

The Baron Report

Volume 4, Issue 3, 2003

Shooting the Messenger - does not fix the problem

Successful organisations welcome new ideas. Inquiry into possible better approaches is encouraged. Criticism is seen as helpful. People focus on the merits of the message, rather than instinctively shooting the messenger. Sadly, our dairy leaders tend to be instinctive message shooters.

Tony Baldwin - Scoop: Opinion: Industry Fond of Shooting Messenger
March 18 2002 www.scoop.co.nz

While the above statement by Tony Baldwin was referring to the dairy industry in New Zealand, some might say that it has parallels in the aged care industry in Australia.

Oh wow, what have we said, now we are in trouble. Well it appears that we are already in trouble in some quarters.

In response to our last *Baron Report* we received a letter from Trevor Goldstone, CEO of Aged and Community Services SA/NT. In his letter he relayed feedback from some of his members in regards to our lead article.

As a result of his letter and our follow up we are pleased to inform you that he will be attending and addressing the Conference with a presentation entitled; **The people who put the care into aged care.** We wish to thank Trevor for his commitment and know that all attending will be most interested in what he has to say. Again a positive outcome for aged care.

It has come to light through discussions that we appear to have offended some industry 'types' over the timing and composition of this

event. So concerned are they that they are refusing to allow their staff to attend. Well really.

It appears that they are not happy with the makeup or balance of presenters. To those who are feeling a bit precious, we apologise. It was not our intent or purpose to do anything but start to expore issues that are constantly being told to us.

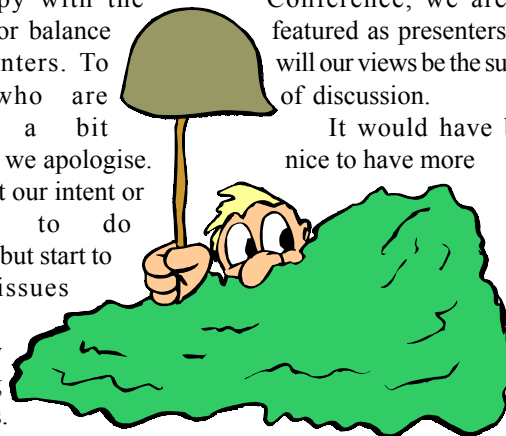
Those notions are out there and have been repeatedly stated to us on almost every occasion that the matter is discussed with care staff. We have not created the problems, nor can we make them go away. We believe that it is better to have problems in the open, rather than taking a 'don't mention it and it will go away' approach.

We accept that there are many differing views in this Industry, as in any area of life but we wish to make it absolutely clear that the feelings expressed were those of personal care workers who perceive that to

be the reality of the situation. Let us not shoot the messenger.

N & C Baron & Associates are facilitating this Conference, we are not featured as presenters, nor will our views be the subject of discussion.

It would have been nice to have more



people and a bigger event, but we must be mindful of time and financial constraints. We purposely have kept these areas manageable to ensure that those wanting to attend will be able to do so.

It must be pointed out that some participants are paying for their attendance from their own pocket.

The agenda addresses the most common issues and concerns that carers discuss with us.

The key areas of concern that will be addressed at the conference include:

- 1) Possible regulation of Carers
- 2) Education of and for Carers.
- 3) Bullying
- 4) Caring for Carers

We believe that those presenting in their repsective areas are professional, knowledgeable and will provide a good starting point. We have difficulty in understanding why any employers would feel that they would not want their staff having this knowledge.

If anyone out there could enlighten us we would be most appreciative.

There is no intention to place blame for these problems but to discuss them in an open forum and in a manner that will inform Carers and give them some positive strategies.

Strategies that we hope they will take back and use in their facility to increase their own esteem and job satisfaction with follow-on benefits to residents.

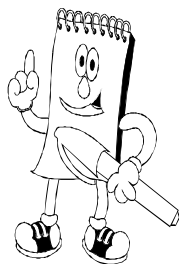
Don't let preconceived ideas or a knee-jerk reaction to the messenger deny you or your facility this opportunity.

Current information for the Aged Care Industry



Would you like to have something you have written or said published?

Simply mail, fax or e-mail us a copy with your details and we will try to make it happen.



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"Yes Minister"

by Neil Baron

Wasn't that a great series, in some ways even better than the later, *Yes Prime Minister*.

In using that title we in no way mean to imply that Minister for Ageing, Kevin Andrews, is in any way like Jim Hatcher. It is simply difficult to listen to a politician and not hear echoing of the former TV series.

