

STAY

SUPPORT TAILORED AROUND YOU

ISSUE 02

Partnership meets dementia needs

CALD seniors connect

Carer says respite's a 'saviour'

Guy Wesley gets a little help at home



SUNETHRA AND NIMALKA JOIN NEW SOCIAL GROUP FOR SRI LANKAN SENIORS

ENHANCED COMMUNITY SERVICES

VMCH leads the way in meeting the needs of an ageing community.

07



Pat Allen and her husband David share their recovery journey from Pat's stroke, with help from VMCH.

19



Barbara Goold is a full-time carer for her mum, Joyce.

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**STAY IS A NEW VMCH MAGAZINE
PROFILING PROGRAMS, PEOPLE
AND NEWS FROM OUR
COMMUNITY SERVICES AREA**

We welcome your content ideas
and feedback to STAY.

Contact:

Cassie Zlonzak on 03 9926 2419
or cassie.zlonzak@vmch.com.au

SPOTLIGHT ON DEMENTIA

THE STATISTICS SURROUNDING DEMENTIA ARE STAGGERING – AND GROWING.

Around 244 Australians each day are joining the population of people living with dementia. The number of new cases of dementia will increase to 318 people per day by 2025, and over 650 people per day by 2056.

A Victorian-first service, formed in partnership with Villa Maria Catholic Homes (VMCH) and Cabrini Health, has become a 'one stop shop' for people beginning their journey with the condition, and their carers.

Launched in October 2016, the Community Cognition and Dementia Service (CCDS) provides a single point of contact for all therapies required to diagnose and assist in the management of dementia.

VMCH clients are referred to a specialist, multidisciplinary team at Cabrini Brighton who provide an assessment and develop a care plan.

"The service is committed to improving early identification and diagnosis of dementia or cognitive impairment," said Kirby Young, Program Director Allied Health and Ambulatory Services at Cabrini.

"Beyond diagnosis, the unique aspect of this service is that it provides ongoing management and support to clients and their families/carers.

"The care is integrated, best-practice, responsive and convenient. We share relevant information with VMCH case managers and carers so strategies are implemented and continuous."

VMCH General Manager Community Services Heather Catherwood said the organisation had worked with Cabrini over many years, developing programs and pathways, such as the CCDS, to help prevent premature admission into residential aged care.



Pictured left: Heather Catherwood – General Manager Community Services at VMCH. Pictured right: Kirby Young – Program Director Allied Health and Ambulatory Services at Cabrini

She said it had become increasingly important for organisations with complementary services to work together to help improve the experiences of people moving between the health and aged care sectors.

"There are organisations, like Cabrini, who are experts in their field and we have sought to partner with them to ensure our clients have access to the best care available."

VMCH also benefits from clinical education delivered by Cabrini to upskill its workforce.

To find out more about the CCDS, please call Elizabeth Baxter (VMCH Carer Support) on 1300 971 720.

SEPT
2017
DEMENTIA
AWARENESS
MONTH

September 2017 is Dementia Awareness Month, aimed to encourage Australians to become dementia-aware.

THE THEME FOR 2017 IS

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

HOW DO I GET A HOME CARE PACKAGE?



1 Call our customer service team!

We can advise you of your eligibility and the steps to accessing a Home Care Package (HCP).

2 We make it simple!

We can walk you through the registration process with My Aged Care (government aged care service) and provide you with information and advice.



3 Everyone needs an assessment.

The government Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) will come to your home to meet you. At this time, you can request VMCH as your HCP provider.



4 The waiting game...

After your assessment, your application is added to a government-managed waiting list.

You will receive a letter from My Aged Care when funding for your package is approved!

5 Can we fill the gap?

In some areas of Victoria, VMCH can provide government-funded support prior to the commencement of your HCP as an interim measure. We can also provide privately-funded services to support you until your HCP is approved.



6 Let's get to work!

As soon as government approval is given, VMCH will start work arranging your HCP services immediately! You don't need to do anything as the government contact us directly. Welcome to VMCH!



SO WHY VMCH?

