

Chair Report for Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care 2024

Good evening and thank you for attending the 2024 Annual General Meeting of Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care. It is great to see so many residents, members and past Directors here this afternoon.

Supporting our residents and clients in their needs is the key reason for our existence. While not always possible, we as an organisation are committed to continually improve how we work in order to not just meet but wherever possible, exceed expected levels of service. This is a strong commitment and at times I recognise we don't meet it, but I do believe the Board and Staff are committed to always looking to learn and do better for those in our care.

Firstly, I would like again to thank all of our staff across the key areas of care, kitchen, grounds and administration and the consistent over and above support to our residents you have provided. We appreciate your commitment and service to our residents and clients.

While staffing continues to be a challenge for all aged care service providers, especially those in regional areas, I know the management team continue to work hard to innovate, support, train and attract staff across all care and administrative levels to the service.

As an organisation we welcome many of the Aged Care reforms, but it must be said again it brings many challenges which, while the intent may be good, their delivery are at times cross-purposes to moving to sector forward. For example, while many regional aged care providers are financially unsustainable, work cover insurance expenses are truly significant. We are required to insure with a Government mandated insurer at a very high cost (upwards of \$900,000) which takes away the benefits we may otherwise accrue by have a contestable insurance market. A reasonable saving of this money of 30% could be reinvested into improved services and facilities – all without costing the Government more money. It is an area that we will closely monitor in the coming year and advocate through ACCPA.

Volunteers allow our organisation 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 and appreciate the following fundraising outcomes:

- Pambula Op-shop raised \$64,000
- Imlay House Auxillary raised \$12,500
- Hillgrove House Auxillary raised \$44,000

Congratulations to all for these results. These are also supported by General Donations of \$150,000.

It has also been a busy year for the group with the 42 Unit development at The Glen in Bega now completed. The opening ceremony, which many of you attended, was a great indication of the interest and support in our community for such a project. We continue to make great advances with the Kennedy development in Bombala and we look forward to its opening in 2025. Thanks again to Matt Sierp our former CEO in coordinating and delivering on these projects.



As a group we continue to chart a course towards greater financial sustainability. While we are operating at a loss again this year of \$162,846, our investment at The Glen is now online and Bombala will join our portfolio in 2025. Our and ACCPA's continued lobbying for improved financial investment from the Federal Government will see continued progress towards a balanced budget in the coming years.

I would like to thank my fellow Directors Kate, Chris, Rod, Cath, Melissa, Phil and of course Gae. From signing documents, advising on property development, reviewing lengthy policies, providing a sounding board for management and ensuring, from the Board's position, that the organisation delivers on its core promises take time and dedication. Thank you for your commitment and participation throughout 2024.

I would also like to wholeheartedly thank Julie and the senior team for their dedication and commitment over the past year. This year has been Julie's first full year as CEO and she has shown the dedication and the grit required for such a demanding role. I believe she leads with empathy and collaboration and is driving the organisation forward in the continued challenging times of the sector. Thank you, Julie.

Thank you for the opportunity to update you on the activities and direction of SCCAC for 2024. As Julie and I say most times we speak – there is never a dull day in aged care – and I look forward to working with her, the senior team and the Board throughout 2025, all in the service of our community.

Daniel Murphy

Director

CEO Report 2024

Sapphire Coast Aged Care Group
2024 Report from the CEO Julie Evans

Dear Members and Stakeholders of Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care,

I am very pleased to present the CEO Report for Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care Service at this Annual General Meeting for 2024. I recognise that every day it is a privilege to work for our care recipients, our community, and for our team at SCCAC. Thank you for putting your trust in me to do that.

The year has passed quickly as we have focused on the daily delivery of quality care for all those engaged in our services. It has also been a year of significant political focus on aged care with the government commitment to overhauling the aged care system. With this comes lots of great opportunities and lots of hard work to get it right and implement change. I am regularly participating in advocacy and consultation through our peak body, Ageing Australia (formerly ACCPA – Aged Care and Community Providers Association), to ensure the voice of rural services is heard as part of the ongoing reforms.

We remain focused on our Commitment to 'Make Life Great for the people in our care' through developing our staff, our community and delivering quality care and services for each individual.

Our Staff

We have continued to build our workforce this year. We have done this through our dedicated labour workforce employment strategy, our local traineeship program and through our reputation as being a great place to work. With new legislative requirements to deliver a minimum 215 minutes of care per resident per day, including 44 minutes of registered nurse care, we continue to commit considerable time and resources to building our team. We are meeting the overall care minute requirements but are still requiring additional registered nurses to meet our nursing needs. We look forward to welcoming additional registered nurses to the team as a priority over the next quarter.

