

Chair Report 2023

Sapphire Coast Aged Care Group
2023 Report from the Chair.

Good evening and thank you for attending the 2023 Annual General Meeting of Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care. I am deputising for our Chair Phil Callan who is unable to attend this evening due to some recent surgery. I know Phil has put in a significant amount of time and energy over many years and especially as Chair and I wish him a speedy recovery.

2023 has been another year of great activity by all involved in the Group. We have chartered another year of covid and have recently welcomed some relaxation of mask use within our services much to the relief of staff and residents. The Board continues to monitor the latest health advice and ensure the settings are appropriate for our service. I thank our residents, staff, volunteers, families and friends for their patience and ongoing support.

Upon preparing this report I reflected in the Values of the organisation and strongly believe that as an organisation we sincerely aim to deliver upon these at every decision point and interaction. We strive to be:

- **Compassionate**
- **Accountable**
- **Respectful**
- **Empowering**

Through this evenings Chairs report, I hope to be able to highlight some of the ways in which the whole team – volunteers, staff and the Board have lived these values throughout 2023.

Supporting our residents and clients in their needs is the key reason for our existence. In order to do this we are committed to meeting and exceeding expected levels of service.

I am pleased to report we have been able to achieve average occupancy rates at Hillgrove 90% and Imlay House 80% over the year and we have met all new Government reporting requirements and service levels despite teething issues with new assessment models.

We have also seen a continued growth in our home care service clients to approximately 190 and we are now servicing many more level 3 & 4 packages reflecting the community's wishes to age in place.

Management and the Board are also working towards improving and streamlining entry into the Group's services to ensure new residents and their families are able to access our support as seamlessly as possible.

Staffing continues to be a challenge for all aged care service providers – especially those in regional areas. I know the management team have worked hard and innovatively to support, train and attract staff

across all care and administrative levels to the service. This has included a highly successful overseas staff program which has made and continues to make, a significant difference to our ability to care for our residents and deliver the quality of care we aspire to. Since 2022 we have welcomed 38 staff, many with spouses, to the service. They are contributing positively to our service, culture and vitality of the broader community.

I would also like to specifically call out the tremendous efforts of our care, kitchen, grounds and administrative staff throughout the year and the consistent over and above support to our residents you have provided despite the challenges of staffing levels across the sector – thank you – we cannot do what we do without this effort and commitment you do on a daily basis.

While we welcomed the Federal Government’s budgeted 15% pay rise for some staff we note that there were staff that didn’t receive this and that there is still work to be done. Despite this additional support there are ever more reporting requirements which can at times detract from the ability to deliver the level of service we hope to. As an organisation through the Aged and Community Care Providers Association we continue to lobby for better resourcing and sensible reform that does not drive up reporting and administrative burdens without commensurate service improvements.

Executive staff and the Board continue to support innovative ways of building workforce numbers and capabilities and I want to specifically recognise the relationship with TAFE NSW and University of Wollongong, Bega. Over the past year we have had 12 Trainees with 5 accepted into Bachelor of Nursing for 2024. We have also had 1 international staff member undertaking Bachelor of Nursing. These are great outcomes.

Volunteers allow the Group to shift the dial on our service to residents and the community and I thank them all for their effort and dedication over the past year. I note that:

- Through the Pambula Op-shop, donations and the Auxiliary; Imlay House received over \$92,000 in support which has been put to good use on items such as outdoor furniture and observation equipment.
- It has been a record year for the Hillgrove House Auxiliary with \$44,000 raised. Congratulations. This support has purchased beds, observation equipment and is contributing to the Springvale wing refurbishment.

Thank you all for your efforts to get these outcomes for our residents.

It has also been a busy year for the Group with the developments at The Glen in Bega and the Kennedy Trust in Bombala. The Glen will see 42 Units built while Bombala will see 15 new villas servicing the Bombala region. We look forward to welcoming our first residents to the Glen and a start on works at Bombala both in early 2024. These are significant investments for the future of the organisation, and I specifically recognise the efforts of Matt Sierp our former CEO in coordinating and delivering these projects.

