

WESTMONT NEWS

Autumn Edition—Issue 35



A Message from the CEO

Hello everyone,

As most of you know I started with Westmont as CEO early February this year. I have been very impressed so far and pleased with the high standard of care, the lovely gardens and grounds and the friendly and committed Staff.

I have been working in and around health and aged care for over 20 years after an early career in Defence. Managing aged care is never easy but the challenges brought forward by COVID-19 and the challenging financial and workforce environment have made things very hard for us all at times. I would ask you persevere as I think things will get better and aged care as an industry is now getting plenty of attention. Working in aged care is very much a team effort – from all parts of the organisation – Residential Aged Care Staff (Homestead), the Cottages, Home and Community Aged Care, Villas and Apartments, administration, maintenance, landscape and garden, catering, laundry, cleaning support Staff and even our Board.

Our focus at present is getting the delayed Seniors Lifestyle Village – being built across the road on the old Trinity School site – up and going. The first 26 houses will get underway shortly once the development work for the stage is complete. Eventually we plan 96 houses along with a Community Centre and many other parks and structures. We are also planning the second stage of the Cottages on the main Baranduda site – adding another 30 dementia places/beds and a purpose built Day Centre.

I am also aiming at building our Home and Community Services and finding better solutions for their accommodation and software requirements. We will also shortly take ownership from Wodonga Council of the Willows building in Wodonga which will free us up to improve it and make it more suitable and functional.

I look forward to meeting you and working with you all.

Thanks,

Tony Dunn —CEO
Ph 02 6043 9999

A Message from the Chairman

I am very pleased to have commenced as Board Chair of Westmont in the last few months. My first task was overseeing the change of our CEO with the departure of Peter de Koeper and the appointment of Tony Dunn.

I wish to thank Peter for his great service to Westmont over 14 years. He is responsible for much of Westmont's development and success and we wish him well in his future endeavours. Although stepping down from CEO, Peter is staying on in a different capacity as part time Project Manager for the Seniors Lifestyle Village. I also wish to acknowledge Andrew Brown who I replaced as Board Chair. Andrew also oversaw the difficult and stressful period of COVID-19 and the governance of Westmont during that period.

Once we settle in Tony and I plan to manage the next stage of Westmont's growth and development and I believe we have a bright and exciting future ahead.

Dr W. Keeton —Chairman

Accessing Care to Remain Living at Home

Shannon Ryder, Business Development Officer is available every Friday at the Westmont Apartments to provide information & assistance to navigate through My Aged Care towards home care services under a Home Care Package or Commonwealth Home Support Program. Please phone her to book in a visit on 6043 9867.

Shannon Ryder—Business Development Officer
Ph 02 6043 9867



Residential Care Happenings

With Easter now behind us and the cooler weather starting to set in, our Residents make the most of the sunshine to go outside and exercise when able.

I would like to thank all the Westmont Residents, Families and Staff for their overwhelming support as I transition into my new role as Director of Care and Clinical Services.

With the transformation of Belvoir into the Homestead's key respite area, we have been able to support our local community by providing care for loved ones and families that so dearly need a source of relief. Respite and permanent care continue to be in high demand with many enquiries coming in daily.

All Westmont Staff are to be proud of their endless teamwork and ability to rise up during the difficult times Covid-19 brought upon us. These efforts have reflected into our local community and contributed to the endless enquiries for families wanting to choose Westmont for the next progression of care requirements.

The Cottages are a hive of activity as always, allowing our Residents with dementia to blossom and thrive under the household framework model of care.

Westmont has recently rescued three cats, Arthur and Maggie will reside in the Cottages and Charlotte will occupy the Homestead. We look forward to the enjoyment they will bring to the Residents, Families, Visitors and Staff.

We still await our assessment and review from the Age Care Quality and Safety Commission. We look forward to this review and reflect on our implementation of the new Age Care Quality Standards.

As we say goodbye to our nursing Staff who have graduated from their studies and are moving on to their next working adventures, we would like to offer a warm welcome to our new Staff and Trainees who have started in early 2022. Our HR Manager George Taylor has been working tirelessly to assist all Managers, actively recruiting new staff to help meet our requirements.

I would like to remind all Staff that myself and Senior Staff are always available to discuss any issues that arise, and I am always looking for ways to improve and grow. I have received some amazing feedback at recent PCA meetings which has resulted in the Homestead purchasing its first full bed bath to improve the quality of life for our most frail. Our maintenance team have work underway in the Belvoir area to 'fit out' the new bathroom for Staff to utilize the new bed bath.

