

# Helping Hand

Autumn Winter 2012



## In this edition

- » Writer in residence helps to share stories
- » Golden Gurus
- » Collaborations to create a better environment
- » Technology workshop success



**Helping Hand**  
new aged care

## From the CEO

This edition of the newsletter highlights a few of the many exciting projects that are currently under way at Helping Hand. Late last year Helping Hand, together with two other large care organisations in NSW and Western Australia, was invited by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to participate in a five year, \$25 million research program aimed at improving the lives of people living with dementia and those who care for them. An extensive program of consultation and research activity will help to inform future care policy and practice. We are very excited at this opportunity to contribute our experience and expertise to help support the thousands of families across Australia who are, and will be, affected by this disease.

We are currently undertaking a major capital works program to provide new residential places in Adelaide and to refurbish a number of our facilities in both city and country. Our new 110-place residential facility at Fosters Road, Northgate is on schedule to open in December 2012 and will offer a broad range of services, including a special care unit for those with dementia, and a shortterm accommodation and rehabilitation service to assist people who are in transition from hospital to home.



Helping Hand's Jamestown residential home, Belalie Lodge, is half way through its \$4.5 million redevelopment, and now incorporates enlarged en suite bathrooms and spacious new communal areas for dining and leisure activities. Substantial investment is also being made at our Parafield Gardens and North Adelaide sites, which are undergoing significant redevelopment, and we have recently completed a refurbishment of the special care unit at Ingle Farm. We are committed to maintaining our high level of quality in care and services, demonstrated by our continued investment in our residential care homes and community programs.

This newsletter also highlights our continued commitment to the development of our existing and future workforce, through the establishment of some very significant partnerships with tertiary and international education providers.

## Golden Gurus

The age-old saying "with age comes wisdom" has never been truer than with the introduction of Helping Hand's Golden Gurus program.

The Golden Gurus program aims to recognise the valuable contribution that older people make to Australian communities. With the program commencing at Helping Hand in 2012 we are now inviting expressions of interest from older people wanting to become mentors in the program.

The program will partner students undertaking work experience or study placements at Helping Hand with skilled volunteers aged 50 or older to assist them as mentors. The goal of the program is for Golden Gurus to share their life-long learning and experience to help young professionals as they enter the workforce.

If you are aged 50 or over and have time to make a difference in helping shape the experience of a young professional in training, or you know someone who is, you can visit [www.helpinghand.org.au/goldengurus](http://www.helpinghand.org.au/goldengurus) or call Emily Sherpa, Project Officer on 8267 0817.

### What are we looking for in a Golden Guru

- » Aged 50 or over.
- » Skilled or retired workers (experience in healthcare is not necessary as students also come from areas including computing and IT, art and architecture, business management, legal studies and psychology). Willing to spend time as a mentor – commitment time can vary.
- » Interest to mentor students.

### What Golden Gurus are offered in return

- » Recognition of knowledge and skills, and an opportunity to pass them on to others.
- » Full training is provided and no mentoring experience is necessary.
- » Opportunity to help young professionals.
- » Make a difference in the lives of young and old.

Positions are available at all Helping Hand sites.



## Writer in residence helps to share stories



Supported by the SA Writers' Centre, in collaboration with Helping Hand Aged Care, renowned author Patrick Allington is working with seniors in the Salisbury area throughout his nine month Writer in Residence project based at Helping Hand's Parafield Gardens residential site.

He is encouraging interested seniors to express themselves through writing memoirs, poetry, short stories and other creative writing forms. As an experienced author and educator Patrick acknowledges that sometimes the hardest part for people is to start their writing.

"We all have a story to tell, so this project is for anybody who has ever thought about writing theirs but isn't sure how to get started," Patrick said.

Patrick's Writer In Residence position is funded by Perpetual Trustee with grant money from the Estate [of the] Late James Simpson, Love and the Enid Irwin Charitable Trust.

If you think you might be interested in joining a writing group, then get in contact with the South Australian Writers' Centre on 8223 7662 or contact [seniorsproject@sawriters.org.au](mailto:seniorsproject@sawriters.org.au)

## Collaborations to create a better environment

A recent project to encourage residents of Helping Hand's North Adelaide residential facility to participate in community living is having many positive outcomes.

