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New strategic plan — our future is in our hands

By Simon Wallace, Chief Executive, NZACA

The theme for NZACA’s new strategic plan is ‘our future is in our hands’. We picked this theme because in a sector that is so dependent on the Government for revenue, it’s sometimes unclear who holds the controls. To be successful it has to be us – NZACA and members. This strategy will ensure we are firmly in charge of our own destiny.

We will focus on five strategic priorities over the 2016/17 year. The goal is to help you manage a growing variety of pressures and succeed in a rapidly changing environment.

Strategic priorities

Strengthening public leadership

We want much greater political recognition of our sector and more engagement with government. Aged care will become a major issue over the next decade. Directions set now have the potential to ease the pressures of an ageing population, making aged care more affordable and of a higher quality.

We’ll be advocating for a Minister of Health and Ageing and capability within the Ministry of Health to service this minister. We’d then work with the Minister and MoH to build a united response to the megatrends impacting our sector, particularly around funding.

Reviewing the funding model

The current funding model enshrined in the ARRC agreement is broken. Amongst other things, it lacks flexibility, there’s no variation in care categories and there’s no connection to interRAI. The Government knows it’s broken and is looking to change it. We must be part of that discussion and ensure your voice is heard.

Specific actions will include:

- Go back to the funding model drawing board, in collaboration with ARRC and the MoH.
- Investigate separation of care and accommodation, as in Australia.
- Review specialist care – palliative, dementia, bariatric, etc.
- Investigate new specialities which offer revenue opportunities, such as rehabilitation.
- Investigate the relationship between home and residential care with the aim of achieving a more seamless interface driven by interRAI.

Enhancement of Technology

Technology will be a key driver of aged care policy in the coming decade. It will be used for assessment (especially interRAI); special needs, such as bariatric care; monitoring, such as home care; mobility to enhance access and lifestyle; and living such as domestic appliances and arrangement.

Currently, there is no comprehensive overview of the application of technology in our sector. Even interRAI is not being used as effectively as it could be.

NZACA will work to enhance the sector’s use of technology. That includes appointing a data analyst specifically to mine the InterRAI data to inform our advocacy and policy work, particularly in relation to the funding model.

Upskilling the workforce

While the eventual resolution of the pay equity issue (potentially within the next 12 months) may help recruitment, we’ll still be faced with staff shortages and challenges around recruitment.

We need care home staff to see a strong future in the sector and a career pathway. We also need to build more capability to support the extra resources we will be asking for from government for specialist areas such as dementia, bariatric and rehabilitation.

Our strategic focus will be on achieving greater flexibility in training, including on the job training, just in time training and appropriate qualifications, as well as training affordability.

Consumer connection

NZACA has been successful over the last few years in achieving financial gains for the sector which have led to the delivery of better service. But there are limits to the influence we can achieve acting largely alone.

We need to attract more support from our natural allies – residents and their families, and some of the professional agencies and individuals we work with.

Our focus will be on building strong relationships and alliances and looking at the feasibility of creating a residential care reference group to support our advocacy work.
Putting it into action

One of the key actions that will support the Strategic Plan is a 2017 General Election Manifesto. This political and public advocacy document will highlight the key areas where we see change is necessary. The Manifesto will be backed by a pre-election campaign pushing for the creation of a new portfolio – a Minister of Health and Ageing.

A communications plan will tell stakeholders what we are doing, and the issues and opportunities our sector faces.

There will also be a focus on insight – studies to set in motion change and analysis of data to support our advocacy.

Email us to get a copy of the full NZACA 2016/17 Strategic Plan or go to the members’ zone on the website.

Turning up the political influence

With an eye to next year’s General Election, NZACA Chief Executive Simon Wallace has been meeting with politicians from across the political spectrum, ensuring the aged care sector is firmly on their radar.

“I’ve been updating them on the issues NZACA and members are grappling with, including the equal pay case, palliative care, interRAI and workforce challenges – particularly topical given Immigration New Zealand’s recent tightening of the skilled workers category,” says Simon.

Conversely, politicians were also keen to get in front of the sector at the recent NZACA Conference.

Delegates heard from Minister of Health Dr Jonathan Coleman, Labour Party leader Andrew Little, Green party co-leader Metiria Turei, NZ First leader Winston Peters and United Future leader Peter Dunne.

“We were pleased to attract leaders from across the parties. It gave delegates some insight into how well they understand our sector,” says Simon.

“NZACA’s lobbying work with politicians will ramp up over the coming months, with the creation of a 2017 General Election Manifesto and a pre-election campaign highlighting areas where we want more government engagement and support.”
Delegates and Exhibitors were welcomed to SkyCity Auckland for the annual New Zealand Aged Care Association Conference in early October.

320 delegates from all over New Zealand and some from Australia attended the three day event.

We had a record number of exhibiting companies, 104 showcasing their latest products from the latest in technology, education, bedding and bathroom products to hoists, beds, linen, continence products to name just a few of the products on display. We welcomed several new companies to the conference and hope that they found their experience beneficial.

This year we opened up the Marlborough room opposite the main exhibition area to accommodate the demand of exhibitors.

The NZ Aged Care Association appreciates the continued support of the exhibiting companies and we hope that Conference was of benefit to them.

Our Master of Ceremonies Te Radar kept everyone up to speed and had many amusing stories to tell and kept everyone on their toes. Radar is a very popular Master of Ceremonies.

Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman Minister of Health gave the keynote address at the 2016 NZACA Conference. His speech covered many of the current issues facing the sector, including pay equity, health funding, particularly related to the health of older people and aged residential care, palliative care, elective surgery and national patient flow. He also talked about the recently updated Health Strategy and the work that is happening around the update of the Health of Older People Strategy and how these two are linked.

Minister Coleman spoke about the demand for quality residential care and how the strengthening of Government audit processes is paying off as more aged residential care homes are being awarded the maximum 4-year certification. He also spoke of the extra investment that the Government has made in dementia and palliative care services.