Well, besides the fact that VMCH is one of the largest and most diverse providers in Victoria and southern New South Wales, we do not charge a daily fee, a sign-up fee or an exit fee. We also offer competitive administration and case management fees, which means more money for you to spend on services you want and need.

And remember, if you're not happy with your current provider, we can help you transfer your package to VMCH.

Call 1300 650 615 today and let us help you today.

A LITTLE HELP AT HOME



Guy Wesley is a man who likes to keep busy. And while Parkinson's may have slowed him down in recent years – the 82-year-old does his best to stay socially and physically active.

Guy credits VMCH with helping him maintain his quality of life – at home – where he wants to be. His Home Care Package (HCP) includes personal care assistance (provided through VMCH Direct), support with household tasks, social support, and massages from VMCH's Allied Health and Nursing team.

Declining health led Guy to move from Sydney to Melbourne to be close to his daughter, Kris, seven years ago. And while his family is “very supportive”, Guy says he appreciates the independence VMCH allows.

“Lorraine (care worker) is a great help and also great company. Alexia (care worker) comes once a week and we go for a walk and have a yak. She helps me chat to the neighbours and meet other people because it's difficult for me to talk, due to the Parkinson's.”

Guy describes VMCH as one of the most “valuable parts of his life”.

“The carers have a wide breadth of knowledge and are the very best in their game – experienced and understanding.”

Kris says she doesn't know where her Dad, or the extended family, would be without the support.

“We can just get on with things and know Dad's looked after. Sometimes if I need to go off to work unexpectedly, one of the carers may come earlier or help in some other way. It's good having that back-up. For Dad, it's nice to know that it's not just his family looking after him, but more of a community. We count ourselves very, very lucky.”

Natalia Tjongue is one of 29 VMCH case managers dedicated to supporting clients, like Guy, and their families, get the most out of their HCPs and remain living independently at home.

She describes Guy as a “very humble person and a fighter”.

“His mobility declined following a hospital admission late last year so to see his progress and how hard he has worked since then, is amazing. He's has now started walking around his neighbourhood again with support from one of our carers – which is great to see.”

For Guy, it's the little things like getting to his fortnightly catch-up with mates and researching his family history, that keep him happy and connected.

“I know as my needs change, (VMCH) will be there to help me with whatever I require to keep going, which is vital.”

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT HOME CARE PACKAGES?

W: vmch.com.au/services/community-services/home-care-packages/

T: 1800 650 615

SURVIVING – AND THRIVING – AFTER STROKE

Pat Allen had a stroke in 1993, aged 52. Her husband of 56 years, David, says the hardest part of Pat’s journey has been the loss her of ability to speak.

“Before the stroke you had trouble keeping her quiet! Now she has all this conversation in her head that she just can’t get through to people, which is frustrating.”

Pat, aged 77, is one of 14 people living with complex communication needs who belong to VMCH Wellbeing Centre’s Conversation Group. Running for ten years, the group gives people the opportunity to develop and use a range of communication skills and strategies and to connect with people in similar situations.

VMCH Speech Pathologist Jacqueline Holland said the ultimate goal was to promote social inclusion.

“We know that people with complex communication needs can also be at risk of social isolation, depression and anxiety. Group members have told us they feel safe to communicate in this environment, and not judged, as they may feel in the outside world.”

Indeed, David said the saddest part of Pat’s stroke had been the loss of friends who had trouble dealing with her communication problems.

“A lot of people don’t understand that inside the person (who’s had a stroke) is an intelligent being and even though they may not be able to get their words out the way they’d like to, you shouldn’t brush them off, but rather persevere or ask questions to get the responses you need.”

Challenges aside, Pat’s independence is improving thanks to her positivity, determination, and support from her loving husband.

She has recently completed a 12-week Movement Group with a physio and occupational therapist at the Wellbeing Centre and visits VMCH’s White Road Activity and Respite Centre for social activities each week, which also offers David some respite from his caring role.



Pictured: David and Pat Allen.

A former singer, Pat’s favourite activity is attending the Stroke a Chord Choir.

“A lot of people who’ve had a stroke with aphasia (impairment of language) can sing, though they can’t necessarily speak. Pat can’t sing words but can keep a tune as well as anybody,” David, 80, said.

