

# Connect

ISSUE 1: 2024



**Hear from our  
CHAIRMAN**

**What is  
HUMANETIX SIGNAL?**

**Discover the benefits of  
PET THERAPY**



# Message from the Chairman



Welcome to the first issue of our Connect newsletter for 2024. This year, we are excited to bring you two issues, aiming to strengthen our bond not only within the PSVCAC community but also across the broader Port Stephens region.

Although it is only February, it has already been eventful. The year commenced with the news that our CEO, Suzanne Newton, had made the difficult decision to leave the organisation. A testament to her hard work and achievements while with PSVCAC, Suzanne will be leaving behind a well-positioned organisation and I am confident of maintaining this positive momentum. We're actively searching for a new CEO and will keep you updated on our progress.

In January, our Board Members and Executive Team held a Strategic Planning Session to map out our direction for the next 2-3 years, ensuring PSVCAC continues to thrive and serve the Port Stephens community effectively. A highlight from our plan is adopting a new software solution, Humanetix, aimed at enhancing our Community & Home Care Team's efficiency and communication. This initiative will help us better serve our clients and expand our services, addressing the increasing needs of our ageing population. More details on Humanetix are available in this issue.

I want to express my gratitude to our Board Members for their invaluable contributions to PSVCAC. Our Board, comprised of volunteers, is dedicated to high-quality care and support for seniors and shares a deep affection for the Port Stephens region.

***Our current Board includes:***

***Max Pride - Treasurer, Warwick Mathieson, Jason Brennan, Graham Blythman, Keian Barnard and Victoria Trigar.***

The aged care sector continues to face ongoing challenges, such as workforce shortages. As one of the largest employers in Port Stephens, we are always seeking passionate and dedicated individuals. Aged care offers rewarding career paths, from nursing, personal care and home care employees to support services like hospitality, maintenance, gardening and administration. Our latest recruitment campaign features the tagline 'Join Us and Build a Career, Not Just a Job!'. Keep an eye out on our website and Facebook page for testimonials from our existing staff as to why they love working in aged care, and for our current opportunities.

There are also new reforms on the horizon, including the introduction of a new Aged Care Act in 2024. The new Act is designed to be a 'rights-based Act', which means that it focuses on the rights of older people, with an emphasis on values, choice, well-being, autonomy, and decision-making. We fully support these changes and are committed to remaining agile and ready to adapt.

We hope you find this issue of Connect informative and engaging. I look forward to sharing more updates with you in the future.

Kind regards,

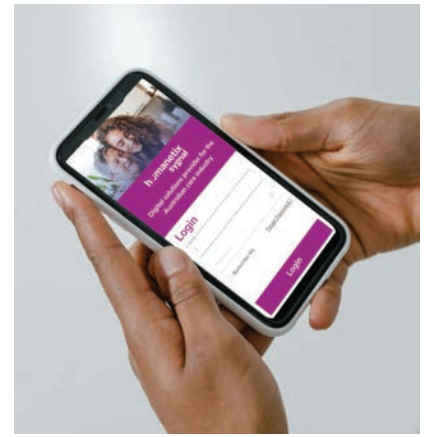
**RAAD RICHARDS**  
**Chairman**



# A New Horizon in Community & Home Care

## Supporting Seniors to be happy and independent at home

As part of our ongoing commitment to delivering the best possible care to our clients, we want to share some important updates regarding our community care software. The Community & Home Care team has used Telstra Health for all our scheduling, care documenting, and work-related communications for the last ten years. Telstra Health, however, will soon be switched off, meaning that it will no longer be supported or receive updates. Late last year, after careful consideration, we proudly announced Humanetix Sygnal as the chosen successor—an advanced solution designed to elevate and transform how we deliver care. So, what is Humanetix Sygnal, and what do the next few months look like?



## What is Humanetix Sygnal?

Humanetix Sygnal is a software that enables home and community care providers to streamline data capture for each client, leading to improved care outcomes. The platform ensures compliance with clinical, care, and all regulatory standards in a user-friendly manner.

## What can we expect?

Humanetix Sygnal brings an array of benefits, ensuring a more personalised and empowering experience for our clients:

- Tracking of total available funds
- Convenient Access to Your Agreement
- Detailed shift information
- Transaction tracking
- Viewing of statements
- Viewing your Care Manager's details
- Service requests
- Effortless shift cancellation

## When is it coming?

Phase 1 - We will switch to Humanetix from Telstra Health on 25 March. During this initial release, our clients will see little change, and we will see more 'back of house' functionality introduced.

Phase 2 - Beyond phase one, however, we are excited about the possibilities phase two brings. This stage is all about unlocking the full potential of Humanetix, offering enhanced features and a more personalised care experience tailored to the unique needs of our community.

*We eagerly anticipate the positive impact that Humanetix will bring, shaping a future where community & home care is not just a service but a truly empowering and personalised experience!*

## HEAR FROM OUR TEAM



*"PSVCAC has been very helpful with furthering my studies. We all celebrate our cultural days and the team never forgets our birthdays. I am delighted to work here."*

Kavita, Personal Care Assistant  
Harbourside Haven Gardens



*"In 2012 I became a casual, knowing I had found a great place to work. With the experience I've gained, I now work full time as a Case Manager and enjoy coming to work every day."*

Jason, Case Manager  
Community & Home Care





PHOTOGRAPHY SOURCE: SIMONE DE PEAK

## BENEFITS OF PET THERAPY

### Unleashing Joy: The Paws-itive Impact of Pet Therapy

Pet therapy is a heartwarming initiative that involves purposeful interactions between seniors and trained therapy animals, usually dogs or cats. Beyond the warm and fuzzy feelings, there are tangible benefits that contribute to the overall health of our residents and clients of which include:

**Increased Social Interactions:** the shared experience of bonding over animals creates connections, combating feelings of isolation. It's a great way to build a sense of community.

