The Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (the Quality Agency) accredits and monitors Commonwealth-subsidised aged care services and conducts quality reviews of home care and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flexible care services. The Quality Agency also promotes consumer-focused quality care through education and engagement activities and works to promote the best quality of care and safety for older Australians.

The aged care sector is undergoing a period of significant change. Supporting the transition to the new Aged Care Quality Standards is a key priority for the Quality Agency in 2018. The Quality Agency is working with consumers, providers and other key stakeholders to assist service providers to comply and help consumers to understand the new Aged Care Quality Standards.

Subject to parliamentary processes, providers will be assessed against the new Standards from 1 July 2019. The new Standards will make it easier for consumers, their families and representatives to understand what they can expect from a service. They will also make regulation simpler for providers and encourage innovation, excellence and continuous improvement.

The Quality Agency’s vision is for a world-class aged care system driven by empowered consumers who enjoy the best possible quality of life. The 2018 Better Practice Awards support this vision by allowing us to recognise and showcase better practice, innovation and excellence across Australia’s aged care sector with an increased focus on the consumer.
About the Better Practice Awards

The Quality Agency’s Better Practice Awards are awarded each year for projects, initiatives or programs that act as exemplars for other aged care service providers and encourage continuous improvement. This year’s awards align to our focus on consumer outcomes and the new Aged Care Quality Standards.

The Awards recognise and disseminate better practice and innovation across the broad spectrum of aged care services including:

- Commonwealth Home Support Program providers
- Home Care Service providers
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible care service providers
- Residential Aged Care Homes.

Nominations for Better Practice Awards describe projects, initiatives or programs that relate to a range of areas including:

- Clinical care/ medication management
- Enablement and/or transition care
- Consumer engagement and/or co-design
- Social participation and lifestyle
- Technology and/or social media
- Living environment and/or sustainability
- Leadership and culture
- Workforce development
- Health and wellbeing
- Dementia care
- Safety
- Diversity

In 2018, 102 nominations for Better Practice Awards were received.

An expert independent panel assessed each nomination that met the eligibility criteria. Nominations were considered against the selection criteria that included a focus on quality of care and quality of life outcomes for consumers.
Better Practice Awards recognise better practice through our “Better Practice Commendation Awards”. These awards showcase better practice beyond minimum levels of compliance and focus on quality and safety for consumers.

Better Practice Awards also recognise a smaller number of higher tier “National Innovation and Excellence in Aged Care Awards”. This award recognises providers demonstrating leading edge, innovative practices in aged care that represent ‘excellence’.

Benefits of the Better Practice Awards program
The key benefits of the Better Practice Awards program include:

- gaining recognition through acknowledgement as an ‘exemplar of better practice’ or as ‘a leader in innovation and excellence of national or international note’
- sharing acknowledgement and celebrating success with consumers, managers, staff, visiting health professionals and others involved
- contributing to sector improvement by sharing better practices that can be adopted
- using the award to promote service innovation across the sector and to consumers.

Award winners will be promoted on our website, www.aacqa.gov.au and in our industry newsletter, the Quality Standard.
The National Innovation and Excellence in Aged Care Awards

These awards are designed to celebrate those providers who are industry leaders in aged care and who are worthy of both national and international recognition in aged care practice.

Up to five of these awards are offered nationally each year, in addition to our Commendation (exemplar) awards.

All nominations apply using the same application form and all must first meet the ‘all nominations’ selection criteria. Those nominations the expert industry panel considered are ‘outstanding’ examples of better practice are then considered against the additional tier of selection criteria for this higher award category.

The 2018 winners of the National Innovation and Excellence in Aged care Awards include:

- **City of Boroondara (Vic)**
  Creating an Age-Friendly Community

- **Fresh Fields Aged Care Pty Ltd (WA)**
  Back to Country

- **The Whiddon Group (NSW)**
  Embedding relationship-based care
City of Boroondara (Vic)

Creating an Age-Friendly Community

Commonwealth Home Support Program providers – Inner regional

Award descriptors:
- Community engagement and/or co-design
- Health and wellbeing
- Social participation and lifestyle

In 2012, the City of Boroondara was recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as an age-friendly city; a place where older people live safely, enjoy good health and stay involved. The City of Boroondara was one of only six Australian cities to have received this recognition at that time.

The development of age-friendly places is a process that actively incorporates older people in decision making, implementation and evaluation of plans of action to bring sustainable change.

