



# Excellence in Age Services Awards Western Australia

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The LASA Excellence in Age Services Awards promote and recognise excellence across the diverse and dynamic fields of endeavour in the age services industry.

The awards celebrate the passion and achievements of organisations, teams and individuals in the service of older Australians. The awards also seek to increase public confidence and community involvement in aged care and services.

Awards have been judged at a state level across the five categories with winners progressing as finalists to the national awards. The national awards will be announced online at the LASA National Congress 2020.

# AWARD CATEGORIES

## Team Award

Recognising a team, working within the age services sector that has created an environment that encourages workplace diversity, positive workplace culture and increased staff wellbeing through development of a service or process or has used innovation and initiative to improve the lives of older people and improve the age services experience.

## Organisation Award

Recognising an age services provider who has made an outstanding contribution to care and services development or provision of high level support to the aged by demonstrating leadership, innovation and excellence.

## Rising Star Award

This award recognises an individual with less than five years industry experience who has made an outstanding contribution to the age services sector, has used innovation and initiative to improve the lives of older people and has delivered high quality care to the aged.

## Individual Award

This award recognises an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the age services sector, has used innovation and initiative to improve the lives of older people and has delivered high quality care to the aged.

## Next Gen Young Leader Award

This award recognises an innovative, bold and inclusive young leader under the age of 40 who has made an outstanding contribution to the age services sector and has used passion, drive and initiative to improve the lives of older people.

# TEAM AWARD

## Collaborative Leadership Model, Maurice Zeffert Home



The Maurice Zeffert Home (Inc) (MZ) is a 60-year-old NFP organisation offering residential care, retirement living, meals on wheels and day lounge service.

MZ has a proud culture for being innovative and in 2018 adopted a new Collaborative Leadership Model by appointing an Executive Management Team in place of a traditional CEO model. The organisation has thrived under the new leadership model and following success of the first-year trial, it has now been extended into the future. Whilst this leadership model is widely accepted internationally in the NFP sector, it is believed Maurice Zeffert is the first aged care organisation to adopt the leadership model in Australia.

The leadership of the organisation is guided through mutually agreed key areas of responsibility and key performance indicators that are measured by the board quarterly, resulting in continuous improvement. This provides the Board with a clearer understanding of the business and the sector which vastly improves Governance. This collaboration also encourages diverse thinking through improved brainstorming and strategic development and secures a more interesting and personally enriching workplace environment for everyone.

The decentralised management model is rare and unique in aged care in Australia. It was incredibly brave of the Executives to pitch the model and brave for the Board to accept it. Maurice Zeffert being a stand-alone organisation has the advantage of being agile and flexible to engrain innovation into its culture and celebrates thinking outside the box.

The EMT is comprised of 3 female executives with diverse backgrounds, qualifications, age, culture, faith, and countries of origin. The new leadership arrangement ensured there is no group think; "Diversity: the art of thinking independently together" (Malcolm Forbes) is actively practiced in this model.

Gender diversity at Board level has improved from 11% to 54% female representation which introduces a more compassionate and nurturing perspective to care services.

Being an organisation that is resilient and adaptable ensures the team are more in touch with the everyday operations of the organisation and can respond to the needs and wants of the residents and elders we care for. The team foster a community within a community and achieve the very best outcomes to enhance the quality of life for our elders.

# TEAM AWARD

## Woodvale Social Centre, Community Vision



The Management Team and Community Vision's Woodvale Social Centre work tirelessly to cultivate an environment that is lively, friendly and inviting for anyone who attends.

The centre's team delivers a vast variety of activities such as Zumba Class, Creative Arts, Yoga, VR sessions, music therapy intergenerational groups, gardening and technology training delivering a unique experience to all those who attend.

The positive effects of these relationships are tangible for both age groups, but also pay dividends for the wider community. Intergenerational activities help our customers to relate to and value one another, which supports the reduction in ageism, breaking down stereotypes and increasing empathy amongst the youths.

Community Visions Intergenerational project has enabled cultural traditions and values, as well as new innovations and technology to be shared between generations, which helps build a sense of personal and community identity while encouraging tolerance.

Community Visions clients that suffer from dementia and similar cognitive impairments have been seen to improve their memory and have a more positive outlook as a result of interacting with the Family Day Care Children.

Held Monthly, the Intergenerational group delivers a variety of benefits not only to the ageing but to those children who don't have grandparents or seniors in their families, engaging with older adults fills a social gap.

# ORGANISATION AWARD

## Brightwater Care Group



Brightwater Care Group is a leading provider of aged care, disability and retirement services that has been part of the Western Australian community for 119 years.

Brightwater is a not for profit with a Mission, pursuing the dignity of independence, which drives all they do.