The devoted couple want others to know stroke doesn’t mean the end of a fulfilling life.

“While we recognise our limitations, we haven’t let stroke hold us back.”

SEPT
4-10
NATIONAL
STROKE
WEEK

This year, the Stroke Foundation is aiming to ensure every Australian household has someone who knows the F.A.S.T signs.

FACE

F

Check their face.
Has their mouth
drooped?

ARMS

A

Can they lift
both arms?

SPEECH

S

Is their speech
slurred?
Do they understand
you?

TIME

T

Time is critical.
If you see any of
these symptoms act
FAST and call 000.

DID YOU KNOW THAT PEOPLE WHO EXERCISE FIVE OR MORE TIMES PER WEEK HAVE A REDUCED RISK OF STROKE?



VMCH PHYSIOTHERAPIST SANDRA YEUNG EXPLAINS THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF, AND POSSIBLE PREVENTIONS FOR, STROKE...

1 What kinds of physical limitations do people who've experienced stroke face?

Stroke may affect people in different ways, depending on which part of the brain has been affected and how extensive the stroke is. The ability of the brain to control the muscles is often affected which might cause weakness of the facial, trunk, arm and leg muscles on one side of the body. People may experience difficulty with thinking and cognition, vision, speech, ability to walk, to get off a chair or out of bed, balance and coordination, activities of daily living and driving. The effects might be temporary or permanent.

2 What kinds of exercises can people undertake to ease their symptoms?

Stroke survivors may need re-education of balance and walking, of how to do all normal activities to regain independence in life. This may require focus on individual muscles to retrain them to contract and relax as they normally should, with support from a therapist. Muscle tone is often affected through stroke, which means muscles can pull with too much or too little tension, disturbing movement. Exercises are often simple and repetitive to encourage the development of new, neural connections.

3 What kinds of simple exercises can help with stroke prevention?

Regular exercises such as walking, swimming, dancing, going to the gym, bike riding and playing sport could assist in stroke prevention. A sedentary lifestyle is a risk factor for stroke. It is said that 30 minutes of aerobic activity five times a week can impact in reducing hypertension, diabetes and obesity. The aim is to keep fit and have a healthy lifestyle with a good diet and regular exercise.

VMCH WELLBEING CENTRE

The Wantirna South centre has a dedicated team of allied health professionals offering a range of wellbeing, allied health and therapy services on-site or in-home to assist older people to maintain or recover a level of independence and keep them active and connected to their community.

Both Government-funded and client-funded services are available. For further information regarding fees, eligibility and services available in your area.

CONTACT:

T: 1300 919 850

E: alliedhealth&nursing@vmch.com.au

NATIONAL CARERS WEEK

OCT
16-21

October 16-22 is National Carers Week – recognising and celebrating the outstanding contribution Australia's 2.8 million unpaid carers make to our nation.

VMCH Community Services assist around 4,500 unpaid carers through a variety of respite and support services. These dedicated people may care for someone who is frail aged, has a disability, mental illness, dementia, chronic illness or who is going through palliative care.

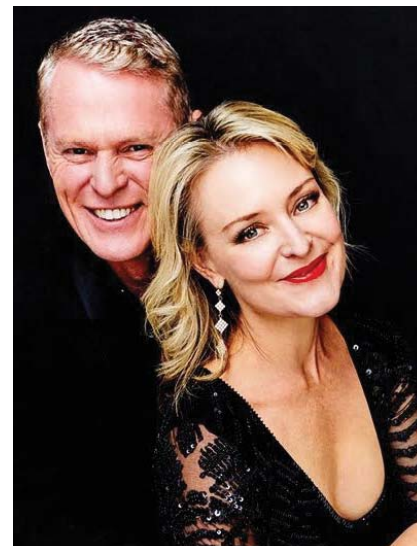
Along with these year-round services, VMCH also hosts special events during National Carer's Week. On October 19, VMCH joins with BrainLink to present **'You and I'** – a musical event featuring Michael Cormick and Rachel Beck.

