

## ***Chair Report 2022***

Sapphire Coast Aged Care Group  
2022 Report from the Chair.

Good evening everyone, and thanks for attending another annual meeting. After another trying year, it is nice to be able to say that progress is being made on many fronts. We can look back on events that have caused us lots of pain from an operating point of view, but at the same time recognise that patience and persistence is bearing fruit.

Covid, of course, has been a major hindrance and distraction, and whilst it seems to be fading away as a national issue of primacy, still causes obstacles to our normal operating procedures. Staffing, in general and as a result of vaccination requirements, has been difficult. The continued use of PPE, and isolation of residents from other residents, and issues arising from relatives and friends visitation, have all impacted on day to day efficiencies.

The recent announcement of significant pay rises for care staff, funded by government, should mean that good staff are less likely to be lured away. Losing other good staff because of industry wide vaccination policies, backed totally by the Board, has also been frustrating, but hopefully will cease to be an issue as time goes on.

The recent steady influx of foreign born and qualified staff has been a tremendous result for the Group, and a result of a fantastic approach and hard work by our CEO and his executive staff. They are all to be applauded, and particularly as we acknowledge that SCACG is the first provider in Australia to be able to access this pool of excellent staff. I would also like to say a big thank you to the Bega Rotary club for their practical and financial assistance in helping our new friends make homes in the Bega valley, as well as the real estate businesses who helped find accommodation for them.

As we make progress with our major projects, it has only been after much frustration with what we can term "red tape". As recently as a month ago we were in danger of losing our work force at The Glen Estate in East St because of some issues not being signed off officially, none of which were our fault, but which threatened to impact significantly on the project. Finding a major piece of granite underground was both a headache, and in a small way, a suitable delaying distraction while other issues were able to be sorted.

In Bombala, we have been working with the Kennedy Trust in being able to progress the retirement village project for the town. Our CEO, Matt, has been able to contribute much cogent advice to the Bombala community in getting the recently closed 32 bed nursing home "Currawarna" back into use as an asset for people of retiring age.



Matt has also been a major contributor in discussions relevant to nursing home issues in Cooma. Advice and help from SCACG has seen a \$2 million improvement in Cooma's aged care environment.

I would like to stress that these out of town projects are fully supported by the Board, and we are all proud to say that we have helped where we could because it was the right thing to do.

Our own financial position is still sound. While the Board has consciously embraced the need to budget for deficits in the last few years, our balance sheet is still largely in balance.

I would like to pay a special tribute to all our staff, some have been with us since the inception of the organisation, some have just joined, but without them the SCACG would not exist. Again, we are sorry that some have left for greener pastures, but we move on. To Matt, I say a most sincere thank you. Apart from our senior executives, I am probably the person who most sees the hours and the effort and the great judgement that he puts into our organisation. His influence is taken for granted in Bega and Pambula, but as I have said, the people of Bombala and Cooma have much to thank him for.

I would like to thank Helen Slater and the hard-working Auxiliary who every year contribute to SCACG in the most meaningful way, financially. I would like to pay tribute to Gillian Oates and Edna Duncanson, the last surviving founders of Hillgrove House, and remember Annette Warby who passed away this year.

I pay a very special tribute to Alex Langworthy and Ross Ritchey, who leave the Board officially tonight. Alex for his calm analytical engineer's outlook, and Ross for his fearless advocacy of any idea he believes in, and for his financial acumen, which has been appreciated by all Board members.

It gives me great pleasure to officially welcome Rod McDonald and Chris Chung to the Board. It has been a special pleasure to welcome a younger cohort to our organisation in recent years, and I know that a somewhat rejuvenated Board sets us up with our future in good hands.

This will be the time I seek a Board position. It has been a very great privilege to have served our organisation and by extension our community in this way. I take great pride in knowing that we have put the wellbeing of our residents at the forefront of all our decision making.

As we contemplate the increasing importance of a viable and ethically run aged care sector in our society, we all know that the Sapphire Coast Aged Care Group at all times aspires to that goal.

Thank you  
Phil Moffitt.

**CEO Report 2022**  
***Your Life, Your Choice, Our Care***

The past year saw the Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care Board and leadership team continue to build on our foundations to improve our purpose of providing quality care and lifestyle choices to our community.

The past year has been brutal and courageous. As I think of the year, and the experiences I had visiting our facilities and speaking with home care clients, and hearing story after story, no other words better capture what our team faced and how they responded. Pandemic, floods, workforce shortages and exhaustion meant the conditions we faced across our services were often brutal. But again, and again we took on these challenges with great personal courage and so, as tough as this year has been, it's one we can be incredibly proud of.

Understandably governments and many in the community wanted to move to a more normal footing for life, and at times there were signs we were through the worst of COVID-19. But we care for the most vulnerable in society – the threat was never really over for them. What changed this time was the very extensive spread of Omicron which impacted our workforce along with everyone else. As a result, we experienced the greatest pressure on our workforce since the pandemic began, as so many of our team isolated with COVID-19 or as close contacts. This was the experience across the aged care and health sectors. In equal measure, we saw an incredible response from our team who went above and beyond again and again to ensure we could continue to deliver care. The resilience of our team and their determination has been nothing short of inspirational. These challenges for aged care are another reminder why we need to better value our workforce and why we support better wages and conditions. It's also why we support the continued implementation of the ***Royal Commission's reform*** and are working actively with government and other stakeholders to strengthen aged care for the future.

