

Caring for Others, Neglecting Yourself

Building on the success and positive feedback from the 2003 *Who Carers for the Carers* Personal Carer Conference we have formulated a program we believe, will be beneficial to all aged care workers.

The full day conference entitled, *Caring for Others, Neglecting Yourself*, will be held on April 28th 2004 and reflects areas that were identified as being important for further discussion.

Once again the Education Development Centre in Hindmarsh will be the venue, as you indicated that it was a good place to hold a function. Again we will try to provide a yummy menu to keep the tummy from rumbling.

This year is focussed on the carer as a person, not just on the duties that they perform. Issues that impact on our lives, will translate into our job performance and as such should be seen as a critical area for examination.

While we all acknowledge the need to leave personal problems at the door, often issues intertwine and a clear separation is not always possible.

GRIEF

The first area that will be examined and discussed will be the issue of GRIEF. While we often assist relatives over grief, we

sometimes forget that carers also grieve over the loss of residents.

Grieving also occurs when workmates move on and our routines change around us.

Ruth Walter, a social worker and Assistant Co-ordinator at the Loss and Grief Centre will lead the panel discussion which will include, personal carer Sue Baldry, Salvation Army Chaplain Major Howard Smith and personal carer and chaplain Leonie Staunton.

These are real people who experience and assist with grief issues from a practical rather than a theoretical perspective.

People that do understand the problems that carers experience and the emptiness and uncertainty that affects their lives.

BULLYING

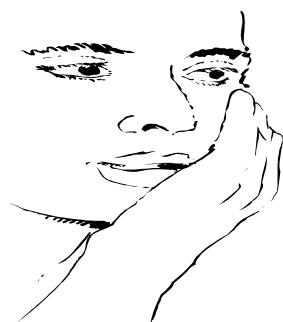
The second issue is that of Bullying. Sue Fenwick, lead organiser with the Australian Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union (LHMU) will outline strategies that will be used to address this contentious issue within the workplace. She will also highlight the personal impact on individuals being bullied up to and including suicide.

The LHMU has a wider role than just advocating for wages and Sue

will tell us how the role of the Union is assisting care workers in other areas.

STRESS

Stress is an often talked about issue and yet many feel they have neither the time or energy to counter



many factors that impact on us.

Kim Ashby, a personal trainer will give clear practical advice on some 'stress buster' strategies that can be incorporated into our daily routines, no matter how busy we are.

SLEEP

Ah sleep, glorious sleep, isn't it great when we get enough? But do we get enough and is it good quality?

These questions, plus many more will be addressed by Dr Helen Wright a clinical psychologist and sleep researcher.

Starting her working career as a nurse and then moving through the academic system Helen is very in tune to the needs of aged care workers. She is not the boring academic type, but a bubbly

well informed and delightful person to listen to.

While she may talk about sleep, we promise that she won't put you to sleep in this fascinating session.

OTHER OPTIONS

If not aged care, then what? It is hoped that a discussion on this issue will be able to be facilitated and to that end negotiations are currently underway. Often the grass is not greener on the other side of the fence.

While it would be great to see every carer employed in aged care given the ability to increase their knowledge in these vital areas, we know that is not a possibility. It would be good to at least see someone from each facility attend.

YES YOU

Why should your facility support having representation at this event?

Quite simply because these are issues that impact on all care staff and having someone experience the proceedings first hand may result in other staff being able to increase their knowledge by way of feedback or discussion.

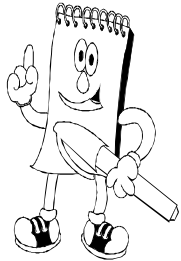
Last year we asked "Who Cares for the Carers". This year we will give you tips on how to care for yourself. Don't miss out.

"Better Practice" comes at a Cost

by Neil Baron

"The Board identified last year that the Agency needed to give greater emphasis to its education and information roles if continuous improvement is to be maintained. Education is the key to the achievement of continuous improvement in the aged care sector, and in the Agency." Jim Harrowell Chairman, The Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Ltd. Annual Report 2001-2002

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



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We could not agree more, ongoing education is critical to the successful management of any facility. So far it appears that we are in agreement, but all is not as it appears.