'You and I'

When: Thursday, October 19, 7pm

Location: The Park Hyatt, East Melbourne

Details and RSVP: 1300 971 270 by October 1, 2017.



REGIONAL EVENTS

Henty Machinery Field Days

VMCH Community Services will extend its reach to locals in rural Victoria during the Henty Machinery Field Days. The three-day farm machinery expo held at Henty – halfway between Albury and Wagga in southern NSW – attracts more than 60,000 people and is a chance for VMCH to let people know about its allied health, respite and home support services across the Riverina region.

When: September 19-21

Event contact details: (02) 6929 3305

VMCH contact details: 1300 650 615

SEPT
19-21

VMCH Moe office opening

The Gippsland community will have better access to Community Services following the opening of a new VMCH office in Moe.

Home Care Packages, help at home services, carer support and health and wellness services will all be offered from the site, which was officially launched on August 21.

Moe office: 44B George Street

Contact details: 1300 919 850

ST BERNADETTE'S COMMUNITY RESPITE HOUSE OPEN DAY

SEPT
28

An Open Day will be held on Thursday, 28 September from 11am to 3pm at 52 Meadowbank Drive, Sunshine North.

Join us to learn more about the house, our staff and the care services we provide.

Morning tea and a light lunch provided.

Please RSVP by September 21 to Brenda Suva on (03) 9310 8749.

COME VISIT US



SUPPORT FOR OUR CARERS

CARER BARBARA GOOLD DESCRIBES ST BERNADETTE'S COMMUNITY RESPITE HOUSE AS HER "SAVIOUR".

Her mum, Joyce, 82, has been visiting the house in Sunshine North three days a week for more than three years – giving Barbara and her husband some vital respite from their full-time role as Joyce's carers.

Barbara reached out for help when caring for her mum – both physically and emotionally – became too great alone.

"Mum can't do anything for herself... we feed and wash her, she can't walk... I was in a bit of stress and just needed a break," Barbara explains.

With her mum taken care of, Barbara has been able to re-join the gym and help improve her back health, which suffered under the strain of lifting her mum.

Barbara and her husband are now able to enjoy everyday activities most people take for granted, like going to the movies and out for walks.

"It's good to have a bit of time out – you couldn't function (as a carer) otherwise."

Barbara says she "couldn't be happier" with the team at St Bernadette's.

"I can drop her off and walk away knowing she's in good hands. Without the support, I'd have to put mum in full-time care."

Centre Coordinator Brenda Suva said typical one-on-one activities for seniors included crafts, cooking, ball games, sitting exercise and iPad sessions.

"We also offer emotional support to our carers and clients. We open longer hours and are more flexible than a usual day centre, so carers have more time – they can even attend work if needed.

"We also assist clients and carers to navigate the aged care system – including information on dementia and Home Care Packages (HCP)."

Barbara, whose Mum Joyce receives visits from a physiotherapist and podiatrist through a HCP, confirmed the one-stop-shop access through VMCH made things easier.

"I didn't know anything about them (HCP) before. Brenda was fantastic and guided me through the process."

LOOKING FOR RESPITE SERVICES?

VMCH offers a range of services and programs for older people with an acquired physical disability, a visual or physical impairment, who have dementia, or who are frail aged. Please call the numbers below near your area.

Wantirna South:	(03) 9800 7210
Sunshine North:	(03) 9310 8749
Pakenham:	(03) 5945 3800
Lysterfield:	(03) 9752 7700
Kialla Lakes:	(03) 5832 8444



**STAFF PROFILE:
CHRISTINE
ANDERSON**

Community Support Assistant
(CSA), VMCH Direct

What does your role involve?

I help older people to remain living independently at home via taking them to appointments, providing personal care, transport and shopping assistance.

How long have you been a CSA?

Five years. I worked at the former Villa Maria aged care residence in Wantirna for 15 years before it closed for redevelopment. I then worked at another aged care residence for three years before returning to VMCH in this direct care role.

What do you like about being a CSA?

I like the flexibility of going to people's homes and the variety of hours.

What keeps you motivated to deliver care?