We have also closed out our support for Sir William Hudson facility in Cooma where we helped Snowy Monaro Regional Council improve the fundamentals of the service and better position it to more



efficiently serve the community throughout the broader Cooma and Snowy Monaro region into the future.

Finally, it has been a significant year of change at the Management Team and Board level of the Group.

We have welcomed Phil Callan as our new Chair, and he has stepped positively into the role over the past 6 months. We have also welcomed Melissa O'Meara to the team and said goodbye to Robert Hartemink and I thank him for his many years of service to the organisation and residents.

I did want to specifically draw out and recognise Phil Moffit for his over 14 years of service on the Board. It was clear to me when I first joined and met Phil that the Group is a place that is genuinely here to serve the community. Every decision I have been part of since has put the residents' considerations at the heart of what we do. Thank you for your commitment and efforts over many years Phil.

We also farewelled our CEO of 6 years in Matt Sierp, and we welcomed Julie Evans to the role. Matt's capacity for work and delivering on the Groups vision and values was simply amazing. From navigating bushfires, Covid, international staffing programs, building projects and transitioning the Board, Matt's contribution cannot be understated. Thanks again Matt.

As a Group we are charting a course towards greater financial sustainability. While we are operating at a loss again this year, our investments at the Glen and lobbying for improved financial investment from the Federal Government we will see continued progress towards a balanced budget in the coming years.

Thank you for the opportunity to update you on the activities and future direction of SCCAC. 2024 will be a busy year of continuing our important services and delivering significant projects in the community. As with all years there will be change and I feel we are well placed as an organisation to meet this challenge. I look forward to welcoming back Phil Callan to the Chair upon his full recovery.

Thank you.

Daniel Murphy



CEO Report 2023

Sapphire Coast Aged Care Group
2023 Report from the CEO

Dear Members and Stakeholders of Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care,

It is my privilege to present the CEO Report for Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care Service at our Annual General Meeting for 2023. This past year has been another year of trying times and daily wins and is a testament to the commitment of our team in providing compassionate and comprehensive care to the older members of our community.

When I reflect on the past 12 months, our work has certainly been focused on our people –

Our customers in our homes and in their own homes, ensuring we have processes, policies and practices in place to exceed the expectations of those we are here to serve. Growing services so we can reach more customers.

Our Staff, building a workforce to be able to meet not only the current but also the future needs of the Bega Valley and surrounds.

Our Community, developing and maintaining relationships with our many and varied partners that ensure Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care remains a valued and viable part of our community. There are so many great stories that I am privileged to hear on a daily basis that continue to inspire me and drive the work we do.

Quality of Care

In the last 12 months the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission have undertaken accreditation for Hillgrove House, Imlay House and Home Care Services. This very thorough process requires an independent assessment of each service in relation to the Aged Care Quality Standards. We are proud to have received a full three-year accreditation term for our residential homes and home care services. This is welcomed recognition of the daily efforts and hard work from all members of the team in delivering on high quality care. The assessors noted the positive feedback from clients and representatives alike and noted that residents reported how kind and caring staff are. Despite the ongoing covid challenges, you have told us and our teams were able to demonstrate that quality care had remained the focus every day and that we have sound processes and policies in place to support clinical governance and quality service delivery. We participated in Infection Prevention and Control audits across residential services and were commended for our policy and process and the cleanliness of our homes. Work safe also undertook an audit of our work health and safety policy and process and were satisfied we are providing a safe workplace.

Whilst we allowed some small celebrations to acknowledge our audit and accreditation success, we have continued to work towards ongoing improvements. This year the 'Experience of Care' surveys were commenced, initially with an external provider sent from the Aged Care Quality Commission to all Aged Care Homes to survey a group of residents and subsequently embedded as part of our quarterly reporting



to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. We thank you for your ongoing engagement with the surveys and appreciate feedback in any form that can support our partnership.

Whilst staffing recruitment remains an ongoing challenge, our workforce strategies are ongoing, and we have met the new legislation for 24 hour nursing cover in our homes and are achieving an average of 205 minutes of care per resident per day in our residential services. We are awaiting additional nurses to our team to be able to meet the registered nursing targets and anticipate that our new nurses will arrive in the first quarter of 2024.

