

Community Matters

EDITION 07

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Welcome

Events of the last few months and years have shown us that life can be fragile. We must still keep a positive outlook and be grateful for each day.

We are mindful of friends, family, staff, and clients who have lost their lives and homes, and have been impacted by local and global events. We cannot always know when a disaster will take place, however it is always good to be prepared and have a plan. In this newsletter, read about tips and information on what you can do in case of an emergency.

As a respite from these challenging times, we take a visit to Chiara Respite Cottage in Lakelands NSW, and introduce some wriggly friends that are making a positive difference to our clients' wellbeing and health.

It is also the start of the influenza vaccination campaign. The period of peak influenza circulation is typically June to September in most parts of Australia, although things may look a little different this year with Australians once again moving freely around the country and the return of international travellers.

We always enjoy receiving stories from our community. We invite you to get in contact and to share your stories with us.

Do you have a story to share? We want to know more about you.



ccc.communications@calvarycare.org.au

Have a break with respite care

Chiara Respite Cottage in Lakelands NSW provides day and overnight respite accommodation where clients can attend outings, engage in activities they enjoy, and meet new people.

Not surprisingly, many clients have felt increasingly anxious over the past couple of years, and depression seems more prevalent. To combat this trend, Chiara has introduced a leisure and lifestyle program that looks after and improves clients' whole wellbeing -physical, mental, spiritual and nutritional. Clients have input into the program with self-selected activities.

Care Coordinator Sonya describes a typical day at the Cottage. "Clients start the day with occupational therapy-approved exercises and meditation in the morning to get their mind, body and soul active and energised, and most importantly help to improve mobility and strength.

"I have noticed that due to isolation, not being able to be out and about and have face-to-face interactions with family or friends, or engage in social settings generally, clients have become withdrawn, disinterested in life, and their physical and mental health have suffered.



"We introduced pet therapy. It is just the beginning of making life-changing differences to the clients who come along to Chiara. Most clients attending have had pets at one time or another and miss them dearly.

"Pet therapy provides such a valued distraction to their ailments, diseases, frailty, and improves mood, energy levels and self-esteem."

As part of pet therapy, Chiara organised a live reptile show for its centre-based and overnight clients. Administration Assistant, Michelle, brought in her respite pets named Priscilla and Peter - two marble Children's pythons, non-venomous snakes that are native to Australia, for sensory play and stimulation.

"Clients were extremely hands on and enthusiastic to hold, pat and engage with the pythons. They were eager to share this experience with their children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and friends.

"The day was full of laughter and smiles. They were very proud of themselves and found the touch, feel and interaction with the pythons relaxing and uplifting," said Michelle.

Chiara clients and staff are looking forward to the next month's activity when they will get a visit from some therapy dogs.

Need a break?

Caring for a loved one is such an important and rewarding job but everyone can benefit from a break every now and then. Respite care is a flexible and responsive service which can be provided at home, within day centres, or at overnight cottages. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Get in touch with your service centre for more information.

"At first when I saw the little snakes, I thought 'oh no, not a snake!' I was reassured by Michelle that they were non-venomous and very friendly. I think everybody should have a pet. My dog and companion is a Maltese miniature poodle cross called Shamie, short for Shamrock, born on St Patrick's Day. I really enjoy the activities held by the Calvary team and couldn't be more appreciative for everybody that looks after me."

Dawn, 83.



Dorothy enjoys outings on the Calvary bus, visiting beaches and bush sceneries.

Dorothy, 79.



"When I saw them, I was a bit frightened as I've always been frightened of snakes. Then I was alright with it because they were so quiet. It was so enlightening. I was just so surprised that I could put the snake on me and I felt very satisfied that I did it."

Patricia, 86.



Support Worker Kallyan has worked with Calvary for 12 years. Kallyan is dedicated to the re-enablement of clients and works closely with them to support their strengths and bring their pastimes and passions back to life.



Shirley has made new friendships from the day centre and looks forward to Ladies' Day on a Wednesday. (left) **Shirley, 85.**

Administration Assistant Michelle has worked with Calvary for 15 years. Michelle has a love for all animal welfare and has many pets including two cats, three dogs, two snakes, four bearded dragons and two blue-tongue lizards. (right)



Emergency preparedness and response planning

Whether it be natural disasters such as bushfires, storms or floods, or other types of emergencies such as COVID-19 and other medical crises, it is important that you continue to receive the necessary support services critical to your health, safety and wellbeing.

As part of Calvary's care and support planning, we will talk with you about having an emergency preparedness and response plan. This will guide us on how we can best support you, and includes strategies to prepare, and respond to an emergency or disaster.

The plan may include information such as:

- having a stockpile of vital supplies such as water and non-perishable food
- knowing the recommended evacuation point in your area
- setting up alerts to ensure you are aware of any risks raised in your area
- having a folder with up-to-date information about your care needs and medications (in case you need to be evacuated), and
- whether you have a family member or friend who will support you/ what supports they will be able to assist you with.