I like being able to talk one-on-one with clients; getting to know them and them getting to know me. When you're working in a facility you don't get as much time to develop that rapport with people. It is a privilege to work with my clients as I try to make a difference in their lives.

Why VMCH?

VMCH has provided courses in Certificate III Home and Community Care and Certificate IV Disabilities. They've also recently provided some dementia training through Alzheimer's Australia. I worked with a fantastic group of people at the aged care residence and many of the old staff and volunteers of Villa Maria Wantirna still remain in contact and meet regularly.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

My main interests are travel, photography, genealogy and enjoying time with my grandchildren.

NEED A LITTLE EXTRA CARE AT HOME?

VMCH Direct offers a wide range of flexible and responsive in-home and community support services designed to suit you.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

E: vmch@vmch.com.au

T: 1300 919 850

**GET
SOCIAL
WITH US!**



Did you know VMCH has an Aged Care Facebook page?

It's dedicated to celebrating all things senior-related across our organisation.

Why not follow or give us a 'like' to keep updated with the latest senior news from residential aged care or community services?

Simply search 'VMCH Aged Care' on Facebook and you'll find us.



Pictured far left: Corrine Kelaart.

CARING FOR CALD SENIORS

VMCH's innovative Multicultural Wellness Centre (MWC) has expanded its reach to help connect more socially isolated seniors.

The centre has gone from strength to strength since opening 17 months ago; building its Chinese and Filipino social groups to 80 and 16 members respectively and recently forming a Sri Lankan group for people aged over 65 of Sri Lankan/Sinhalese-speaking background.

“Being socially isolated can reduce life expectancy and overall health, both physically and emotionally,” said VMCH Day Centre Coordinator Lynne Cahir.

“While there are many groups for people of Italian and Greek backgrounds, we found there was not much support for the Sri Lankan community. Language can also be a barrier. Most of the members do speak English but it still may be a bit of a challenge so we always have a staff member who speaks Sinhalese and encourage members to chat in their native language.”

Members meet weekly to socialise, undertake cooking classes, exercise classes, go on community outings and listen to guest speakers.

Corrine Kelaart, 66, migrated to Australia in 1994. Since 2003 she has experienced some depression and racial discrimination. She lives alone and struggles with missing her two children and grandchildren in Sri Lanka.

“Everybody (in the group) is so nice and they make me feel very welcome,” Corrine said. “Every Monday I get up extra early, I don’t even need to set an alarm, and get ready to come. I would be very lonely if I missed this.”

Corrine encouraged more CALD seniors to come along.

“There might be a lot of people like me out there facing a lot of problems who don’t have a place to go to. It’s been a help for me.”

Fellow group member Rita Padmaperuma, who also receives a Home Care Package from VMCH, described it as a “nice community”.

“We have a chit chat and a cup of tea, do some chair exercises, have lunch and play some games. I like listening to other people’s problems and helping if I can.”

The MWC is open to seniors aged 65 years and over from CALD backgrounds, living in Melbourne’s eastern metro region. A daily attendance fee includes meals and activities. Fee reduction is available for anyone who is experiencing financial difficulty.

For more information about the MWC call Rani Wong on (03) 9800 7255.

FAST FACTS

- **VMCH Multicultural Wellness Centre was the first culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)-specific, integrated, aged-focused wellness centre in Victoria.**
- **There are 2,638 Sri Lankan-born people living in the City of Knox** (source: ABS, 2011).



FEEL AT HOME WITH VMCH

COMMUNITY SERVICES



Retain your independence and live at home for as long as possible.

- Home Care Packages
- Allied Health and Therapy
- Lifestyle and Respite

RETIREMENT LIVING



Embrace a low-maintenance lifestyle and form new friendships.

- 11 retirement communities
- Secure, independent living
- Quality, well-designed homes

AGED CARE SERVICES



Providing older people with individual and specialised care as they age.

- 11 fully-accredited aged care residences
- Outstanding care and service delivery

VMCH IS HERE TO HELP

P: 1800 036 377 | W: VMCH.COM.AU | E: VMCH@VMCH.COM.AU

VMCH
Villa Maria Catholic Homes