The Minister concluded by acknowledging the high relevance of the conference topics to improving the performance of the aged residential care sector and providing the best care possible for residents.

Jamie Fitzgerald, world class adventurer and motivational speaker followed on from the Minister. Jamie presented on day one and two and was a very popular choice.

Claire Madden a social researcher from Australia gave a very entering presentation on the future workforce: who are you likely to hire, their expectations and multi-generational teams.
Nadia Lim completed the line up on day one and this was followed by the AGM and Strategy session.

Day two we were treated to a session by John Ryder on the history of the Association and investing in your business. John was joint founder of New Zealand publicly listed retirement village operator Ryman Healthcare and joint CEO for 18 years. John was a long-standing board member of the Association back in the days of NZ Licenced Rest Homes Association. He had many stories to tell.

Concurrent clinical streams were held throughout day two and early on day three. This gave plenty of choice for the many delegates.

Keith Evans from the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management gave a very good presentation on managing risk through business continuity planning. The delegates were grateful for the useful booklets that Keith left.

The political parties were well represented, with Metiria Turei co-leader of the Green Party, Andrew Little, leader of the opposition, Hon Peter Dunne, United Future, and Rt Hon Winston Peters, who was late but confessed he had forgotten to change the clocks to daylight saving!

The highlight for me was the closing session by Billie Jordan, Granny Whisperer and Livewire founder of The Hip Op-eration Crew. What an inspirational presenter, she had a story to tell about how she became involved with the Hip Op-eration Crew. Then we were treated to a live show with eight of her team aged from 72 to 92 performing on stage. They were given a standing ovation.

Social functions

Welcome drinks and nibbles were sponsored by Health Metrics from Australia. These were held amongst the exhibition area on the first evening and many delegates took the opportunity to enjoy a drink while chatting to the exhibitors on their stands. This was a good opportunity to catch up with colleagues from previous years. Many took advantage later in the evening to enjoy a meal at one of the many restaurants in and around SkyCity.

The conference dinner ‘Disco Fever’ and the Excellence in Care Award ceremony was held onsite at SkyCity. The Event Impression team from Rotorua did an amazing job as usual and the venue looked fantastic with a fabulous dance floor with flashing disco lights. This set the scene for a great night.

Well done to those who went to such great efforts. We find that every year more and more join in the fun of the fancy costumes.

Everyone enjoyed the delicious meal, followed by the much anticipated announcement of the winners of the NZACA/EBOS Healthcare Excellence in Care Awards.

The night continued with great music from the Hipstamatics Band.

I would like to say a big thankyou to all of our sponsors and exhibitors. Without your continued support we would not have the successful conferences that we are known for.

Conference 2017 is at the Rotorua Energy Event Centre from 5-7th September. Mark your diary now.

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Thanks for making the 2016 Conference such a successful event.
2016 NZACA ANNUAL AWARDS

Congratulations to the winners of our expanded NZACA/EBOS Healthcare Excellence in Care Awards, announced at the NZACA 2016 Conference in Auckland, 4-6 October.

Award Winners:

EBOS Healthcare Overall Excellence in Care Award, and MediMap Community Connections Award

Winner: St Johns Wood Rest Home & Village, Taupo

For their ‘Grandfriends’ initiative — an intergenerational programme that encourages residents to interact with children from the local kindergarten. ‘Grandfriends’ — connecting young and old.

“I have the biggest smile on my face when I see the interaction between the residents and the children. All the faces in the room are lit up and the energy is so positive.” Ilana Kerr, Business & Care Manager, St Johns Wood Rest Home & Village.

‘Grandfriends’, an initiative that connects young and old and combats the loneliness felt by many elderly people, won St Johns Wood Rest Home & Village in Taupo the top award in the 2016 NZACA/EBOS Healthcare Excellence in Care Award.

The initiative, which is having a positive impact on everyone it touches, won the EBOS Healthcare Overall Excellence in Care Award and the MediMap Community Connections Award. This year’s expanded Awards programme attracted a record number of entrants. The winners were announced at the New Zealand Aged Care Association conference in Auckland in early October.

‘Grandfriends’ has built a relationship between St Johns Wood and its local kindergarten, bringing children and residents together every fortnight to socialise and enjoy celebrations and activities such as drawing, storytelling and dancing.

Raewyn Heke, St Johns Wood Activities Coordinator and a founding member of ‘Grandfriends’ says many care home residents struggle with a loss of independence and loneliness. The programme was devised to give a connection to the community that provides meaningful social interactions and an opportunity for residents to feel useful and valued.

“‘Grandfriends’ has had a huge impact on the residents’ wellbeing. The regular visits provide continuity that has helped to foster deeper relationships between the residents and children, and give the residents something to look forward to.

“It gives them a purpose – a reason to tell their stories, share the joy of reading, show manners, have respect, and in the moment the residents often forget about their worries and aches and pains. Residents who are usually withdrawn have a smile brought to their face, and their mood is lifted for the whole day.”

Raewyn says the kindergarten wanted students to learn about their community by being immersed in it.

“Some of them have no connection with the older generation, and our residents provide an opportunity for them to have that positive influence in their lives.”

“It’s taken over a year to fine tune ‘Grandfriends’. We’ve found the sessions work best with a mixture of structured activities, such as holiday celebrations and letting residents and children ‘go with the flow’. Together, they choose to colour, read, dance, sing or chat.”

The initiative has also encouraged residents to find other ways to engage with the local community, especially with children. Some of the projects they’ve since taken on include building wooden toys for children in need and fixing bikes, a fundraising raffle for a child in Starship, knitting for the Taupo maternity unit and joining in the ‘March for Moko’.

St Johns Wood Rest Home and Village is part of Oceania Healthcare.
Bidvest Excellence in Food Care Award

Winner: Harbourview Rest Home & Hospital, Porirua

For excellence in food and food service.
“‘You eat with your eyes’.