This year we have sponsored a further 25 Labour Workforce staff, including personal care workers and registered nurses. We have entered our third year of the Labour Workforce Program. Staff will be eligible for nomination for permanent residency when they have completed three full years of work with us. We continue to work hard to help our workforce to establish in our towns and local communities in the hope that they want to remain here when they have permanent residency. This year we have seen two current staff members become Australian Citizens and we are proud to have played some small part in their decision.

Staff report a strong sense of commitment to the values of the organisation and report being proud to work for an organisation where they can make a difference through the delivery of great care. We recognise our staff for empowering care recipients each and every day but also for empowering themselves and their teams to grow and develop. This past year we have had 12 staff undertaking their Bachelor of nursing at UOW, Bega campus. 1 staff member finishes their degree at the end of this year. 4 staff are completing their second year and 7 staff are completing their first year. We have had 7 staff undertaking their certificate IV in aged care and are all on track to finish early in 2025. We have 2 staff



undertaking additional studies in infection prevention and control, 22 staff completed palliative care training and 18 staff completed advanced wound care training. Our hospitality staff have undertaken the Maggie Beer training modules. This in addition to 100% of staff undertaking mandatory training and additional online learning. This is testament to staff commitment, and we applaud all the great work being completed.

The increase in wages across aged care services has remained a priority for the industry to ensure we are attracting quality staff and rewarding people for the tremendous work they do. SCCAC has passed on pay rises in line with the Fair Work Commission stage 2 outcomes from January 2024 and further with our new Enterprise Agreement that came into effect 1 July 2024. Additional pay rises are scheduled through the Fair Work Commission stage 3 outcomes and will come into effect in January 2025 for support staff and personal care workers. Registered Nurses and Enrolled Nurses will have incremental pay rises in 2025 with the details yet to be advised from fair work. We welcome the financial recognition of our staff through the commitments of the federal government pay rises, they are much deserved.

Our Community

We take our responsibility to connect with our local community seriously and have done that through ongoing partnerships with the university of Wollongong, UOW College, Tafe, Rotary, volunteer services, local real estate services, local schools, Sunshine and Puddles, local general practices, allied health services, emergency services, meals on wheels and representation in local health and community forums. We take weekly bus trips from our residential homes out to community venues, which are a highlight for those residents who choose to go. We love the regular visits from school and preschool groups. We appreciate our community members who come into our services to deliver programs and entertainment as part of our lifestyle programs. We want to ensure that our care recipients feel part of the broader community, recognising quality aged care as another phase of life within the community, not separate from it. We appreciate the way our community interacts with our residential, home care and retirement living communities. This is part of the strength of SCCAC.

We have recently undertaken broad engagement with our consumers through the Consumer Value Proposition Project. Thank you to everyone who has participated through surveys, interviews and focus groups in residential care, home care and retirement living. You have told us that you feel safe and included in our services and that staff are knowledgeable and do their jobs well. You have asked us to remain focused on improving the dining experience for residential care and ongoing communication with all of our stakeholders. Across our range of services, you have told us you would recommend care and services to others because you can advocate that we meet your needs. We are listening and thank you for your feedback.

Quality Care and Services

We have maintained a four-star rating (good quality of care) at both of our residential homes this past year. The governments star rating system has been controversial but overall aims to improve transparency of aged care services to support choice for older people. The star ratings focus on, resident experience of care, how well a service is meeting its obligation to provide safe quality care, staffing and performance in key quality measures. We thank you all for your engagement in ongoing surveys, focus groups and for your feedback, this helps us improve our care when needed.

We have been fortunate to participate in the Maggie Beer mentoring program at Hillgrove House and have been sharing the learnings across our residential teams. The kitchen is the hub of any home, aged care is no different. Our homes have introduced food focus groups, and our residents are actively

engaged in influencing our menus, improving the dining room experience and it is great to see our team adapting residents favourite recipes in the day-to-day menus.

Outbreak management has become part of our daily life in aged care. Covid -19 and other viruses have impacted our service, requiring implementation of increased infection prevention and control management. We have all learnt to live with outbreaks and to minimise the impact on our residents, representatives and staff. The daily routines of screening and being able to implement targeted restrictions in line with changing risks have helped us manage outbreaks effectively. It has taken tremendous commitment from every member of staff and our community to ensure that we continue to protect our vulnerable residents. We continue to offer vaccination clinics for residents and are proud of our vaccination uptake. I thank our whole community for working together on this with us.