The City of Boroondara’s Creating an Age-friendly Strategy 2014-19 fulfils the organisation’s commitment to the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities, which has enabled the organisation to deliver a series of actions that develop and maintain the functional ability enabling wellbeing in older age. Some of the key outcomes and achievements resulting from the Creating an Age-friendly Strategy and associated plans include:

Some of the key outcomes and achievements resulting from the Creating an Age-friendly Strategy and associated plans include:

- **Casserole Club** – a meal sharing and community strengthening project.
- **Telling Tales** – interviews with seniors about memories and experiences which led to the development of a theatrical presentation.
- **Walk, Rest and Talk** – a map/brochure series offering seniors a safe and easy walking route with information about available amenities.
- **Adult outdoor fitness** – outdoor fitness equipment supported by a local YMCA fitness program.
Better Practice Award winners 2018

Share Care and Connect – a toolkit which assists individuals, community groups and local organisations to support community sharing groups, projects or activities.

Active Ageing Hub – a digital directory of programs and activities for over 55’s. Dementia Friendly Community – to help people remain independent for longer.

Annual Age-friendly Forum – an annual forum with a different theme each year held during the Victorian Seniors Festival.

WHERE:
Main Hall,
Hawthorn Arts Centre,
360 Burwood Road,
Hawthorn

WHEN:
Friday 7 October,
2pm to 4pm,
afternoon tea included
Free entry,
bookings essential.

Boroondara Arts and Health, Active Ageing and Disability present

TELLING TALES
Back to Country

Residential aged care homes – Major cities

Award descriptors:

- Health and wellbeing
- Consumer engagement and/or co-design
- Enablement and/or transition care

The aim of the Back to Country program is to provide a social connection and hope for Aboriginal care recipients and to inspire positive mental health well-being outcomes with the promise of sending them home to their traditional land.

This program has many benefits for our care recipients and their communities. Due to the urban location, our home has care recipients with high-level care needs. Many of these people identify as Aboriginal and are traditional land owners from remote areas of the state who have been transferred to the city for medical care.

The Back to Country program consists of evaluating whether the person’s health condition can be stabilised and rehabilitated to a level of fitness and independence where they would be able to return to their home. The program includes a schedule of structured and unstructured activities facilitated by the Aboriginal Health Coordinator and the home’s clinical team who work together on a plan for the person to get to our health and wellbeing goal for their return to country.

Driving this commitment, is our recognition that Aboriginal people have a link to the land. For traditional people the land encompasses kinship, community, history, spirituality, and family. We work with many agencies, both government and non-government to assist people to return to their traditional lands.
We have evaluated the effects of the program by conducting informal qualitative interviews post-transfer. The benefits have been very clear and positive, with the people benefiting from social inclusion, and an increased sense of community, however the most remarkable benefit has been the sense of being ‘back in country’.
Embedding relationships based care

Residential Care – Major cities, Inner regional

Award descriptors:

- Leadership and culture
- Health and wellbeing
- Workforce development

Our care philosophy has always been based on a belief that personal growth and meaningful activity can be possible regardless of age and frailty. The launch of our new MyLife model of care - which integrates care for social, emotional and physical needs - provided us with the opportunity to consider how best to ensure a consistent and holistic approach to care and create true cultural change.

Through implementing the MyLife model of care, we have empowered clients and families to be true partners in their care and give permission and the right skills to staff to deliver relationship based care.

We identified 3 key elements to implementing relationship based care – continuity of staffing, greater personal connection and meaningful activity. We established a dedicated rostering model and partnered with University of Sydney for training, new processes and the evaluation. In addition, a new Program Manager role was created to work alongside University of Sydney and drove both the trial program and the subsequent 3 year roll out across all 27 of our residential and community care services.

Through the MyLife program, MyLife Buddies (focus carers), were allocated to each resident to develop the relationship, partner with family and advocate for the resident to other staff.
The new program also introduced 2 new tools/processes:

**All About Me**, conducted at the outset of the program where the MyLife Buddy spends one on one time with the client and family discussing past, present and future interests and goals.

**Best Week** is introduced as a Handover tool, where each client experiences the best possible week for them approximately every quarter. Activities can be big or small, but are tailored to that individual.
The Better Practice Commendation Awards

The Better Practice Commendation Awards represent exemplars of good practice. These awards retain a clear focus on quality and safety for consumers and are central to the Quality Agency’s role in promoting consumer focused, high quality aged care and services throughout Australia.

Nominations come from a range of service types, locations and sizes, covering the breadth and diversity of providers in Australia.