An award-winning chef whose food philosophy is ‘you eat with your eyes’ has helped Harbourview Rest Home & Hospital in Wellington win the Bidvest Excellence in Food Care Award.

Chef Jerson goes above and beyond to serve nutritional, delicious and appetising food to residents, says Care Home Manager Erin McGlynn.

“Improvements he’s introduced have made residents happier and healthier. Since Chef Jerson has been employed, resident satisfaction survey results for food have increased significantly.

“The residents love Jerson’s engagement and the respect he shows them by personalising his service and seeking their feedback. This has enabled us to create the desired ‘home-like’ social and family dining experience,” explains Erin.

Jerson and clinical managers work together to monitor residents’ weight to identify those at risk. They formulate meals and adjust flavour, quantity and frequency of meals for individual needs. As a result, 85% of frail residents have gained weight.

Erin says the kitchen team thrives under Jerson’s guidance and tuition.

“He began his cooking career with Bupa five years ago and then pursued his dream of becoming a qualified chef. He now uses his passion to work with the elderly to create a homely atmosphere for their dining experience, believing that they deserve the best care at this stage of their lives, including the best food.

“Jerson helps serve the meals, answering residents’ questions and responding to positive or negative feedback to continually improve their food experience.”

To share quality improvements and best practice, a presentation featuring different meals and resident feedback is shared with other care home managers in the region.

Health Ed Trust Training and Staff Development Award

Winner: Clutha Views Lifecare, part of the Heritage Group, Balclutha

For their efforts in rolling out a training programme that has seen 93% of their staff on the road to being qualified.

It’s not uncommon for staff to lack enthusiasm for education and training. Clutha Views Lifecare successfully took on that challenge, winning the Health Ed Trust Training & Staff Development Award.

Today 93% of staff are either qualified or on the road to being qualified and they are taking pride in their achievement, says Pam Joll, Clinical Operations Manager of the Balclutha care home.

A change in training delivery has created this new enthusiasm. In the first year, ten staff started and completed a certificate. The following year 15 more staff signed up with 100% pass rate achieved. Today 93% of staff are either participating in training or have qualified,” says Pam.

As well as partnering with Careerforce as the new training provider, there is a lot more talk about education and training. Staff are kept fully informed of the changes and opportunities. Time and resources are set aside for staff to meet with the trainer and discuss issues and progress.

The trainer provides support and encouragement. Importantly success is celebrated.

Pam says through attaining their certificates, staff have increased their knowledge and skills, which is enabling them to deliver a greater quality of care and support to residents.

“On a personal level, there has been an increase in staff pride in their achievements and confidence in their abilities. They’ve developed a greater team bond and culture through this shared learning experience.”

“On a personal level, there has been an increase in staff pride in their achievements and confidence in their abilities. They’ve developed a greater team bond and culture through this shared learning experience.”
2016 NZACA/EBOS Healthcare Excellence in Care Awards

Invacare Small Operator Industry Award
Winner: Shalom Court, Auckland

For outstanding work caring for, supporting and enriching the lives of residents, their families and staff.

For outstanding work caring for, supporting and enriching the lives of residents, their families and staff, Shalom Court in Auckland won the Invacare Small Operator Industry Award, one of several new awards introduced this year.

With just 36 beds this not-for-profit care home offers a care environment based on Jewish values and practices.

As Sylvia Treister, a long serving volunteer at Shalom Court explains, the “Shalom family” is an extended one embracing not only residents and families and all those service professionals who care for them, but also a dedicated band of community volunteers and visitors, including spiritual leaders and youth.

“Shalom is a home with a ready-made family – indeed it takes a village to care for its elders. Shalom proactively seeks innovation and continuously strives to improve its services to residents, their families, the Jewish and wider communities.

An advocate from the community listens and responds to residents’ needs on almost a daily basis, equipment and services are personalised, and residents are kept “connected” to community through technology and the visits of rabbis, school students, youth groups and participation in onsite community functions.

Family involvement in their loved one’s care is encouraged with a dedicated whānau room, invitations to Jewish festivals and activity programme events. “Daily life” photos are proactively texted and e-mailed.

The care team includes a dedicated Quality Improvement Coordinator. Staff are empowered to swap shifts, enjoy subsidised meals, and are recognised each month for behaviours that best reflect Shalom Court’s culture.

Jackson Van Interiors Built and Grown Environment award
Winner: Strathallan Lifecare, Timaru

For their dementia-friendly garden.

Transforming an old and hazardous outdoor area into a “dementia-friendly” garden, with input from residents, staff and families, won Strathallan Lifecare the Jackson Van Interiors Built & Grown Environment Award.

“Staff in the secure dementia unit recognised that the garden we had was causing residents distress and increased risk of harm,” explains General Manager Debbie McMaster.

“The area had been developed almost 20 years ago. Residents’ bedrooms looked onto a semi enclosed area that was dark and uninviting. The garden looked messy and offered little opportunity for meaningful activity, reminiscing or relaxation.”

Feedback, internal audits and benchmarking showed a transformation was needed.

“Residents and families helped choose plantings, murals and positioning of some of the garden structures.

Residents have fun and socialise, enjoy croquet or bowls, BBQs, picnics, concerts and family visits in the large, sheltered patio.

“Family feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and we’ve had a significant reduction in the incidence of falls, skin tears and most significantly, behaviours causing risk to self or others. Residents have a sense of being free to come and go. There is space to reflect or relax. They aren’t bored or lonely as there’s lot of interaction and swapping of ideas, advice and memories.”
QPS Benchmarking Innovative Delivery Award

**Winner: The Selwyn Foundation, Auckland**

For its colony of therapeutic robotic seals for aged care.