The past 12 months has also seen a significant change with a focus on developing our team to position SCCAC to meet the changing industry focus, and furthering SCCAC's good will in the community. We remain focussed on fulfilling our purpose and make a difference to everyday older Australians in the Bega Valley, by further improving their quality of life.

We continually take any opportunity to further advocate for the Aged Care industry and in particular the needs for regional, locally managed providers such as ourselves to remain viable. Sustainability and innovation is our approach to meeting the new and emerging models of care as we have seen develop through the introduction of consumer directed care.

### **Our Developments**

I am very grateful for our Board who approved the recommendation to build 42 retirement living villas in Glen Mia to be known as The Glen. This development is on track, and we are hopeful the first 28 villas will be ready mid-year 2023 which will also address a huge community need, as at present people who have been waiting to move into The Oaks have had to wait several years.

The year also saw our expansion of our retirement living with another development application lodged with Snowy Monaro Regional Council to build a 15-villa retirement village in Bombala in conjunction with The Kennedy Trust, our aim is to put this development out to tender this calendar year and commence building early 2023.



## **Our Staff**

Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care has a dedicated and professional workforce of more than 250 who do their best to deliver high quality care 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, year in year out.

Our dedicated professional staff engage and connect with our older residents and community members and at times becoming defacto family members in the process. What sets our staff apart is their dedication to what is a rewarding, yet regularly challenging profession, in which they devote themselves to caring for others. Some of the most overlooked and unsung heroes in our society are the wide spectrum of people working in aged care.

I am committed to not only investing in, but retaining the best and the brightest team members, so Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care can continue to prosper.

I am humbled by the professionalism of the management and staff at Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care who have kept our residents and clients safe throughout the last 12 months which can only be described as exhausting, relenting, and challenging.

None of our achievements would have been possible without our passionate staff who live our values daily.

I'm proud to be working with a team of people who avidly value the aged, through respect to our clients, teamwork, passion and care to all citizens of the Bega Valley. I would personally like to thank all staff for their dedication and support. Our staff are the backbone of our organisation and their valued contribution is directly correlated with our success.

It is always pleasing and rewarding to recognise staff's years of service to our organisation and each year we recognise staff on achieving milestones of 5,10,15,20,25 and more years of service and I congratulate staff on achieving these milestones. This year we had another staff member achieve more than 30 years' service with our organisation and I congratulate Jennifer Snell on this achievement, and special mention must go to the staff member who has worked for our company for forty-two years, thanks to Helen Triggell for achieving this milestone.

***The loyalty of our staff is reflected in the family like culture that exists at SCCAC.*** It provides a welcoming environment for our new employees and encourages long, trustworthy relationships with our residents and clients.

## **Recruitment Initiatives**

This year has again been extremely challenging recruiting staff and a number of new initiatives have been undertaken to grow our workforce. I need to thank University of Wollongong – Bega Campus for working with us to develop a training course for certificate 4 support workers in addressing the staffing shortage and to date we have been successful with recruiting 17 trainees in last 12 months.

I also need to acknowledge the Department of Immigration who has approved a labour market agreement for SCCAC to bring in overseas trained staff to work for Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care as care workers to fill a desperate need we have, without these staff we would not be able to fill all shifts required and would have no option to but to close beds as other local aged care organisations have undertaken.

Our entire community has helped us attract and retain staff and special mention must go to Rotary who have managed to source furniture and white goods for our new staff. Through the labour market agreement, we have been able to attract 17 staff to move to the Sapphire Coast. We now have 16 houses which we have been able source for staff to ensure when they move to the Bega Valley, they have an affordable house to move into.

### **Our Volunteers**

One of the most endearing assets SCCAC can boast is its strong and enduring relationship with our local community. This encompasses our relationship with community volunteers, who are the lifeblood of not-for-profit organisations like ourselves. This year we have been challenged with the government restrictions on who is allowed in aged care homes, and we do look forward to the year ahead with encouraging and supporting volunteers back in aged care facilities.

At SCCAC we have numerous volunteers in a variety of roles ranging from our Hillgrove House Auxiliary, Imlay House Auxiliary and The Op Shop committees who tirelessly raise money for the many individual purchases to make the lives more comfortable for those living in our facilities. It was great to have the opportunity to celebrate 40 years of service for The Op Shop and we had a lovely morning tea for our volunteers in Pambula to celebrate this achievement.

*I would like to personally thank each and every volunteer* for the dedication and support you offer our residents and clients each and every day- Thankyou.

### **Thanks**

I would like to thank Phil Moffitt and the entire Board for their hard work and support they have offered all at Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care. On behalf of SCCAC, your continued support and good governance safeguards our success. I would like to thank Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care's team members and volunteers for their dedication and for supporting our residents through the uncertainty of COVID-19.

I am beyond grateful for the individuals that make up our SCCAC community. ***To our leadership team, thank you for your support, passion, strong direction, and guidance*** you have provided to me and your teams.

Finally, I wish to thank our residents, clients and families who inspire us to enrich their lives on a daily basis.

It is truly an honour and a privilege.

Thankyou

Matt Sierp  
Chief Executive Officer