Adjudicators as educators have not proven successful on a host of reality based television shows and if comments from within the industry are correct, the same might be said for aged care. Indeed under item 27 of the *Key Findings, Managing Information of The Auditor-General Audit Report No.42 2002-03 Performance Audit Managing Residential Aged Care Accreditation* it states: **"Some industry representatives have expressed concern over the Agency's dual role as accreditor and educator. These concerns range from a reluctance to approach the Agency for education assistance for fear of regulatory consequences, to homes being receptive to the education role and appreciative of the opportunity to interact with, and learn from, Agency staff in another forum. The potential tension between the Agency's dual roles of accreditor and educator, and the response from some parts of the aged care industry, is a risk that the Agency must continue to manage."**

Education is necessary and the Agency will be providing education, these two issues have been identified. How the issue is perceived is a potential problem. This has also been identified.

We know that on past audits that suggestions and

comments have been taken as directives and still continue to be a source of confusion. So is a two day extravaganza (not



our words) the best way for the Agency to address the issue of education?

Nurses are not backwards about coming forward, nor are they timid on passing judgment. Comments that have reached us in regards to the upcoming Standards and Accreditation Agency *Better Practice Conference* have been interesting.

While it is difficult to pass comment on something that has yet to happen, it is worth mentioning a few of the areas of concern.

Cost

"Do they think we are made of money?" "Don't they understand the shortage of money in Aged Care?" and "Why have it at the Hilton?"

The issue of cost is not just the registration price, which is a serious impost to many small facilities but also the additional requirements of parking, travel and accommodation for some.

Add to that the cost of having to have someone covering their responsibilities while they are away: "We are not like the Agency who can just shut down" one person

indicated.

We empathise, indeed N & C Baron & Associates will only be sending one person, Carla, who as an external auditor feels obligated to attend.

Shared Registrations

The inability to share registration also came to us as a major issue. While an early bird registration would set a facility back \$479.00, that is one person attending the two day event, should that same facility wish to send two people for one day each the cost becomes \$550.00.

Now that seems not to be a very user-friendly approach. Surely the only real cost in producing an additional name tag should not be \$71.00. Yet it might mean the difference in allowing facilities to be able to attend.

Concurrent Sessions

Again an area of concern, in that while three areas are happening, a person can only attend one.

One DON indicated that this would be okay if the three sessions were for different areas, CEO, RN and say kitchen etc. but not a matter of having to pick one area at the expense of two others.

Finally the previous mentioned report *Managing Income and Workflow* (Chapter 3) indicated that the Agency goes through light financial periods on years when accreditations are not happening. Is this a way to perhaps increase the cash flow?

The following is a March 4th 2004 media release put out by **Annette Ellis**, the Shadow Minister for Ageing. It was announced on March 5th 2004 that Annette will take a leave of absence due to the discovery of breast cancer.

We wish Annette well and hope that she is soon back on deck to provide another federal perspective on issues relating to aged care. Further information regarding this statement may be gained from her adviser, Victoria Toulkidis on 0439 994 564.

Nursing home resident dies following “successful” accreditation

An elderly nursing home resident died following an attack from another resident, only one month after the Government's Aged Care Accreditation Agency noted behavioural problems with some residents in that facility.

In September 2003, the Accreditation Agency gave accreditation to the Chelsea Private Nursing Home, but found that the facility failed the Accreditation Standard '2.13 Behavioural Management'. It passed all other 43 out of 44 Standards.

Only one month later a resident was allegedly attacked by another

resident and died as a result of injuries.

The Accreditation Agency knew from the year 2000 that this facility was not adequately managing behavioural problems with some residents. Yet the situation was allowed to deteriorate to the extent that it may have contributed to the tragic death of a resident.

One month after the death, the Accreditation Agency went back into the facility which then failed 19 out of 44 Standards.

I don't understand how in one facility the Accreditation Agency can fail one Standard in Septem-

ber, and then fail 19 Standards only two months later.

Obviously there is something wrong with the accreditation system – it is failing and not providing the vital support needed by aged care facilities.

When asked about this in Parliament today, the Minister said: *“This is an example of how the accreditation system that was introduced by the Howard Government in 1996 and 1997 is working...”*

Clearly, that is not the case. The Government has failed to improve the accreditation system, and has done little to en-

sure that aged care facilities are funded appropriately to care for residents with complex and behavioural problems.

In March 2003, following the release of the Government's Resident Classification Review, Catholic Health Australia called on the Government to “...move with a sense of urgency to change the structure of funding to better meet the needs of palliative care residents and for people with dementia.”