Interactive robot seals that respond to touch and other stimuli, providing comfort to residents, won The Selwyn Foundation in Auckland this year’s QPS Benchmarking Innovative Delivery Award.

Hilda Johnson-Bogaerts, General Manager of the Foundation’s Selwyn Institute for Ageing and Spirituality, says The Selwyn Foundation became the first provider in New Zealand to introduce therapeutic ‘PARO’ robotic companion seals to its care facilities in Auckland, Hamilton and Whangarei, following successful trials with rest home residents undertaken by Auckland University.

PARO is an advanced interactive robot modelled on a baby Canadian Harp seal. It responds to touch and other stimuli by making soft noises, moving its head and tail and opening its eyes. Designed in Japan, it is the world’s most popular commercial robot for elderly people and is approved in the USA as a health device.

“Residents with mild and advanced dementia can become upset or agitated, while those who aren’t cognitively impaired may also experience feelings of sadness or loneliness,” says Hilda.

“International research and trials conducted with Selwyn residents have shown that PARO has positive effects, such as decreasing depression and loneliness, increasing brain activity in people with dementia, facilitating communication, is calming, and reduces stress and agitation.

“Interacting with PARO also brings about physiological benefits, such as helping to lower blood pressure.”

Selwyn has 13 PARO robot seals which it uses with residents on a one-to-one basis and in group settings.

“The seals are not a replacement for human contact, but another type of aid that enables us to care for our residents. While it’s unlikely that robots will ever replace personal interaction or animal companionship, our experience shows that there is a place for such assistive technology in aged care,” says Hilda.

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Leecare Solutions Stand-Out Individual Award

**Winner: Jill Woodward, Chief Executive, Elizabeth Knox Home and Hospital, Auckland**

For being the stand-out individual in a care home.

Jill Wood, Chief Executive of Elizabeth Knox Home & Hospital, won the Leecare Solutions Stand-Out Individual Award, one of two new individual awards introduced this year.

Jill was recognised for her commitment and success in implementing the Eden Alternative philosophy of culture change and resident-directed care at Elizabeth Knox and beyond.

Jill has worked in healthcare for over 30 years as a registered nurse, surgical services manager, Hospice CEO and most recently as CEO of Elizabeth Knox.

She is a strong advocate of service improvement and uses her strengths to better the lives of elders and improve perceptions of aged residential care.

Jill has improved the lives of residents and her team, promoting their interests and providing opportunities for them to grow. She has helped create buildings and spaces that help staff and residents socialise and form friendships.

She works closely with other health providers and fellow CEOs and managers to improve aged residential care at a regional and national level and is a tireless advocate for changes.

Helping residents find a “life worth living” in residential care, has included implementing the Ten Eden Principles to create an environment where human beings thrive and grow, and where loneliness helplessness and boredom are greatly reduced.
TENA Legendary Contribution to the Aged Residential Care Sector Award
Winner: Fraser Sanderson, Cascades and Bethlehem Views

For his outstanding contribution to the aged care sector for more than 10 years.

Fraser Sanderson, winner of the TENA Legendary Contribution to the Aged Resident Care Sector Award has a simple philosophy: “If it’s not good enough for my family, then it’s not good enough for my residents”.

Fraser’s contribution and dedication to the aged-care sector for more than 30 years, providing quality care and accommodation, has enriched the lives of many Bay of Plenty and Waikato residents and their families.

In 1987 he was a foundation member of the Retirement Village Association and is still actively involved in the organisation.

He developed Omokora Country Estate, Bayswater Village, The Avenues, followed by The Cascades, Bethlehem Country Club, Bethlehem Shores and Bethlehem Views.

Fraser believes there are two key components to making a care facility a ‘home’ successful, quality accommodation and quality care.

He puts a lot of effort into taking care of staff and says making them feel part of the family encourages loyalty and commitment. Staff’s circumstances are taken into account when rostering shifts, they are given flexible working hours where possible. Regular talks helps Fraser understand and support staff.

Fraser strives to make his care facilities as homely as possible, with art work on the walls, and delicious home cooked meals.

Fraser’s homes have a heart and staff at Bethlehem Views and Cascades receive a constant stream of feedback, thanking them for the wonderful care their loved ones receive.
The office of the Health and Disability Commissioner has released a comprehensive report into complaints against aged care providers over the period 2010 – 2014. The report, released in late September, identifies trends in complaints and potential learnings from the Commissioner’s numerous opinions in this area over the four-year period.

A total of 502 complaints were surveyed, with a steady yearly average of 100. This contrasts favourably with complaints against health practitioners generally, which have risen over the same period.

The report demonstrates that complaints tend to involve multiple areas of concern, rather than focusing on a single aspect of care. Often, while a complaint might arise from family dissatisfaction following a particular incident, investigation by the HDC will reveal other problems.

Communication issues most frequent source of complaints

The most frequent area of complaint (by a substantial margin) is communication, having been raised in 448 of the 502 complaints. Of these complaints, a failure to communicate effectively with the resident’s family was the most common issue, demonstrating the need for providers to encourage and support family involvement in a resident’s care where possible. In particular, the report highlights the need to keep family updated on changes in a resident’s state of health or when an adverse event occurs.

The second most significant communication issue was communication between healthcare providers, including other staff and external providers such as the DHB or GP. The importance of good handover, including full progress notes and communication of any problems that have occurred on a shift was emphasised.

Complaints management was also a fertile source of complaints, suggesting that proper handling of internal complaints may avoid complaints being taken further, or will assist providers when it comes to responding to a complaint to HDC. This is a point I always emphasise when advising providers about handling complaints as they arise. The report quotes the Commissioner’s opinion in 09HDC1040:

“Handled with due care and consideration, complaints can provide opportunities for learning and improvement. Handled badly, they can inflame a situation and increase mistrust. Dealing with complaints effectively and meaningfully is an essential part of providing a quality health service.”