The 2018 winners of the Commendation Awards include:

- **ECH Incorporated (SA)**
  ECH LGBTI Connect Service

- **Feros Care (Qld)**
  Grow Bold – Independent Fulfilled Lives

- **Feros Care (NSW)**
  Trials to Smiles – Sunbeam Legacy

- **Resthaven Incorporated**
  Restoring Older People’s Lives

- **Sacred Heart Community (Vic)**
  My Community My Way

- **Montefiore (NSW)**
  Integrated Cognitive and Sensory Program

- **Yackandandah Bush Nursing Hospital (Vic)**
  Let’s Grow Old Together
ECH Incorporated (SA)
ECH North | ECH South | ECH West

ECH LGBTI Connect Service
Commonwealth Home Support Program providers – Home care services – National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flexible care service providers – Inner regional – Major cities

Award descriptors:
- Diversity
- Consumer engagement and/or co-design
- Health and wellbeing

This project ensured access, service delivery and employment experiences for people from LGBTI communities was positive and welcoming. Through co-designing services for older LGBTI people, a LGBTI Connect Service was developed. This service works with potential clients to understand their requirements and incorporates a social program element to facilitate social connections and mutual support. The program has also supported the delivery of extensive staff training leading to new and updated policies to guide culturally sensitive support for clients from the LGBTI community.
Feros Care (Qld)
Wommin Bay | Byron Bay | Bangalow

Grow Bold – Independent Fulfilled Lives

Award descriptors:
- Health and wellbeing
- Social participation and lifestyle
- Technology and/or social media

This national program helps Seniors live a healthy, fulfilling life by building stronger connections with the broader community and promoting the message that even as we reach our Senior years, there is opportunity for us all to set and achieve our goals and dreams. Through an ambitious multi-media marketing campaign “Grow Bold”, Feros Care started community conversations which have raised awareness of the value of Seniors in the community, normalised the ageing process, reduced Aged Discrimination - enabling “Bold Lives”.

![Images of seniors engaged in various activities]

![Image of an elderly man spray painting]

14 Better Practice Award winners 2018
**Feros Care (NSW)**

Wommin Bay | Byron Bay

**Trials to Smiles – Sunbeam Legacy**


**Award descriptors:**

- Health and wellbeing
- Social participation and lifestyle
- Enablement and/or transition care

In an environment typically associated with keeping people comfortable and preventing decline, Feros Trials to Smiles is a first of a kind solution to providing evidence based fully integrated clinical and lifestyle therapy for Seniors in residential care; personalised restorative programs provide a sustainable way of helping residents get stronger through therapy, at the same time supporting them to live “their best life” and achieve their lifestyle dreams.
Resthaven Incorporated (SA)
Resthaven Marion Community Services

Restoring Older People’s Lives

Award descriptors:
- Health and wellbeing
- Enablement and/or transition care
- Consumer engagement and/or co-design

In 2017, Resthaven was allocated 17 ‘places’ of the new Commonwealth Government service, Short Term Restorative Care (STRC). A working group developed an action plan to implement Resthaven’s restorative care program, using a nurse-led multidisciplinary team approach, and building on existing organisational experience, capacity and capability in wellness, reablement and restorative care services. An evaluation in May 2018 demonstrated the program is achieving quality outcomes for consumers through tailored assistance, aimed at supporting individuals to regain physical and emotional functional capacity; restoring their lives following “setbacks”; and postponing the need for higher level care.
Sacred Heart Mission (Vic)
Sacred Heart Community

**My Community My Way**
Residential aged care homes – Major cities

**Award descriptors:**
- Diversity
- Health and wellbeing
- Social participation and lifestyle

The Sacred Heart Community provides a special place for residents who have a history of homelessness and disadvantage. This initiative takes its lead from residents and is guided by trauma informed care. The model encompasses every aspect of services provided to residents by staff, allied health practitioners and volunteers.
Montefiore (NSW)
Randwick

Integrated Cognitive and Sensory Program
Residential aged care homes – Major cities

Award descriptors:
- Dementia care
- Clinical care/medication
- Health and wellbeing

This program improved interventions, staff skills and knowledge to better support residents with dementia experiencing changed behaviours, or behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD). The program involved three core components including: multifaceted specialist assessment; environmental assessment and enhancements; and staff training.
Let’s Grow Old Together

Residential aged care homes – Inner regional

Award descriptors:
- Consumer engagement and/or co-design
- Social participation and lifestyle
- Leadership and culture

The Let’s Grow Old Together project was aimed at breaking down perceived barriers and reconnecting services to the community. This project changed community perceptions of the organisation and embedded the home as an integral part of the community. The project has led to the development of a website and social media plan to engage with the community. It has also supported the creation of community spaces, and a collection of monologues entitled ‘Living Memory’.
Congratulations

to all our 2018 Better Practice Award winners

For more information about the Better Practice Awards program visit our website: www.aacqa.gov.au

Contact us: 1800 728 589
Betterpracticeawards@aacqa.gov.au