It would appear that the current Minister does have a good handle on what is happening and is genuine in attempting to achieve favourable outcomes for the Industry.

Personally, I have time for him and believe that he is doing a much better job than did the former Minister. My only concern with Kevin to date was his negative stance on the issue of euthanasia. In that regard I believe he was wrong.

But we are not here to praise or condemn Ministers but rather to report on the latest announcement in regards to changes in aged care.

Minister Andrews, on March 2nd, 2003 supplied a media release that was entitled; "Minister

Announces Changes to Cut Paperwork in Aged Care Homes". Wow great when does it happen? Well like all good things we have to wait for them to happen.

What the Minister was in fact



announcing was the findings of a report prepared for the Department of Health and Ageing entitled, *Resident Classification Scale Review, February 2003 - No. 43*.

The report reviewed what the current situation is, looked at alternative models and proposed suggestions.

In the case of changes to the RCS it will be years, not moments away. This is understandable as changes of this magnitude take a lot of planning and preparation.

The Minister further stated that. "We need to remove the paperwork burden so nurses can concentrate on

what they are trained for - providing the best possible care."

Does that mean that nurses are not trained to do paperwork and if not the question should be, why not. There is not an area or industry that exists today that does not have paperwork as a key element.

Perhaps what we should all be working for is less 'mindless' paperwork, as is often imposed by bureaucrats and more functional paperwork that actually assists us in getting our jobs done. Paperwork in itself is not a bad thing, in fact it can be our best friend if done correctly.

The Minister went on to say that "Of the \$4.3 billion the Australian Government is providing for residential aged care this financial year, \$3.6 billion will be distributed to homes via the RCS." A very big chunk indeed and one that everyone needs to ensure is well spent.

The greatest tool to ensure that you are getting your share is to have a brilliant understanding of how the process works and how you can best capitalise

RCS Education - Don't Miss Out

Many facility managers were under the mistaken belief that the recent RCS review would result in quick changes.

Release of the report dashed those hopes.

Still, we must take solace in the belief that it is better to make a positive change, although in the distance, than to band-aid

a system that is clearly not working well.

The review suggests that we are at least three years away for major changes.

Recommendations to improve the current system in the meantime with a timeline of approximately twelve months will be carried out.

Now is the time to review and upgrade once again.

N & C Baron have identified this as the ideal time to provide another cost-effective education session to assist you and your staff in maintaining optimum funding until changes occur.



Portable Document Files

Using computers is one way of expanding our communication links. Like any form of communication it is great if both sender and receiver are talking the same language, the same cannot be said if we are mis-communicating.

If you use a computer, at some point you will come across Portable Document Files (PDF).

Usually you will have had a frustrating experience trying to open something only to find that it is meaningless goobly-gook

What do you do then? Phone Neil and say the program you sent is no good. Okay. A little more information and we are able to conclude that, 1) you are not going mad, and 2) you did not get a bad program.

What you have done is tried to open a PDF file with Word and it doesn't work.

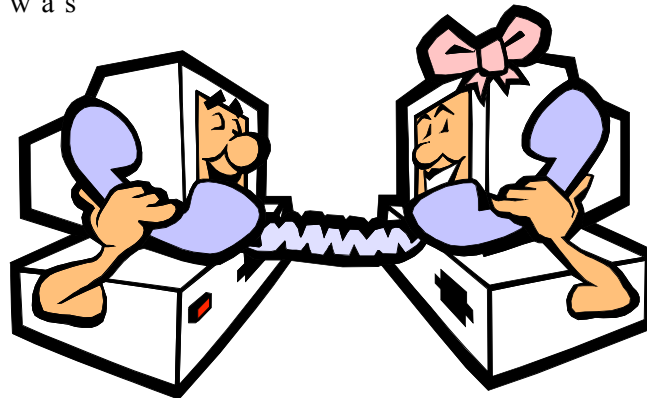
Have we got you totally confused.

Because not all operating systems are alike there is always the opportunity that if I send you something developed with one type of software, that unless you have that identical software you will not be able to use it.

Very much like trying to place a musical CD on a cassette tape machine.

To correct this

problem some clever person(s) developed a method of taking your work, printing it to another file, compressing it and delivering it so that everyone has the ability to read the document as it was



intended, including graphics.

If you have tried to access files on the net you will see a display that says that you need to have an Adobe Reader. It will further tell you that it is free and how to get one.