Importance of good documentation practices

Predictably, poor documentation and record keeping was a common finding in the complaints surveyed. While this did not generally feature in complaint, it would be revealed on investigation as a frequent source of problems. In particular, the need for providers to ensure that staff keep accurate and full progress notes is highlighted, as well as effective and continuously reviewed care planning.

Other common themes

Other common topics that featured in the Commissioner’s opinions were:
- Pain management
- Falls management (particularly the adequacy of post-fall assessments)
- Nutrition and hydration
- Wound care
- Failure to recognise or monitor deterioration in resident’s condition
- Hygiene practices

In some of these areas, the report noted that there had been a marked improvement over the four-year period covered in terms of the incidence of complaints: complaints relating to nutrition and hydration had declined from 24% to 7% of complaints; wound care complaints from 24% to 6%; and hygiene from 30% to 13%.
Adherence to policy is key
Throughout the report, there is an emphasis on the need for providers to support and assist staff sufficiently to understand and comply with facility policies and procedures; and to document staff participation in training.

The continued relevance and sufficiency of a facility’s policies should also be a focus for providers: the Commissioner has spoken of “an organisational duty of care” owed by rest home owners to provide a safe healthcare environment, and this duty will be discharged by owners ensuring that their staff are educated in and adhere to sound written policies and procedures.

Link to report
- A full copy of the report can be found at http://www.hdc.org.nz/publications/other-publications-from-hdc/other-reports/residential-aged-care---complaints-to-the-health-and-disability-commissioner-2010%E2%80%932014

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Wendy is an independent barrister who specialises in law affecting the health and aged care sectors and she writes regularly for Excellence in Care. Please note that this article is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice in relation to any of the topics covered.

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Contact Ross Currie on 021 805 089 or Ross.Currie@asb.co.nz, to find out how we can help you achieve your ambitions.
ARC occupancy increases

National aged residential care occupancy reached 89% in the June 2016 quarter, its highest level in two years. National occupancy for the year ending June 2016 was also up at 88.15%, compared with 87.3% the previous year.

ARC providers in South Canterbury DHB recorded the highest occupancy in the June quarter (94.4%). This was followed by Hawke's Bay (92.9%), Northland (90.8%), Capital and Coast (90.7%) and Waitemata (90.7%).

Lakes had the lowest occupancy at 79% (although it was up slightly on the March quarter), closely followed by Nelson Marlborough at 79.1%.

The largest occupancy increase from the March 2016 quarter was in Northland, up almost 4% from 86.9% to 90.8%.

Nationally, the occupancy rate for NZACA members was up 0.6% on all ARC providers, slightly lower than the 1.1% increase recorded in the March quarter.

Improving Outcomes in Aged Residential Care report
Audits lead to improved outcomes

A new Ministry of Health report shows that changes to audit processes have contributed to better care for residents and are largely viewed positively by managers and staff.

Key results include:

• The audit process changes have been beneficial to the quality of care and improved outcomes for residents.

• An increased number of ARC facilities were awarded a 4-year certification period in 2016 compared to 2009, along with lower numbers of partially attained criterion scores.

• ARC facility management and staff hold longer certification periods in high regard and interpret them as representing the organisations' commitment to quality and therefore improved outcomes for residents.

• The online publication of audit reports are used by potential consumers and their families to assess the quality of ARC facilities; by facility management to benchmark performance; and by job seekers to determine organisational standards.

• Generally, ARC facilities viewed unannounced audits positively and said they improved overall quality and commitment to continuous improvement.

The report findings are based on insight provided by the MoH and other sources and interviews with stakeholders, amongst them ARC facilities, NZACA, DHBs, audit companies, the Office of the Auditor-General and the MoH.

The Ministry says the findings demonstrate that providers are committed to providing safe and high quality care.

Changes to the audit process, including the introduction of integrated audits, have led to improved communication between stakeholders. Greater gains were made for residents when auditors approached the process as a collaborative, quality-focused conversation, rather than a data-focused examination.
The Selwyn Foundation

**Therapeutic robotic seals win innovation award for The Selwyn Foundation**

Charitable trust, The Selwyn Foundation, has won the 2016 New Zealand Aged Care Association/QPS Benchmarking ‘Innovative Delivery’ Award for its use of PARO therapeutic robotic seals in its aged residential care facilities and the proven benefits for residents.

The award was announced at this month’s New Zealand Aged Care Association (NZACA) conference, following a submission and presentation by Selwyn on the positive psychological, physical and social effects for residents when interacting with the seals. Benefits include decreasing depression and loneliness, reducing stress and agitation and restoring a sense of calm, comfort and wellbeing for residents. Sessions with PARO also bring about physiological benefits, such as helping to lower blood pressure, and can improve social interaction and conversation.

PARO is an advanced interactive robot modelled on a baby Canadian Harp seal, which responds to touch and other stimuli in its environment by making soft noises, moving its head and tail and opening its eyes. Designed in Japan, it is the world’s most popular commercial robot for elderly people and is approved in the USA as a health device.

The Selwyn Foundation became the first provider in New Zealand to introduce PARO to its care facilities, following successful trials with residents undertaken by Auckland University in 2013. The research found that rest home residents (who were not significantly cognitively impaired) were less lonely and more socially engaged as a result of their interaction with PARO, than those who did not interact with the seal.

Hilda Johnson-Bogaerts, General Manager of The Selwyn Institute for Ageing and Spirituality, has been involved in the various Auckland University robotics initiatives that have taken place at the Foundation’s retirement villages since 2008 and first raised the prospect of trialling a companion robot as an aid to reduce loneliness in residents. She says:

“We’re delighted to have won this award, which recognises our cutting-edge work in this area of diversional therapy and the wide range of positive therapeutic outcomes that we’re achieving for residents.

‘For people with mild or advanced dementia who are distressed, withdrawn or lonely, interaction with the companion seals can help reduce their anxiety levels and improve their mood.