Sadly, the Government has done absolutely nothing since then, and it stands condemned.

New Self Learning Package - Fire Safety in Aged Care now available

It gives us great pleasure to announce the completion of our latest video package, **Fire Safety in Aged Care** presented by Rolly May, a highly respected health care safety consultant with more than 25 years of experience.

Easy to follow and understand, this information is designed to allow your staff to gain basic knowledge in a user friendly way.

The package will

cover areas of: Fire causes, Fire prevention, Fire equipment, Staff roles if they discover a fire and Staff roles if the fire alarm activities.

As with our other packages, a companion question and answer section ensures that you are able to document that your staff have had a level of training in this vital area.

We believe that this exciting package will prove invaluable for all

of your current staff as a refresher and will form a vital part of your orientation package for all new staff.

Fire is a real threat and an issue that cannot be treated lightly.

At only \$84.95 including GST, packing and shipping you cannot go wrong, with this valuable training tool.



Roller Coaster is rolling along

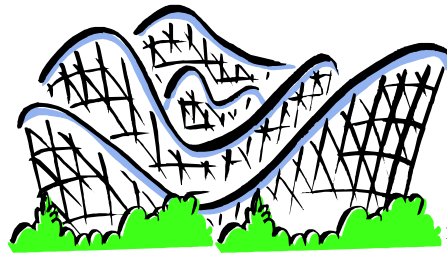
In the last edition of **The Baron Report** we predicted that aged care would have a roller coaster ride in 2004. Well has the response been interesting!

We had no one disagreeing with the sentiment, rather there appears to be general agreement that if anything we have understated the case.

To start was the announcement by the Salvation Army of the sale of 15 of their 19 facilities in Victoria, West Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

In South Australia the facilities are Edenfield, Parklyn and Sunset Lodge

with the retention of Linsell Lodge as part of their ongoing commitment to disadvantaged people.



tagged people.

We must say that we believe the decision was a very difficult one, not taken lightly and one that has produced comment and admiration for a brave decision. It has also caused a great deal of angst.

It has been indicated to us that other facilities are in similar circumstances and that it is only a matter of time before they too, will need to finally give in to financial pressures.

Some have said more organisation should sever their 'aged care business' if it cannot be adequately resourced.

At an Adelaide luncheon In November 2003, Minister Julie Bishop made much of what might happen with the result of the shortly to be released Hogan Report.

Rumours exist on the likely outcomes that will result from this \$7.3 million review, but it appears that we will still have to wait for our political leaders to determine the appropriate time to roll out the details of this review.

The time might well become an election issue rather than a genuine attempt to provide aged care with a future direction. This should be roundly condemned as totally inappropriate.

Will it take further sell offs, good staff burning out and potentially residents being put at risk before we have some resolution?

Two Great Days for You

Clearing the Air on Leisure in Aged Care

Thursday June 24th 2004

Leisure and Lifestyle One Day Conference
Education Development Centre
Milner Street Hindmarsh

Leisure and lifestyle people are short of time, yet spend countless hours recording details that have absolutely no benefit to their residents.

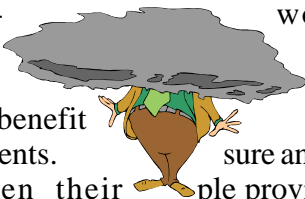
Too often their documentation resembles that appropriate for nursing purposes but has little to do with ensuring that residents are still enjoying an aspect of quality of life.

Social histories are often fill in the blank forms that provide very

little useful information about the resident, but rather a jumble of one word answers that tell us little.

And yet leisure and lifestyle people provide a very useful service, are often undervalued and help to make life worthwhile for the residents.

This exciting day will provide strategies and perspectives that will greatly assist in making their tasks more beneficial.



Aged Care - Inside Out

Thursday August 12th 2004
5th Annual Thorny Issues Conference
Education Development Centre
Milner Street Hindmarsh

While preliminary plans and negotiations are underway for this exciting event, the challenge this year is determining which of a host of 'thorny issues' to address. We do live in interesting times.

Areas of concern, debate or confusion are constantly with us and the successful managing of them is an ongoing challenge.

As always we will endeavour to provide you with a thought provoking day with speakers that come with current practical information that may assist your facility to be able to move forward just that bit more smoothly.

Details will be available shortly.