Brightwater operates 12 residential aged care facilities in Western Australia as well as one retirement village and supports over 1000 clients in their own homes. Within their residential aged care facilities they offer transitional care and respite care.

In 2011 Brightwater established a dedicated Research Centre with the aim of extending their influence. The Brightwater Research Centre is

a hub of discovery and innovation, influencing operations across our own services, and the wider community. Their research, including research with national and international collaborations, helps to provide evidence and paths to best practice.

At the core of the support they provide is a team of over 2000 people who are diverse, dedicated and hard-working. Brightwater is driven by a strong culture of care. Brightwater see it as their privilege to enable their clients to lead their most fulfilling lives.

Innovation and dedication is important to Brightwater's business.

# ORGANISATION AWARD

## ECHO Community Services



ECHO's purpose is to enrich the lives of people living independently in their own homes through connection to services and community. ECHO strives to deliver measurable social benefit based on contemporary, evidence-based practice to:

- Provide practical assistance and support to community members in need
- Enable people to live independently and remain integrated within their local community
- Actively promote positive ageing
- Support a thriving and inclusive community
- Create a strong sense of belonging

Despite the pandemic, ECHO has seen a substantial growth in HCP (73.67%) over the 2020 financial year, including a growing number of higher level packages, resulting in growing demand for clinical care and governance.

In a time of uncertainty, ECHO has found innovative ways to improve. For example, in February, ECHO presented at the NFP People Conference in Melbourne, sharing a simple tool for improving performance appraisals.

ECHO has also been working to build relationships with other organisations, such as ECU and the Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre in Tasmania, with two aims:

- Ensure ECHO's approaches are based on contemporary research
- Develop the possibility of new research to improve understanding of aged care.

ECHO also won a CHSP innovation grant to trial a new, locally developed system, designed to improve care planning and help people stay living at home longer. This trial is already yielding a wealth of invaluable data for the developers, as well as gaining positive feedback from users.

# ORGANISATION AWARD

## VisAbility Ltd



VisAbility (the former Association for the Blind of WA) has been providing services to older Western Australians with a vision impairment for over 100 years garnering a reputation for both responding effectively to the individual needs of clients and for working in partnership and collaboration with other service providers, funders and community groups. They are proud to be the organisation that introduced Guide Dogs and O&M services to Australia.

VisAbility is an independent, not for profit, company limited by guarantee and a leading provider of innovative, contemporary professional therapy and support services in the disability and aged care sector. The staff provide services to people across a wide range of ages and disabilities, with a focus on people with vision impairment, in the home and in community settings.

They are one of the largest employers of interdisciplinary allied health staff as well as people with disability (currently 17%). Our staff comprise 165 FTE and 200+ Volunteers.

In the last 12 months, they have responded to the need of approximately 3,500 people with disability

(primarily people who are blind or vision impaired). Two thirds of these clients are aged over 65. They work within a client-centred framework and offer individualised supports, placing the person at the centre of all their practices.

VisAbility offer senior Western Australians, their families and carers local solutions by delivering services from our main office in Victoria Park, through regional offices located in Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, Mandurah, as well as visiting service and outreach programs WA wide.

VisAbility's Exercise Clinic delivers an 8 week program designed to improve our clients physical and mental well being. The program incorporates strength and balance training, nutritional guidance, mindfulness exercises, and falls prevention techniques, to meet the unique needs of older blind and vision impaired Western Australians.

In addition in 2018 VisAbility won the HESTA Organisation of the year for our innovative ROAM program which brings Orientation and Mobility to regional and remote people with a vision impairment via video conference. The program expanded during Covid -19.

# RISING STAR AWARD

## Sonja Norville, Community Vision



Sonja Norville has worked within the Aged Care Industry for just over a year. She delivers support and care needed of seniors and people living with a disability, enabling them to remain independent in their own homes.

Sonja addresses every little issue regardless of how small or big and delivers the best possible solution which is extended to her direct customers loved ones.

An example of this is of a customers husband who was experiencing high career stress due to his wife condition and behaviours. Sonja intervened by offering social support for her customer at Community Visions Woodvale social centre, which was originally declined due to behavioural concerns; However, with coordination with her customer's husband to provide reassurance of his wife care, this customer now attends Woodvale social centre 2 full days a week, providing the husband much-needed respite and reduction in aggression and frustration of her client due to the activities and therapies provided at the centre.

Sonja has no age boundaries and views all her customers as people. Sonja understands that each and every person is individual and she delivers care that is personalised to their unique story.

Sonja on multiple occasions has supported customers outside of her scope of responsibilities.