‘The unique appearance of the robot also prompts residents to converse more with caregivers and with each other about what PARO is, what he can do and what he looks like. It therefore stimulates greater social activity and more meaningful conversation, and so residents are less lonely as a result.’”

Selwyn has 13 PARO robots which are used on a one-to-one basis and in group settings with residents of its care facilities in Auckland, Hamilton and Whangarei, as well as with clients of its dementia day centres.

Hilda Johnson-Bogaerts says: “The seals are not a replacement for human contact, but another type of aid that enables us to care for our residents. Whilst it’s unlikely that robots will ever replace personal interaction, our experience shows that there is a place for such assistive technology in aged care.”

The prestigious NZACA/EBOS Healthcare ‘Excellence in Care’ Awards recognise the continuous pursuit of excellence by aged residential care homes and their staff. The ‘Innovative Delivery’ Award recognises exceptional effort by aged care providers to enhance the standard of care they provide to residents through innovation, creativity or redesign of service delivery.

This is the second time that The Selwyn Foundation has won the ‘Innovative Delivery’ Award – it was a recipient in 2010, when it was awarded for the introduction of its ‘At Home at Selwyn’ model of care, (also receiving the supreme award for ‘Overall Excellence in Aged Care’ the same year).

At this year’s awards, the Foundation’s Diversional Therapist at Selwyn Village, Orquidea Tamayo Mortera, was also a finalist for the ‘ Legendary Contribution to the Aged Residential Care Sector Award’ for her evidence-based, holistic approach to enriching residents’ lives through meaningful therapies and interventions.
Careerforce strives for a seamless transition

It’s six months since the Health Ed Trust (HET) and Careerforce Merger, and things seem to be keeping on track.

From May 2016 all employer and learner training activity has transitioned into the Careerforce system.

This was always going to be a significant change for trainees and workplaces but the team at Careerforce together with former HET employees have been working hard to support people in the transition.

Andrew Saunders, Careerforce, Manager Employer Services says, “Our intention was always to make the journey for workplaces and trainees as simple and seamless as possible. We’ve visited all 230 workplaces that were operating with HET qualifications, to talk to them about the transition into the Careerforce system.

“We’ve worked hard to ensure that the paperwork and processes have been easy to navigate.

“Some organisations have chosen to keep working with the HET product, but many have moved over to the New Zealand certificate in Health and Wellbeing qualifications. Enrolments and results continue coming in. To date Careerforce has received 1067 enrolments into the various ACE programmes. Since the transition, 481 trainees have completed their qualification.

“Many workplaces are telling us they are enjoying having someone come and visit them regardless of where they are in New Zealand,” says Andrew.

“Other feedback has been about having access to the new online training (MyPath) which is now possible through Careerforce. There has also been positive feedback about the new Apprenticeship in Health and Wellbeing (Level 4) in Community Facilitation.

“Supporting workplaces in the transition, former HET employees Jennie Cooper, Helen Wilton, Lucille Ogston and Zara Fraser work with Careerforce’s Andrew Saunders.

According to Careerforce, the transitioning of HET assessors is also almost complete.

“A few little bumps along the way were to be expected,” says Jo Rea, Workplace Advisor. “We’ve had to do a bit of work tying up some loose ends.

“For one or two organisations, paperwork was missing and we had to try to work with managers to try to fill some of the gaps in the assessments.

“People have been fantastic in the way they’ve helped us through the process. It’s been great helping to set up new assessors in the workplace and talk about the role of observer.

“I really feel like I can support workplaces to get them on track and feel they are in control of the training.”
Gene Ruiz Takes her next step at UCG

Any misconception about the level of skill and expertise required for aged residential care nursing quickly dissipates after only a few moments chatting with Gene. It’s evident that the 10 years working for the Ultimate Care Group (UCG) hasn’t jaded her. She is excited to share both her team’s past successes as well as the many new initiatives they’ve been introducing. It is this infectious passion that has made her a role model for many aspiring, young nurses within the company.

Originating from the Philippines, Gene started her New Zealand aged residential care career in 2006. Although she initially thought that aged care would just be a stepping stone, she quickly developed a passion for the specialty.

Gene’s father would often tell her to “bloom where you’re planted”, and this is a phrase that has stuck.

She says that a pinnacle moment in her career was when she was promoted to the Unit Coordinator (which later became the Clinical Services Manager). With a great group of people already working in the team, she could see endless possibilities to develop the systems and processes at the facility.

Her first project was an overhaul of the clinical filing system. Without a robust archiving process, the files were a point of frustration for the team. She had an idea for a more effective system, and was supported by UCG management to give it a go. The project was a huge success and Gene was hooked!

Gene notes that many of the team she worked with in 2007 are still employed by the facility today. She puts this impressive retention rate down to a strong sense of family at Bishop Selwyn. The leadership team have also worked hard to foster a creative environment; with brainstorming sessions at almost every handover.

Every member of the team is invited to contribute ideas in these sessions, and there is a strong belief that there is “no such thing as a silly idea”. It’s this culture at Bishop Selwyn that has led to numerous ingenious initiatives from team members in both clinical and non-clinical roles. The biggest payoff being the ongoing high quality of care received by the residents of Bishop Selwyn.

Gene fondly remembers an occasion where as a team they came up with a solution for one resident’s mystery bruises. They had tried multiple approaches to preventing the bruises, but realised that until they worked out the cause, the bruises were going to keep appearing. One day a caregiver observed the resident walk down the hallway and noticed they were repeatedly knocking their shins against the metal bar of their gutter frame. With the help of the laundry manager (who sourced a strip of foam) they trialled taping foam to the frame to act as a buffer. The initiative worked, and within a couple of weeks the bruised shins had started to heal! Gene encouraged the caregiver to turn their idea into a quality initiative which was then successfully rolled out across the entire facility.