Take care all!

Laura Souquet — Director of Care and Clinical Services
Ph 02 6043 9845



Homestead and Cottages Activities

The last six months have been unpredictable with the activities. Our team are now accustomed to the 'program that's been organised', changing at the last minute, day, week or month. We have sadly said goodbye to retiring activity staff and embraced new members of our team. Luke and Samara are new to our team and are very welcome.

One of our ongoing activities that has been gratifying is our gardening program where Residents planted seedlings at the Cottages in spring and by January, they were reaping the rewards and were happy to enjoy a wine and cheese tasting with produce grown from our raised vegetable gardens. We made beetroot chutney, basil pesto and ate fresh tomatoes. The garden was watered and tended to by the Residents watching the produce grow.

The countries we have celebrated since October have been Germany, India, Australia, 'In Our Own Backyard', and Scotland, with lots of information, enjoyment and learning about these places.

Volunteers are so important to Westmont and Residents living here. They perform so many different tasks that (unseen at times) improve the Resident's lives. Some of these tasks are, helping with concerts, painting nails, art and craft, bingo, musicians, entertainers, conversation, providing newsletters, walking with Residents, pet therapy, mending, serving at the kiosk, and being someone who cares. If anyone would like to volunteer or share a passion, please don't hesitate to give us a call. You will be very welcome.

Cheryl Pollard—Activities Officer
Ph 02 6043 9999



Community Care

Welcome to the Autumn Edition.

You will find some new faces in the Community Care Team. Christine Odewahn Director of the Community Care team retired after almost a decade of service with Westmont and will be sadly missed by Staff and Clients. We wish Christine a long and healthy retirement and express our appreciation for the wonderful work she did in supporting the team and our community.

Maralee Vogel commenced as the Director of Community Care in March 2022. Maralee grew up and worked in Albury Wodonga in the community service sector for over 22 years. She is passionate about older people having access to services so they can remain independent and contribute to the community. Maralee is supported by a hard-working, talented team. Caterina and Catherine lead and support the administration, rostering and care planning Staff that help plan and roster Client services. Most importantly, we have a dedicated team of around 50 Personal Care Staff that deliver home care services to Clients. They are proud of the positive changes they can make in the lives of our Clients.

The Staff tailor services to your needs and goals and deliver a range of services including personal care (help with showering, dressing), domestic assistance (working with you to maintain your house in a clean and safe condition), help with shopping, attending appointments and preparing meals and respite care. We know how difficult it can be when caring for someone, and we can provide in home respite, so carers can take a break. The Willows provides a range of fun creative and social activities through the Social Connections Group. We also provide centre based activities where Clients living with dementia can participate in leisure and mentally stimulating activities for a day or half day. Our bus can pick you up and take you home. We charge a small fee, which includes transport to and from the group, materials and lunch. The Social Activities Group is a good way to meet like minded people and form new friendships. We plan day excursions and outings to local tourist attractions and entertainment venues.

To find out more about our services please ring our office on Ph: [\(02\) 6043 9867](tel:0260439867) or call by and meet our Staff. We are located at 193 Beechworth Road Wodonga. We can also help you access the My Aged Care website so you chat to an operator who will assess your needs and make a referral to an aged care provider like Westmont.

For Clients who may require more regular services to live at home, we provide Home Care Packages. The Commonwealth Government funds the packages and provides level 1 to level 4 packages depending on your needs. If you find tasks are becoming a bit harder and you need more help, come and chat with our Home Care Package Team. We will help you complete the application through the My Aged Care website and help you set up a budget and care plan that meets your needs. We work with a range of local Allied Health Services and contract services to provide physiotherapy, occupational therapy, podiatry services, not to mention help you maintain your lawns and undertake minor home modifications to make it easier for you to feel safe and mobile in your home.

Older Persons COVID-19 Support Line 1800 171 866 8:30am-6pm (AES)

Some older people are vulnerable to Covid-19 but are less connected to the internet and in need of ways to access information for their circumstances. The Older Persons Covid-19 Support Line provides information and support to older people who are vulnerable to Covid-19 and may not have access to the internet. The support line provides:

- Help to access care services or essential supplies such as shopping
- Support someone to talk to about the Covid-19 restrictions and its impact on them
- If feeling lonely or are worried about a loved one or are caring for someone and need some information or a listening ear
- Help or advice about changing the aged care services they are receiving
- Support for people living with dementia or are concerned about a friend or family member living with dementia
- An arrangement where a one-off or regular wellbeing check is provided

Are you semi retired or do you have a couple of hours each month to become a Westmont Volunteer?