Sarah Tooke,  
HESTA member

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# RISING STAR AWARD

## Hadja Sow, ECHO



Originally from Guinea and only having completed her training in Australia in 2018, Hadja has become a vital contributor to the work of ECHO. Starting as a Support Worker in May 2019, Hadja was promoted to the role of Scheduler in November, less than six months later.

As Scheduler, Hadja is a key link between the clients and staff both in the office and in the field, helping to make sure each client has the right Support Worker, with the right skills at the right time. Hadja has the ability to keep clients at ease and ensures clients are at the centre of everything she does. Hadja has made a big impact in a short period of time.

Scheduling is a critical role to the operations of ECHO and Hadja has demonstrated excellent leadership skills and led the Scheduling Team through a major change process. She has found ways to improve efficiency and looked for

opportunities to improve her own skills, the lives of clients and the processes of ECHO.

Hadja's can-do attitude and commitment to going above-and-beyond make her a valued and admired member of her team. Regularly stepping in to provide support to colleagues (even sacrificing her own personal time and leave to do so), Hadja's reliability and positive attitude mean she is an integral asset to the ECHO team.

The importance and difficulty of scheduling is often underestimated. Matching each client with the right staff member, with the right skills, at the right time makes a huge difference to the client's outcomes and satisfaction; and the task is complicated, especially when there are unplanned absences or disruptions to the normal routine.

Hadja has managed to innovate and introduce new working approaches in this difficult role. During the COVID pandemic the Scheduling Team has had to respond rapidly to massive changes, with some staff self-isolating, some clients putting services on hold, and lots of innovations to make sure systems can handle the strain. Hadja has also been supporting ECHO's efforts to improve consistency and efficiency in the way we roster staff with clients. Hadja's contribution can be measured by a fall in scheduling-related complaints by 40 % to 5 % and increase in compliments received.

Hadja is driven by a continuous improvement mindset, proactively seeking feedback and learning opportunities in the feedback process. Hadja is now looking to extend her education and pursue a certificate in Leadership and Customer Service Relations.

# INDIVIDUAL AWARD

## Helen Nowlan, Compatible Care Nursing Services



Compatible Care Nursing started in 2012 with Helen Nowlan and Trish Gloede. Trish had over 28 years as a DON and wanted to start an agency that worked together with providers. Hence the motto 'Working Harmoniously Together' Sadly Trish passed away in 2015 and Helen, together with her husband Paul had to try and find their way in to the world of aged care without Trish's clinical expertise. Helen having a strong hospitality background gave that edge of customer service/focus that the sector needed and Paul with his sharp eye and attention to detail for scheduling and staffing they managed to move forward with enthusiasm and a genuine passion for looking after older Australian's. In 2018, the business expanded with recruits that have extensive aged care experience and moving from a home office to functional office space with training rooms. This expansion included a Clinical team, HR, Accounts officers and quality in

house training. Trish's dream for a quality agency would be realised. The expansion included adding more arms to the business. Quality consulting, Placement services, Community Nursing and a training hub.

To safeguard Older Australians and Approved Providers, Helen Nowlan led the project of ensuring all staff prior to visiting any community clients or RACF's did a 'Health Check Declaration'. Staff could access this from their smart phone, answer all the health status and COVID questions, electronically sign and in our system prior to leaving home for their allocated shift. This, together with evidence of flu vaccination has been an invaluable tool to all of our clients/providers. Compatible Care and the Approved Provider can site this both via our 'Bookings Website' and on the staff's smart phone.

# INDIVIDUAL AWARD

## Lisa Kempster, Community Vision



Lisa Kempster is a well-known and respected West Australian Art Therapist, who is employed by Community Vision.

Lisa is a professional practitioner who has over 20+ years of knowledge and experience working within the Arts Industry. She designs art programs specific to Community Visions customers and their abilities.

Lisa is incredibly caring, passionate and committed to the significant role that art therapy can have towards fostering positive creative social engagement as well as the capacity for art to encourage personal and emotional transformation.

Working closely with the Marketing and communications manager of Community Vision she seeks out innovative ways to push boundaries in connecting Community Vision customers with alternative mediums to offer different but just as rewarding sensory experiences.

Working with the MarCom Manager Lisa is currently developing a Virtual Reality Creative Art therapy program to deliver fully submerged art experiences. This innovation empowers creative expression, ignites imaginations and supports self-confidence as the experience is personal to each and every customer.

Lisa is client-focused ensures that every interaction is created for the client's absolute best interest at heart, whilst always having consideration for their personalised specific needs. Her art therapy class helps develop interpersonal skills, manage behaviour, reduce stress and increase self-esteem through creative expression.