Gene is a huge advocate for professional development and is often heard encouraging her team to aim high in their career aspirations. She embodies this in her own practice, recently achieving her expert level in the CDHB professional development programme.

When asked about her experience of the PDRP, Gene was quick to point out that it is not a path for the faint-hearted! To reach expert level takes more than just gaining knowledge, but requires the registered nurse to contribute the knowledge back to their practice and to the nursing profession. An experience she has found hugely rewarding.

A highlight of the programme was Gene’s invitation to participate in 2013 CDHB Gerontology Programme. She was able to complete placements in both the acute and the older person’s health setting, a challenging but valuable experience. After realising that she could hold her own as an RN outside of the facility, she gained a new appreciation for the skills she had developed through her years working at Bishop Selwyn.

Gene’s tireless effort have been recognised by the Ultimate Care Group with a recent promotion to UCG Clinical Coach. She commenced in her new role on Monday 3 October, and says she is excited to take on the bigger challenges it will bring. As Clinical Coach she will be focusing on the orientation of new Clinical Services Managers and developing a teaching centre on-site at Bishop Selwyn.

She is succeeded as Clinical Services Manager by Michelle Bugayong, as well as Maechie Panuntan, who is taking on the role of RN Team Leader (both pictured right).

BIG ANNOUNCEMENT:
Michelle Bugayong, Gene Ruiz and Maechie Panuntan (pictured left to right) wear bright colours to celebrate ‘Loud Shirt Day’ in honour of the deaf. A staff member’s relative had kindly gifted Michelle and Maechie the blazers they are wearing.
Tips for a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year

Amanda Hynes has 14 years’ experience working in Infection Prevention and Control. She specialises in working with the aged care and community sectors. Amanda is passionate about Infection Prevention and Control in aged care and would love to hear from you.

Visit www.infectioncontrolnz.co/about for more details or email amandaicnz@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Protecting yourself against food-borne illness

Christmas is fast approaching and celebrations for most families include lots of communal meals and festive eating. Don’t let your holidays be spoilt by a bout of food poisoning.

Unfortunately, New Zealand has one of the highest rates of food poisoning in the developed world with approximately 120,000 cases of foodborne illness each year, including 19,000 general practitioner visits, 400 hospital admissions, 22 cases of long term illness and two deaths. Here are some simple rules to follow that will protect you and your family from food-borne illness over the coming festive season.

Buying safe food:

- Try to only buy and use food that is fresh, or within its ‘use-by’ or ‘best before’ date. Remember that once a package is opened it should be treated like fresh or perishable food.
- Only buy food whose packaging is in good condition; avoid buying food with damaged packages – leaking cartons, swollen or dented cans, ripped packets, loose vacuum packs.
- Check that chilled food is cool to touch and that frozen food is frozen solid.

Raw food:

- Make sure raw meat and poultry is packed in separate bags away from other foods — this stops their juices dripping onto other foods and contaminating them with pathogens.
- Take food home as soon as possible after purchase — don’t leave food in a hot car.
- On a hot day, or if you have a journey of more than 30 minutes, transport perishable food such as meat, dairy products or seafood in a chilly bin.
- Put chilled and frozen foods into the fridge or freezer as soon as you get home.

Cooked food:

Sometimes food is cooked in one place and then taken somewhere else to be eaten. This is a time when food can become contaminated, or germs can grow in dangerous numbers if the temperature is right for them.

- Make sure cooked food is cooled down quickly before transporting it. Cover the food and put it into a chilly bin, or cooler bag with ice packs.
- For food that will be served hot: cool it and transport it as noted above, and then reheat it until it’s steaming hot at the place where it will be eaten.
Storing Food Safely

To keep food fresh and safe store it in the following ways:

**In the fridge:**
- Store perishable chilled foods in a fridge with a temperature between 0 and 4°C.
- Cover food to prevent pathogens being transferred from raw food to cooked or ready-to-eat foods (e.g. bread, salads, seafood, and cold meats).
- Cover raw meat and poultry, and store them in the bottom of the fridge so their juices can’t drip onto other foods and contaminate them.
- Store eggs in a cool dry place.
- Take vegetables and fruit out of plastic bags. Storage in plastic bags make fruit and vegetables spoil faster.
- When you’re catering for large numbers of people, if there isn’t enough room in the fridge for all the food, store food in chilly bins with ice packs.

**In the freezer:**
- Ensure the freezer temperature is between -15°C and -18°C, or is cold enough so that the frozen food is frozen solid.
- Only freeze fresh, good quality food — freezing will not kill some pathogens in food.
- Put leftover food into small containers so it freezes quickly.
- Don’t put hot food in the fridge or freezer. Let hot food cool down naturally, and then refrigerate or freeze it.

**In the pantry:**
- Store shelf-stable food products (e.g. cans, bags of flour etc) off the floor.
- Keep food covered or in airtight containers and away from chemicals and pests (insects, mice, rats etc.)
- Keep the area clean — food scraps attract pests.
- Use the oldest food first.

Preparing food

- Wash and dry hands thoroughly before starting to prepare or eat any food, this includes food that isn’t going to be cooked such as salads, ham and seafood.
- Keep benches, kitchen equipment and tableware clean and dry.
- Don’t let raw meat juices drip onto other foods.
- Cook meat, poultry and eggs thoroughly.
- In a perfect world, separate raw and cooked food and use different cutting boards and knives for both.
- If you are sick with diarrhoea or vomiting avoid preparing food for other people.
- Put cooked meat on a clean platter, rather than back on one that held the raw meat.
- Wash produce.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables in running tap water to remove visible dirt and grime.
- Where food is prepared outdoors, cover it as soon as possible to protect it from insects, birds and animals.
- Before and after food is prepared, cover and store chilled in the fridge.
- Minimise the length of time that food sits at room temperature — NEVER allow food to sit at room temperature for longer than a total of two hours. The warmer the temperature, the shorter the time food will remain safe.