Once you have a reader you can open, read and save PDF files in their original form. That is you see the text and graphics in the same way as it was intended.

If you want to produce PDF files you need a Writer. This software you have to purchase. .

Software company Adobe, in promoting their writer (currently Acrobat 5.0) states that it will:

- Create Acrobat PDF files that retain exact look and feel of the original

documents with formatting, graphics, and fonts intact.

- Prevent reviewers from making unauthorised changes to documents.

This is the area where people who get to the documents, have so

concerns.

PDF files are brilliant and if used correctly they can provide an inexpensive method of distributing information.



Using the net to make things happen.

Still time,
DON'T
Miss out

*Who Cares for
the Carers?*

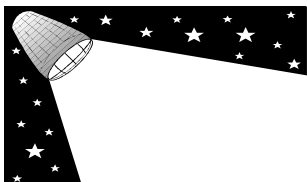
*A one day user
friendly conference
especially developed
for Personal Carers*

**Monday
March 24th 2003**

Education
Development
Centre

Milner Street
Hindmarsh
0845 - 1500

Forget me Not



By popular demand - A second video learning package released

Response to our first video self-learning package 'Good Oral Hygiene in Aged Care' has been outstanding with lots of comment from across Australia.

Most of the feedback has been very positive, indicating how useful it is to have a portable education vehicle that can be used over and over again to reinforce learned concepts with current staff and to introduce these concepts to new staff.

Managers are delighted by the questionnaire that provides them with clear evidence that their staff have been able to articulate the key points made in the presentation.

AFFORDABLE

Facilities report that the low cost has enhanced their ability to educate their staff within the constraints of a limited budget.

Especially happy are rural areas that either have to

pay high travel costs to educate their staff or to forgo valuable training.

PACKAGE IMPROVEMENTS

A few comments on the first package have been in relation to the 'digital quality' of the video itself.

There was a small glitch in the production that was not able to be corrected without a major time and money investment. We decided to leave it in and go with the project, rather than either scrapping the total video or having to impose a much higher cost.

Our major continuous improvement has been investing in advanced software, hardware and training to ensure better outcomes for our customers. (Does that sound familiar?)

It must be stated that all of these items do come with very large price tags. But

we will continue to keep costs as low as is possible. We do believe in aged care and are in it for the long haul. Any way that we can help the industry is seen as a positive move and worth the effort.

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We are sure you will be as delighted with the result as we are.

We do make one proviso though; we will continue to use real health professionals rather than actors to get the message across.

Sadly our industry is not flush with dashing Hollywood types but with some very knowledgeable people who can give your staff the information they need to improve resident care and quality of life.

FUTURE PLANS

Thanks to your

feedback we are now planning a range of packages to address aged care issues and expected outcomes as per the Accreditation Standards. These will include documentation, lifestyle, nutrition and hydration and sleep to name but a few.

IN-HOUSE PRODUCTIONS

We have also embarked on in-house productions for some facilities and must say that the results have been very pleasing.

An ideal way for you to be able to show prospective employees, residents and relatives your facility with out having to drag them through your resident's home.

Again, the costs can be surprisingly low and the benefits incredibly high.

We will keep you informed.

Food Safety Practice made *Easy*

Food safety is a doddle, and a waste of time, we all know what we have to do and how to do it. Or do we?

Well we should know if we are involved in any way with the preparation or serving of food, yet every day we hear of cases of people being hospitalised or even dying due to food poisoning.

We cannot afford to be less than totally vigilant.

Aged Care has been identified by the Australia New Zealand Food Authority

ANZFA in their publication Safe Food Australia 2nd Edition 2001 as an industry that needs to ensure that special care is given due to having a susceptible population with an increased potential of risk.

A new self learning package is now available to provide facilities with an inexpensive, simple way of training in the important area of safe food practice.

Hosted by chef, food consultant and aged care specialist, Adrian Hill the

package includes a video along with an easy to follow question and answer section.

It is ideally suited for all levels of staff, with valuable information, helpful tips and strategies to prevent problems associated with unsafe hygiene practices.

While a must for all of your catering staff, the video will also be useful for any care staff members who deliver food (ie morning tea, supper etc.) to residents.

See the enclosed brochure for details.



We have chosen this little fella as the symbol for the food safety package because he does personify the dreaded little bacterium that are present and can cause us problems.

When you see him spare a thought to ensure that you are doing all the rights things to prevent him being a 'guest at your table.'