Building Program

This year has seen the actualisation of a 20-year vision, in delivering 'The Glen' retirement village. This has effectively doubled our retirement village options in Bega with 42 new villas available. The village was officially opened by Barry Irvin on 30 September. Barry shared his experience of quality aged care at Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care and acknowledged the importance of great local services. We celebrated the opening with over 120 community members, local members of parliament, council representatives and community stakeholders. We look forward to growing The Glen community. At the time of this report, we have 5 villas left to sell.

Our building program at Bombala, 'The Kennedy', is taking shape. The builders commenced in February 2024, and we expect to take handover of the 15-villa retirement village in March 2025. The vision of Laura and Herbert Kennedy to provide accommodation for older people in Bombala will come to fruition when the build is completed. I thank the Kennedy Trust for working with SCCAC to make this vision a reality. We have been fortunate to have the expertise of Matt Sierp as the building development manager across these projects.

It takes a village ...

We have farewelled some key members of our community this year and I would like to make mention of some individuals. Anna Garner worked for SCCAC as a registered nurse for 17 years. Anna left a positive mark on the lives of so many people with her kindness and compassion. It was with sadness that we said our goodbyes to her on 29 May 2024, following her fight with cancer. Dirk Kruit was a member of our board for 27 years and lived his life serving others. He spent the last four years of his life as a resident at Hillgrove House before passing away on 25th May 2024. Pat Durrant was made patron of Hillgrove House auxiliary in recognition of her commitment as a volunteer for over 40 years. Pat could remember sewing sheets and bedspreads for the opening of Hillgrove House. Pat moved into The Oaks for her last couple of years and passed away on 11 September at Hillgrove House. We recognise the dedication and care of our faithful staff and volunteers who have shaped our wonderful SCCAC community, and their passing has been felt by our community.

I would like to recognise Gae Rheinberger, our retiring Board Director at this meeting. Gae is an outstanding person, a humble leader and a strong advocate for the rights of all people. Gae has shaped SCCAC through her contributions to governance, development of the constitution and to weaving her kind, caring and committed manner into the fabric of the service over the past 12 years. Gae has been a tremendous support to me personally, sharing her time and expertise to ensure that we have been able to make the many changes that have been required in aged care over the past few years. I am grateful to



have had the privilege of working with you Gae and I thank you for your countless hours of volunteering for the good of this service. You will be missed!

Helen Slater and Allison Jenkins were the deserving recipients of the 'Hidden Treasure Honor Roll' recognition in May 2024, for their work in our SCCAC community. Hidden Treasures is a NSW Government initiative created to recognise and elevate the invaluable volunteer efforts of women across regional, rural and remote NSW communities. We were thrilled to have the two presidents of our auxiliaries recognised by this award. Thank you both for the work that you do for this service. You are our treasures, and we appreciate you and the teams that you represent. To all our volunteers who enter our homes, run our op shop and give of your time in all the many and varied ways, thank you for your support.

Thank you

To our residents, clients and representatives who chose Sapphire Coast Community Aged Care, I want to say a huge thank you to each and every one of you. We recognise the enormity of what you entrust to us every day. We take this responsibility seriously and we look forward to delivering high quality care to each individual for many years to come.

To our Board of Directors, your support and commitment to SCCAC again this year. You volunteer your time and generously share your experience and expertise. Your ongoing vision to ensure great care is delivered to our people sets clear direction for the service. I see your ongoing commitment and best intentions for this community in all that you do. Thankyou.

I would like to thank the leadership team for your daily support to me, to your teams and for your dedication to the service. These jobs are not easy, and you take them on daily with poise and passion. To all our staff, thank you for all that you do to make the SCCAC team work and to ensure that our residents get great quality care and services. All the big and little things you do each day make a difference. To Never underestimate your value, this service cannot run without each of you!!!

2024 has been a significant year of preparation for the coming changes to the aged care sector. We will have challenges to come as we implement the new aged care act, new quality standards and overhaul support at home to be able to deliver world class aged care and to become a financially viable sector. We remain committed to working together to ensure that the changes are for the good of older people and that we continue to have quality aged care in our local community. Thank you for your continued trust and partnership with us.

Sincerely,
Julie Evans
Chief Executive Officer