We have actively engaged in consultation through our peak body, regarding the new Aged Care Act and revised Aged Care Quality Standards to be introduced in 2024. We remain committed to ensuring our continued adherence to industry standards and to best practices in aged care service.

We have undertaken a review of our Home Care services as we position ourselves for the proposed changes to the model of care with the 'Support at Home' program to be launched in 2024. We are building workforce capacity in Home Care with a view to expanding packaged care and aligning our program with a stronger clinical focus, which represents the changing Home Care client group.

We have been excited by the interest in the environmental review of Springvale, our dedicated memory support unit. As a specialist unit in the valley, we have listened to our residents and their representatives and have focused on building staff skills and knowledge, improving the aesthetics of this area of the home and we look forward to continuing this work with our stakeholders to improve the experience of care for people living with Dementia.

Our Staff

Attracting new staff to aged care has remained our biggest challenge and we have engaged in a range of ongoing strategies to support workforce development. With the introduction of our Labour workforce program just on 18 months ago, we have been able to relocate 53 workers to the Bega Valley to join our team. This has been a tremendous effort by our whole community who have got behind the program and helped in many ways to settle staff into this lovely valley. Our ongoing partnership with the University of Wollongong University and College has allowed us to engage 21 trainees in the certificate 4 program. This time last year our first 7 staff graduated and have all continued to work in aged care. Of our mid year 6 graduates, 5 are enrolled to commence their Bachelor of Nursing at UOW Bega Campus for 2024 and are all still working in our homes. Our current trainees are learning fast and our residents take an active interest in their progress. We have adapted our traineeship model to a rolling program for 2024, which we hope will allow more trainees to take up the program. We continue to offer students from TAFE and other learning providers placements as another way of showcasing our service and engaging locals for employment in the services.

Our staff are committed to ongoing learning. We have three staff currently undertaking certificate four in Leadership and Management We have also been able to provide two education scholarships this year to staff to undertake further studies. We thank our amazing silent donors who help us support education.

Our residents introduced 'Staff Member of The Month' across our residential services. This initiative arose from the resident meetings, where residents said they wanted an opportunity to recognise individual staff and celebrate them. We combined this request with our service values as a way of embedding our service vision and values into all that we do – **Compassion, Accountability, Respect,**

Empowerment and residents, staff and representatives get to vote each month for a staff member who they identify as outstanding in displaying the service values. Thank you everyone for participating, it is a very special award to receive, and staff are humbled by the comments they are given. Recognition goes a long way to support staff development.

We have commenced a project to identify our Employment Value Proposition, to support us in attracting and retaining staff. Our staff have engaged in a staff survey, which we have received over 70% return rate. Staff interviews have also been conducted and we are looking forward to getting our deidentified results shortly, which will assist in identifying opportunities for improvement for our staff engagement.

Community Engagement

Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care was proud to be nominated for the Bega Valley Business award, run by the Chamber of Commerce.

We appreciate our partnership with Rotary and the amazing work they have done in ensuring our 29 rental properties where our staff live, have been filled with furniture, linen and accessories to make it easier for new staff to settle into our community. Members of the Rotary group and other volunteers have been overwhelmingly supportive of individual staff, finding cots, helping with driving lessons, taking people for tours and just making time to listen. We applaud the engagement of the community in supporting SCCAC.

Building Developments

This year has seen our significant development underway at East Street Bega. Despite delays caused by the biggest rock in the street (about 3 months of work to get rid of it), we are on track for our first residents to move into 'The Glen' in January 2024 and the building works to be completed by mid year. Approximately 65% of the villas have been sold off the plan to date and we have not yet commenced our marketing program. The villas all boast views, high ceilings and light filled rooms. We are excited to be growing our Retirement Living services in Bega and look forward to meeting our new residents this coming year.

We will commence the building of 'Kennedy Homes' – a 15 villa retirement village in Bombala, in January 2024. This will see the vision of the Kennedy Trust come to fruition, with Retirement Living coming to the Bombala community. We thank the Kennedy Trust for their faith in SCCAC to provide this service. The village will be a great addition to the township.