Sharing your skills, time and energy with your community as a volunteer can be rewarding, exciting and fun. Volunteering is also a great way to stay active and build new connections and friendships.

Our volunteering program was hit hard by Covid-19, that meant we had to find different ways of doing things. Now that the threat of Covid-19 has been reduced due to lockdowns and vaccinations, all our services are operating normally. We provide a range of volunteering opportunities that can work around your work and family commitments. Our Volunteers provide meals on wheels to Clients daily during the week. Volunteers are rostered on when they are available, which may vary from a few hours each month or every week. We are also looking for volunteers to be Friendly Visitors who can visit and chat with our Clients in their home. We match Volunteers to Clients based on their interests, hobbies and background. A few hours a week visiting someone in their home can reduce social isolation and depression and make a big difference in someone's life. Our Volunteers at the Willows Social Connection Group are always very busy preparing meals and engaging in activities with our Clients.

COVID-19 has changed our priorities and allowed many to reassess their life and goals. Volunteering can provide the perfect opportunity for you to pursue your passion, give back to the community and find fulfillment.



Community Care continued...

Why sit at home when you could attend the leisure activities available at the Willows Social Connections Group.

The Willows offers social and lifestyle programs daily from Monday to Friday for older people. New members are welcome. You can come for one day or as many days as you want. The programs at the Willows assist people to reconnect with their community by attending excursions and centre based activities that focus on mental and physical stimulation. The program aims to enhance the social and physical wellbeing of participants in a pleasant group environment as well as providing respite care and support for carers.

Lunch and morning tea are served and transport is provided if required. Each program is designed to respond to the individual needs of the participants. Our computer programs are proving popular with seniors. Group based computer programs, as well as 'one on one' programs can help older people connect with their community, pay online bills, order their groceries and safely navigate the internet and protect themselves from online scams. For further information on obtaining a calendar of events or joining our Social Connections Group, contact us on Ph: [6043 9867](tel:60439867).

Maralee Vogel —Director Community Care
Ph 02 6043 9867

Apartment and Village Voices

The festive season was enjoyed by all at Westmont – kicking off the celebrations with Carols in the Recreation Centre. This year the location was changed to suit the night's entertainment with sound and visual technology within the Centre working very well to provide a spectacular line-up of famous, funny and furry performers. A light supper of Christmas cake, appropriately iced biscuits and shortbread rounded off a wonderful evening.

Two Villa Christmas lunches and one Apartments lunch compliments of Westmont to our Residents were held with all the trimmings of the festive season.

Autumn is now upon us and the gardens are spectacular at 265 Baranduda Boulevard. You are most welcome to drive through this property to view the lovely gardens.

The infrastructure at the Seniors Lifestyle project in Ellen McDonald Drive are well underway and civil works are progressing to plan. Information will be posted to the website www.westmont.org.au which is being constantly updated with information on all aspects of Westmont at the "Services" tab with the FAQs tabs providing viewers with a comprehensive outline of the various services available.

You are welcome to contact me on 6043 9832 for further information on the independent Villas and Assisted Living Apartments, and Angela Collins on 6043 9609 regarding the Seniors Lifestyle project.

Chris Boyer—Apartments and Village Manager
Ph 02 6043 9832



Hotel Services

Over the last few months, we have finally seen restrictions ease enough for the Ray Snell Centre to be fully operational again. The Village Residents have seen increased numbers for their BBQs, "Happy Hours", sausage sizzles, dinners, indoor bowls, movie afternoons and "Fish 'n' Chip" Fridays. It is great to see the facility finally being used again. Once again, many have taken this new sense of normality and booking family functions with Residents from the Homestead, Apartments, and Village for their special occasions.

After a long wait, our new Apartment dining room furniture finally arrived in late February 2022. This new furniture was expected to be delivered back in November 2021, however due to shipping and delivery delays it was late. This furniture is designed with aged care in mind with a straighter back, firmer seat and wider body to give better support and it is easier for Residents to get in and out of. The new colour design blends with the existing lounge space and gives a lighter feel throughout the dining area.

Our menu is currently transitioning into autumn flavours as we begin to come into the cooler months. Our kitchen is always tweaking the menu in consultation with the Residents to keep it refreshed and offer a wide variety of foods and flavours. Feedback from Residents meetings have been very positive and has helped to keep our menus fresh and varied.

Peter Ward—Hotel Services Manager
Ph 02 6043 9851