# NEXT GEN YOUNG LEADER AWARD

**Caitlin Burnett**, Silver Chain Group



Caitlin Burnett commenced her Journey with Silver Chain over 9 years ago as a young dynamic care aide reliever, providing direct support and best care to our clients. Caitlin has been key in supporting Aged Care and promoting independence in our ageing population throughout WA metro. Within 2 years after demonstrating exemplary care, initiative and leadership, Caitlin moved to a Team Leader position where she led a team of over 30 staff members.

During her years as a Team Leader, it was evident Caitlin had a passion for learning and supporting her team and clients. Caitlin then moved to a more senior position, leading the Team Leaders and carers, a team of over 300 staff with the same dedication, leadership and compassion.

Caitlin went on to study for her Cert IV in Dementia and in 2019, was awarded the 'Dementia Change Champion' of the Year at the Alzheimer's WA Symposium.

Caitlin spent 2019 driving her passion for Dementia friendly communities by developing a partnership with WA Favourites Dome to create the Living Well Cafes.

Caitlin led the team to facilitate the vision of providing a Safe, enabling and friendly environment for people living with Dementia to build relationships and meaningful connections in the community. The aim was to reflect a dementia friendly approach through access to our environments, appropriate use of language, inclusiveness and collaboration with people living with dementia and their Carers. We now have a dedicated team and day connecting over 35 clients and their carers, in over 3 locations in WA. Caitlin's goal is to extend this to many more across the metro region.

During Dementia Awareness month last year Caitlin proposed and led a Dance to help raise awareness. The client focus group developed 'A dance to remember'. This dance was held for clients living with dementia and their families to. Clients along with their friends and family attended a fun, inclusive and safe event which was enjoyed by many. Caitlin led the team to proactively raise donations to provide refreshments and costs for hiring out a suitable venue for the dance. Over 40 clients and their carers were in attendance. It was a hugely successful evening, and to quote the words from a clients husband whos wife has as a diagnosis of dementia: "I never thought I would ever have an opportunity to dance with my wife again, and you have given that to us."

# NEXT GEN YOUNG LEADER AWARD

## Ashleen Chand-Babooram, Guildford Village & St Jude's Mental Health Services



Ashleen Chand-Babooram's role is Manager of Guildford Aged Care Facility where she is known as a calm, caring and capable professional with immense pride in her position and in her staff and their care delivered to their residents and their families.

During these challenging times resulting from the Covid Pandemic, Ashleen has managed to achieve safe infection control which is delivered in a calm and efficient way focusing on safety of residents, families and staff. She has introduced strategies to comfort the residents through virtual communication with their loved ones and has introduced the watching of old favourite movies for their comfort and enjoyment. She has also instigated more personalised one on one activities where possible and applicable.

During this time Ashleen's caring and kindness and communication has afforded the very best outcomes to her team, their residents and families.

Ashleen's Management of and care for her team of whom she is very proud, and concerned for their well-being is born out in their absolute dedication to deliver the best possible care to their residents and respect to their families making for a happy, well functioning team and continuity of staff, offering best care and comfort to residents.

# NEXT GEN YOUNG LEADER AWARD

## Gabriela Di Perna, MercyCare



Gabriela transitioned into the Aged Care sector in February 2019 having previously worked as a Principal Consultant at Baxter Lawley, a Perth based management consultancy focusing on the not-for-profit sector. Whilst working at MercyCare, Gabriela was responsible for the management of major strategic projects for the Aged Care directorate. This included the Intergenerational Care Approach and the Digital Empowerment project. Gabriela led the implementation of the New Aged Care Standards and all proactive initiatives regarding the Royal Commission into Aged Care. Gabriela is a strong influencer and strategic thinker and she has made a significant contribution to the strategic direction of MercyCare.

Gabriela's brain child is the Digital Empowerment project, an Australian-first, joint 12 month research study between MercyCare, the University of Queensland and CheckedIn Care to explore the impact of using the MercyCare Connect app on mood and loneliness in older Australians.

The project aims to invest in the learning of residents across MercyCare connecting them with the things that matter to them most. Funding secured from the Department of Health, CHSP Innovation Funding, as well as from Lotterywest to equip 75 participants across MercyCare's Aged Care services Residential Aged Care, Home Care and Retirement Living with tablets and the Mercycare Connect App - designed specifically for people 65 years plus.

The project has so far been positively received by participants, their families and the wider stakeholder groups alike.

Gabriela has pushed the boundaries and been pivotal in the development of several initiatives across MercyCare's Aged Care Services making a positive difference in the lives of older Australians across Home Care, Residential Aged Care and retirement living. Examples include partnering with staff at MercyCare's aged care homes to establish the "Linking Together Initiative" during lockdown due to the COVID 19. This program uses a raft of ways to support residents to stay connected with their family and friends at a time when traditional face to face visits were not possible.

Congratulations  
to all of the Finalists  
and Award Winners.

Thank you to our awards  
judging panel.

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