We also look forward to expanding our Home Care Services into Bombala to meet the needs of residents in the new village and as we partner with Currawarna assisted living to provide home care services to eligible clients.

Challenges and Mitigations

Covid -19 has not gone away and in the rest of the community, whilst life has mostly returned to normal, our staff have endured prolonged restrictions, daily screening, testing and fatigue in managing this balance and bringing 100% to work every day. It has taken tremendous commitment from every member of staff to be vigilant in living their lives to be able to come to work well and do their job. For some of our staff they have not been home to visit their own families in several years. We look forward to seeing staff being able to take regular planned leave with our rising recruitment.



The Work Value Case, Fair Work Pay Rise was very welcomed by those who were eligible to receive it. For our direct care staff, the much needed pay rise has been well received and has supported workforce to remain in the industry. This also resulted in a challenge in aged care services as administration, cleaning, kitchen, laundry, maintenance and management staff did not receive a payrise in 2023. This has created inequity for workers in aged care and we have been actively engaged in consultation for Stage 3 of the Work Value Case which we hope sees support staff in aged care awarded a pay rise in 2024.

Thank you

There are so many people involved in the success of Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care. I want to start by thanking our residents, clients and representatives who entrust Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care to provide you with care and services. We acknowledge that we work for you, in your homes, every day and that is our privilege. You inspire and encourage us, giving back to the team in many ways. Thank you for partnering with us. It is all of you who keep us coming back. We appreciate the ongoing engagement and feedback from residents, clients, friends and families as we work together to provide each individual with the services they need. Thanks for joining our focus groups, resident meetings, completing surveys and taking the time to call or drop in – this is how we keep growing together.

To our volunteers, my admiration and thanks to each and every one of you for your tireless efforts in supporting the service. Hillgrove and Imlay Auxiliaries, the Op Shop Committee and individuals who come and help, you support our clients and our staff and we appreciate you very much. Volunteering has changed in aged care and you have ridden the waves with us and continue to find creative solutions to support the service, thank you very much.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their ongoing support and dedication to Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care. This year has seen an increased focus on reforms to Provider responsibilities relating to governance. Our Board have eagerly engaged in training and ongoing education. Your commitment to good governance ensures our service remains successful now and into the future and we appreciate the strong vision and leadership you bring to SCCAC.

To all our staff, you are what make Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care great every day. The many small thoughtful things you do each day, even when nobody is looking, do not go unnoticed. Our team has grown this year and members come from near and far. This has strengthened our skills and knowledge as a team and has improved the quality of our services. We are a more inclusive, diverse and supportive group as we have managed the challenges of this year together. Thank you for making a decision to be part of the Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care team and to bring your best to our community. Your focus on teamwork has earned us the reputation of being a great place to work and will help us attract more staff into the future. I could not be prouder of the way you care for our residents and that you always dig deep to meet the needs of others. We see what you do and we appreciate you.

We have been thrilled to fill all our senior leadership roles, with three new members joining the team this year. I would like to thank the leadership team for your daily support to me and for leading your teams in a way that supports excellence and ensures all our residents, staff and community are respected. Your hard work has been instrumental in shaping the service culture this year. It is my privilege to have taken up the CEO role and to be working with such a committed group of leaders.



Thank you to Matt Sierp for laying a strong foundation with courageous leadership during your tenure in Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care. Your bold plans to grow Retirement Living and to tackle the many obstacles that threatened the projects have been overcome and your hard work in amalgamating Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care Group during your role as CEO has been pivotal in ensuring our local, community owned, not for profit organisation is well placed for the future in the changing aged care environment.

In conclusion, the past year has been marked by both challenges and triumphs. I choose to focus on the triumphs and the incredible people I get to meet every day in my role. We remain committed to our mission of providing exceptional care to the older people in our community. The support we have received from all stakeholders is the glue that drives our community and our success, and we look forward to a strong year ahead.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership with us.

Sincerely,
Julie Evans
Chief Executive Officer