It is important you have input into the plan and agree to the strategies recommended. Your emergency preparedness and response plan will be individually tailored, taking into account your care needs, desires and current support networks. We highly recommend sharing the plan with your support network.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding preparing for an emergency or disaster, please contact your local service centre on 1300 797 522 who will happily assist you.

Be alert, diligent and safety-conscious

What should I do in an emergency? Urgent action is required in an emergency. Call 000 without delay and ask for the appropriate emergency service/s (ambulance, police or fire).

What if I am unsure if it's an emergency? An emergency is when there is an immediate threat or risk to health, life, property, or environment. The threat or risk may be suspected or actual. If you are not sure, it is safer to treat it as an emergency.

Below are some useful links that may assist in preparing for a range of emergencies:



abc.net.au/emergency

bit.ly/VIC_SES-information

bit.ly/RFS_Bush-fire-safety



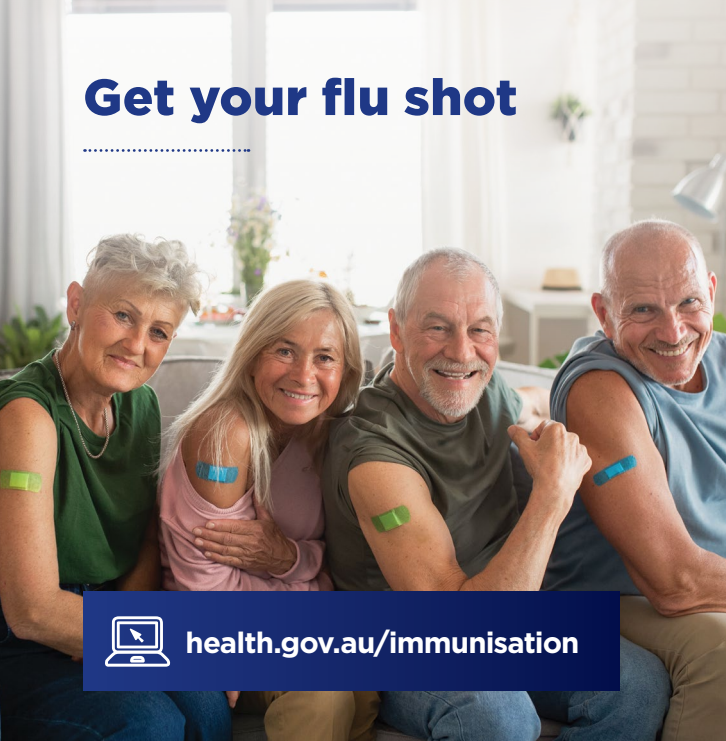
Please reach out to your Calvary support team if you require additional support.



STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO IMPROVE PERSONAL SAFETY

- **Never open the door to strangers** or let them know you are home alone.
- **Improve outside lighting.**
- **Keep a flash light** and candles handy.
- **Keep your phone close to you** at all times and fully charged.
- Keep a list of **up-to-date telephone numbers.**
- **Update your emergency contacts** in your mobile device and add 'ICE' (in case of emergency) next to their name.
- **Have a safe place** where you can go if you need to leave your home.
- Consider getting a **personal safety alarm.**
- Consider a **medical ID bracelet** which can store allergies, emergency contacts, medications.
- **Ask neighbours to be alert** for any signs of a problem.

Get your flu shot



health.gov.au/immunisation

Influenza can be a very serious disease. To protect yourself and others from the flu, you should get vaccinated every year.

The influenza virus strains change every year – and the vaccine changes every year to match the new strains. That is why it is important to get the vaccine every year. Annual vaccination is the most important measure to prevent influenza and its complications.

Vaccination against influenza this year is even more important. Over the COVID-19 period there has been lower exposure to the influenza virus and lower levels of influenza vaccine coverage compared to previous years. With borders reopening, a possible resurgence of influenza can occur in 2022.

Flu vaccines are available from April 2022 and are free for adults aged 65 years and over, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Ask a health professional about booking the influenza vaccine today.

Start living your best life now

What is self-funded care?

Calvary's self-funded home care services assist you to maintain your independence while living in the comfort and familiarity of your own home.

All of Calvary's services can be booked in privately as a self-funded client (known as private services). You can also "top up" government funded services with one-off or regular private services.

Services can be provided on a private basis, as part of a government subsidised program, or a combination of both.

Services are flexible and range from short-term help to ongoing care, and are matched to your personal preferences, circumstances and budget.

In addition, if you are waiting for a government-funded Home Care Package to become available, our self-funded services give you immediate support.

No matter what level of care you're seeking, our Care Adviser team can provide information and options to suit your needs.



1300 66 00 22
www.calvarycare.org.au



Founded in 1885 by the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, Calvary is a charitable, not-for-profit, Catholic health care organisation.

Our mission is to provide quality, compassionate health care to the most vulnerable, including those reaching the end of their life.

With over 18,000 staff and volunteers, we have a national network of 14 Public and Private Hospitals, 72 Residential Care and Retirement Communities and 19 Community Care service centres.



Hospitality



Healing



Stewardship



Respect

Continuing the Mission of the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary

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Published: Apr-Jun 2022
You have received this newsletter as a valued client of Calvary. Information is accurate at time of printing.