated MyLife carer.

The increased empowerment of residents and families and the underpinning of Whiddon’s relationship-based care approach were two of the strongest factors in their decision to pursue full integration of ASCOT in its care planning processes and systems. The ASCOT tool is now being implemented across Whiddon’s homes and community care services.

Team Award – Goodwin Health and Wellness Centre Team

The team at Goodwin Health and Wellness Centre, incorporating Goodwin Health Club, provide seniors with access to a hub of specialists in one location, which ensures that clients’ various health services support each other in the context of the person’s lifestyle, mental and physical health, and care plans.

The Health and Wellness Centre promotes active aging with a holistic health focus, including reactive and proactive services. It promotes quality of life for their clients which is consistent with Goodwin’s vision and mission. The age services experience therefore becomes focused on the positives of empowerment, personal gains and goals.

The key objectives of the Goodwin Health Club are to promote enablement, independence and quality of life through preventative health measures so as to reduce falls risk, pain and social isolation; improve joint and muscle tone; and maintain cognitive function.

As the Centre grew, Goodwin observed a growing demand from its residents to remain fit and healthy through their aging journey and in January 2017 introduced Goodwin Health Club. The Health Club offers an opportunity to stay active in mind, body and soul through participation in a range of classes including yoga, weights, resistance, and tai chi. The Club runs 18 classes each week across three Goodwin villages across Canberra.

Individual Award – Claire Abbott, Nurse Practitioner, Peninsula Villages

Claire's role as Nurse Practitioner is integral to Peninsula Village as it assists its residents who require ongoing or one-off care, giving them peace of mind that they are receiving high quality care.

Claire's innovative and forward-thinking contributions as Peninsula Village's Nurse Practitioner has greatly improved the lives and health of older Australians in their care.

Claire's role supports local GPs through both formal and informal collaborative agreements with five out of six visiting GPs. As Peninsula Village's Nurse Practitioner, on average Claire reviews 50 residents per week for Chronic, Palliative Care and Gerontological assessment. This has resulted in a 42% reduction in Peninsula Village transfers to hospital over the last three years of her tenure.

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