The project, between Helping Hand, UniSA Occupational Therapy students, Adelaide City Council, Falls SA and SA Police North Adelaide Branch, aimed to look at ways to provide safe pathways in the area, so that residents were more confident in venturing out into the surrounding streets. Making it easier for residents to get out and about enables them to remain an active member of the local community. Staying active socially has far ranging health and wellbeing benefits,

and can improve quality of life to a large degree.

As a result of working closely with residents, staff and other project members, the public areas surrounding the North Adelaide site, including the local bus stop and pathways, are in the process of being repaired and improved.

This will make a significant difference to the lives of our residents, and the students are very grateful and appreciative of the time and support they have received from all residents, staff, Adelaide City Council, Falls SA and SA Police North Adelaide Branch.

### Did you know?

We can give you the support you need to successfully regain your independence after a hospital stay, through an intensive program of rehabilitation support lasting up to twelve weeks. Call 1300 653 600 for more details.

## Respite volunteer program

Helping Hand's Respite Program coordinates two community respite houses, in Woodville and Elizabeth South. The aim of the houses is to provide meaningful and enjoyable activities for clients, while their carers are able to take a break from their regular caring role.

We are currently looking for volunteers who would like to get involved and make a difference in someone's life. As a volunteer at one of our respite houses, you can expect to meet new people, participate in varied activities and enjoy flexible hours.

*We are currently looking for volunteers who would like to get involved and make a difference in someone's life.*

If you are interested in enhancing our programs by bringing activity ideas, helping with transport or assisting clients to participate, please contact our Respite and Carer Support Program on 8209 6980.

NOTE – a police check is required for all volunteers, which is conducted and paid for by Helping Hand.



### Did you know?

Our domestic assistance support provides flexible help to assist you remain safe and independent at home. It can include house cleaning, dishwashing, clothes washing and ironing, unaccompanied shopping and bill paying. Call 1300 653 600 for more information.

## New initiative to support registered nurses commences



In February Helping Hand welcomed seven new graduate nurses in a new initiative which supports registered nurses in their transition to working in aged care. Based at our sites in Port Pirie, Ingle Farm, Mawson Lakes, North Adelaide, Parafield Gardens and Clare, the nurses will be supported by Helping Hand staff.

The program offers graduate nurses:

- » Employment for 12 months (26–38 hours/week).
- » Five paid study days.
- » 4.5 units of credit towards postgraduate studies in Health and Ageing.
- » Access to a mentor program.



## Green thumbs at Mawson Lakes

It has long been known that gardening has many health and therapeutic benefits for people of all ages, especially when the garden is edible. Not only does gardening help to reduce stress and increase relaxation, it also is an enjoyable form of gentle exercise, especially when there are pesky weeds to pull out! Plus, nutritious, home-grown produce not only tastes great, but is good for you as well.

Recently, residents at Mawson Lakes looked into developing a garden that they could tend. After some discussion about the best type of garden to get, two corrugated raised

garden beds were installed. A variety of organic seeds and seedlings were cultivated, and the Chef has been delighted to be able to use the herbs and vegetables in preparing meals.

Everything from parsley, chives and basil, to carrots, beetroot and radishes have been grown so far, and residents at Mawson Lakes are keen to try their green thumbs at different vegies as the seasons change. Residents and visitors alike

are delighted to be able to enjoy the pleasant green space and watch the garden grow.

*Not only does gardening help to reduce stress and increase relaxation, it also is an enjoyable form of gentle exercise, especially when there are pesky weeds to pull out!*

## Donation appeal

Thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas Appeal, your gift was much appreciated and will make a difference.

We are currently conducting our annual Autumn Appeal – money raised from this

appeal will assist us to meet our goals of enhancing the quality of life of our clients.

All donations over \$2 to Helping Hand are tax deductible and can be posted in the envelope provided with this newsletter.

Donations can also be made at any Helping Hand site, via our website [www.helpinghand.org.au](http://www.helpinghand.org.au), or phone 8366 5463 with credit card details.

## Technology workshop success

At Helping Hand we always try to challenge the stereotypes of older people – and that’s exactly what led us to running internet workshops for seniors.

Technology presents wonderful opportunities to keep people connected, which is important, because isolation is a big issue facing older people, as they can’t stay connected if they don’t know how. It’s through our work around overcoming isolation that we noticed real synergies with programs being run by Telstra.

With the support of Telstra we ran four workshops over two days where we had over a hundred people eager to learn from the bright-shirt-wearing Gadget Guy, Peter Blasina. With 82% of our participants saying they felt left behind with technology, we knew that we were helping to address a problem affecting seniors in the community.