Serving food safely

- Served cooked food hot, as soon as possible after it leaves the oven.
- Keep chilled, ready-to-eat foods covered in the fridge until it’s time to serve. This applies particularly to seafood, meat and vegetable salads, rice salads, desserts and cakes containing cream or imitation cream.

I wish you all a healthy and Happy Christmas and New Year.

Peppermint ‘bark’

**Ingredients:**
- A block of white chocolate
- Peppermint candy canes (as many as you like)

**Method:**
Melt the block of chocolate in a double boiler or in the microwave and pour it onto a baking tray lined with baking paper.
Smash some peppermint candy canes with a rolling pin. Sprinkle the candy cane pieces over the chocolate and press into the chocolate to ensure they stick.
Allow the chocolate to cool slightly then chill until set. Once set, break it into pieces.

Christmas rocky road

**Ingredients:**
- Two large (180-200g) blocks of good quality white chocolate
- 200g of marshmallows cut in half
- 100g of cranberries
- 50g of pistachio nuts
- 100g macadamia nuts
- 1/3 cup of desiccated coconut

**Method:**
Line a 20cm square cake tin with baking paper.
Combine the marshmallows, cranberries, nuts and coconut in a bowl.
Melt the chocolate in a double boiler or the microwave. Pour the chocolate over the marshmallow mixture and mix well.
Spoon the mixture into the cake tin and press it down with the back of a spoon. Refrigerate until set. Cut into squares using a warm knife.

Christmas Cake recipe from 1960

**Ingredients:**
- 8oz butter (225g)
- 8oz sugar (225g)
- 4 eggs
- 2 tbsp golden syrup
- ½ tsp vanilla & lemon essence
- 2 ½ cups flour
- ½ tsp BP
- ½ tsp salt
- 2lb mixed fruit

**Method:**
Cream butter and sugar together, add eggs and golden syrup and essences. then add fruit and dry ingredients. Mix well.
Put into lined and greased baking tin.
Bake at 275 deg or 2 to 3 gas for about 3 ½ hours. Test, leave in tin to cool.

National office will close for the Christmas break from Friday 23 December at midday and will re-open on Wednesday 4th January at 8.30am.

*Wishing you a fantastic break from all the team at NZACA.*
EBOS HEALTHCARE & NEW ZEALAND AGED CARE ASSOCIATION ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE A PREFERRED SUPPLIER PARTNERSHIP SUPPORTING NZACA AND ITS MEMBERS.

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Older people health strategy needs greater ARC focus

The Government’s update of the Health of Older People Strategy needs to give more recognition to the important role played by our members in providing quality aged residential care.

Our submission to the Ministry of Health welcomed the draft strategy update and the extensive engagement with the sector, however, given 35% of New Zealanders live out their final years in ARC, the final strategy needs to better acknowledge and include our sector.

Following are some of the key points made in our submission:

**The case for ARC**

There is growing evidence to suggest that older people are not always happiest “ageing in place” [at home]. The elderly often feel much improved in ARC settings and initial interRAI data suggests some very positive health and social outcomes.

We challenged the view in the draft strategy that aged residential care is amongst some of the most expensive health services. On a per-day bed rate, ARC is significantly cheaper than public hospital care. The average hospital-level ARC bed is $237.84 compared with an average $1,000 per day to stay in a DHB hospital medical ward. ARC provides a very cost-effective way of caring for people who need more care than they can receive at home.

Our submission reinforces NZACA’s expectation that we will play a major part in the funding model review being undertaken by the Government.

**Living well with long-term conditions**

The final strategy needs to acknowledge the need for many people with acute dementia to be cared for in the ARC setting. There are currently over 5,000 beds specifically designated to dementia and psychogeriatric care and many more for those who have mild cognitive impairment. These numbers are likely to grow as the population of older New Zealanders grows.

**High and complex needs**

We want to see an action in the strategy to ensure ongoing support and training for the ARC workforce around interRAI and working with ARC providers and government to ensure the inter-operability of available technology.

**Respectful end of life**

We acknowledge the need to build a greater palliative care workforce closer to home, however, a new report prepared for the Ministry of Health projects the number of Kiwis dying in ARC homes is set to soar by 84% over the next several decades, from 10,420 to 19,000. The key findings of this report should be front and centre in this section of the strategy.

Our submission said that when we canvassed members on the introduction of legislation that would permit medically-assisted dying in the event of a terminal illness or irreversible condition, respondents thought the more proper position for older citizens in care was to receive additional support as they progressed through the natural ageing process. We listed the ways members had identified they could add to the quality of the end of life.

**Sector-led strategy**

We disagree that the strategy’s action plan should be led by Government agencies. There needs to be commitment across the whole sector, including industry associations such as NZACA, Crown agencies, local government and the community and voluntary sector.

One agency should take the lead on each action point with other agencies listed as support. More than one lead means that action is unlikely to happen!

**Final strategy**

The Ministry of Health advises the final Health of Older People Strategy will be released later this year. Go to their website to read the draft strategy and find out more - www.health.govt.nz

Go to the NZACA website to read our full submission - www.nzaca.org.nz/policy/submissions
This is a member service to help answer those questions and queries which crop up from time to time around auditing, policies and procedures, the ARRC contract, clinical operational issues, standards, and dealing with difficult residents and staff.

NZACA have contracted Rhonda Sheriff to run this service.

Rhonda has worked exclusively in the aged care sector over the last twenty years in several roles, covering quality coordination and management, facility management and operational management for large groups and standalone aged care providers. These providers have been from both the for profit and not for profit sectors.

Rhonda’s time in the sector has allowed her to develop a unique understanding of the varied aspects required to operate a successful business such as ensuring quality care delivery, meeting compliance requirements, dealing with HR issues, and overall Care facility management.

0800 445 200 Monday to Friday 9am–5pm

One voice for the aged residential care sector www.nzaca.org.nz