We had people from their early 60s through to a 93 year old; some who had never touched a computer before and others that wanted just to keep up with the grandkids. One couple were able to find a book their son had published for sale online. Others found long-lost ancestors or the farms they grew up on with Google Maps.

Something experienced by everyone was a new awareness of the many varied, wonderful and wacky things the internet has to offer. We know it hasn’t ended when our workshops finished – people left with email accounts to keep in touch and were keen to get home to give everything another go.

*We had people from their early 60s through to a 93 year old; some who had never touched a computer before and others that wanted just to keep up with the grandkids.*

People also left with the confidence to use the technology that many already have lying idly around at home. With the support of organisations like Telstra we will continue to challenge the stereotypes surrounding older people – we have been shown that sometimes all they want is someone in a bright coloured shirt to show them that “I’m feeling lucky” on Google, mightn’t mean what they once thought!

Please contact Amy Phillips on 8366 5435 or [aphillips@helpinghand.org.au](mailto:aphillips@helpinghand.org.au) to find out more.



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## Website review

We are about to begin a review of the Helping Hand Aged Care website [www.helpinghand.org.au](http://www.helpinghand.org.au)

Helping Hand has grown and changed significantly, and we want it to be a true reflection of our innovative and diverse

organisation. The website will be recreated with our clients and consumers in mind so we would like to invite you to help us create a tool that will be accessible, easy to use and informative. If you would like to be involved in shaping

our website we would like to hear from you. Over the next few months we will be holding a series of forums and discussions and would greatly value your ideas and input.

## Entertainment books now on sale

The 2012/2013 Entertainment™ Book is now available for purchase through Helping Hand. See the enclosed order form for examples of great savings on dining, retail, travel and accommodation, sport and leisure, art and attractions. Virtually all of the offers in the Entertainment™ Book are restriction free and can be used whenever you like.

For only \$65 you will receive over \$15,000 worth of valuable offers, including hundreds of up to 50% off and 2-for-1 offers from the finest restaurants, cafés, attractions, theatres and accommodation.

To purchase your book, complete the enclosed order form and return it to Helping Hand Aged Care, PO Box 66, North Adelaide SA 5006; or contact Robyn Sykes on 8366 5463 or [rsykes@helpinghand.org.au](mailto:rsykes@helpinghand.org.au) with your order details. Part proceeds of every book sold support Helping Hand Aged Care's fundraising efforts.



## Our commitment to listening



Helping Hand understands the need to have input from carers and consumers at all levels in our organisation. To help reach this goal, we have formed a Consumer and Carer Engagement Committee. The committee consists of Helping Hand staff members as well as representatives of our clients and residents. A key purpose of the group is to lead the

organisation in its responsibility to ensure all voices are heard when decisions about care and services are made.

The committee are currently developing a framework that will provide guidance to consumers, carers and Helping Hand staff members on how to support and enhance participation in all areas of our business.

If you would like more information about the committee and its work, contact Helen Radoslovich, Project Manager on 8267 0887.

# Helping Hand welcomes international student Rachel Lomp

Rachel is working with Helping Hand for six months as part of her undergraduate course at the University of Applied Sciences in Regensburg, Germany.

While here, Rachel hopes to gain more insight into what practical social work consists of within aged care and how the aged care industry differs from other industries. She is also working towards applying social work with older people living both in the community and in residential care.

A particular focus of her placement will be researching how music can be used within social work. She will be finding ways and opportunities to touch people with music, whether it be voice, percussion or instruments. This is in an effort to make space for emotions, clear the head, relax and relieve, to provide calmness, energy and skills for tasks in everyday life.

Rachel will also be learning how to link the community with individuals so they are more involved, and finding activities to connect different generations in a respectful and valuing way.



Learning how to keep the physical and mental fitness of people in ways that fit individual background and circumstances is also one of Rachel's goals.

We look forward to working with Rachel over the next six months in this very interesting area of research.

To learn more about Rachel's participation at Helping Hand, please contact Jan Van Emden on [jvanemden@helpinghand.org.au](mailto:jvanemden@helpinghand.org.au) or 8267 0839.

## Did you know?

Our fully trained, caring staff can help you with daily self care tasks, including assistance with meals, bathing, toileting, dressing, grooming, getting in and out of bed and moving about the house. Call 1300 653 600 for more information.

## Contact details

For further information on any of the articles, or to be removed from the mailing list, please contact us.

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