**Cognitive Benefits for Seniors:** for those dealing with cognitive conditions, pet therapy has demonstrated positive effects. The structured interactions stimulate memories, potentially improving cognitive function. The presence of therapy animals can offer comfort and familiarity, particularly beneficial for those facing challenges related to dementia or Alzheimer's.

**Additional Health Benefits:** beyond emotional and cognitive advantages, there are other noteworthy benefits such as an improved sense of purpose and meaning, lowered blood pressure, and reduced stress. These contribute to promoting better physical health among our residents and clients.

### Meet Banjo: The New Face of Furry Companionship

Recently introduced to our program is Banjo, an ex-racing greyhound who belongs to our Executive Manager of Clinical Care and Quality, Shelley Haines. Banjo's beautiful, calm nature is putting smiles on the faces of our residents at Harbourside Haven Gardens and our clients who attend the Day Centre. Banjo recently featured in the Newcastle Herald, outlining the joy he is bringing to our residents and clients, and encouraging people to adopt an ex-racer.

Our commitment to enhancing well-being doesn't stop here. We are wanting to introduce different animals into our programs. Currently, one of our staff members, Claire, is trialing shared care arrangements with rabbits. Her daughters are looking after two lovely rabbits, and Claire regularly brings them into work for our residents and clients to enjoy. Together, we are creating moments of joy and connection that go beyond the ordinary.



## EXCITING LAUNCH: Resparke at Harbourside Haven Gardens

### Creating moments of joy and connection

We're thrilled to announce the introduction of the Resparke program at Harbourside Haven Gardens this February. Resparke offers an innovative approach to enhancing resident wellbeing and addressing dementia-related behaviors. Through a personalised mix of activities including music, podcasts, yoga, meditation, religious and cultural activities, residents can stay active, entertained, and connected. This technology allows for the customisation of content according to each resident's preferences, ensuring a truly individualised experience.

The name "Resparke" reflects the joy and renewed spirit seen in residents as they engage with the program. We can't wait to see that special spark in the eyes of our Harbourside Haven Gardens residents.

Discover more about Resparke at [www.resparke.com](http://www.resparke.com)



# Out & About



Melbourne Cup excitement at Harbourside Haven Gardens



Congratulations to Harbourside Haven Village 2024 Eminent Residents Bev Lee (pictured with CEO Suzanne Newton) and Gloria Irwin



Farewell to long time Board Member Don Whatham by Chairman Raad Richards at the 2023 AGM



Harbourside Haven Gardens shining bright with Christmas joy



True blue Aussie Day with sausage sizzle and lamingtons at Salamander Haven Village.



A festive pre-Christmas outing for our Community & Home Care clients at the Bull and Bush Hotel



Inspiring PSVCAC residents, Betty Goudge and Eric Brae, being recognised for their war service by Quilts of Valour



Cheers to Shoal Bay Public School for their heartfelt Christmas gifts to Harbourside Haven Gardens residents

## OUR PHYSIOTHERAPY PROGRAM

Harbourside Haven Gardens resident, Stephen Alta, has a powerful message for us all – **use it or lose it!**



Prior to moving to Harbourside Haven Gardens in September 2022, Stephen had been grappling with anxiety and depression. In addition to this, following his move, he put on quite a bit of weight (a testament to the fantastic food served at Harbourside Haven Gardens perhaps?).

Missing his regular trips to the gym before his move, which not only provided exercise but also crucial social interaction, Stephen decided it was time to set a goal for himself.

**His aim was simple but profound – to be healthier and happier, with weight loss as a beneficial side effect.**

Central to Stephen's journey was one of Harbourside Haven Gardens Physiotherapists, Alyssa Sibug. Alyssa worked closely with Stephen to develop a personalised program. Starting with walks limited to the end of the building, Stephen has now progressed to completing a full lap around the three houses that make up Harbourside Haven Gardens – Carter, Richardson, and Les Johnson. Additionally, he has embraced exercises like partial squats and resistive training using bands, gradually incorporating dumbbells and increasing repetitions.

And the outcome? In Stephen's own words, *"I am a totally different person. I've improved my balance, reduced reliance on my walker, seen a decrease in my depression medication, lost 12 kgs, and generally feel much happier and healthier."*

Stephen's enthusiasm extends beyond his personal journey – he has been actively encouraging fellow residents to join the physiotherapy program. Quietly, his inspiring story seems to have resonated with quite a few of our staff as well!



### OUR STORY

We are a local, caring, community organisation with over 40 years of experience in delivering on the original mission of the organisation - to provide quality care, support and accommodation for the aged people of Port Stephens.

### OUR PURPOSE

To compassionately meet the social, care and wellbeing needs of our ageing community. We provide support services that empower people's lives to enhance their dignity and deliver peace of mind to families.

### OUR SERVICES

Under the banner of Port Stephens Veterans & Citizens Aged Care we provide the following services:

#### RETIREMENT LIVING

We offer a variety of one and two bedroom villas and apartments.

- Harbourside Haven, Shoal Bay
- Fingal Haven, Fingal Bay
- Salamander Haven, Salamander Bay

#### RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

- Harbourside Haven Gardens, Shoal Bay

#### COMMUNITY & HOME CARE


- Commonwealth Home Support Programme
- Day Centre
- Home Care Packages
- DVA Home Nursing Program
- Privately Funded Home Care Services
- Meals on Wheels
- Support and assistance to navigate MyAgedCare

### CONNECT WITH US

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[www.harboursidehaven.com.au](http://www.harboursidehaven.com.au)

 FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

### JOIN OUR TEAM

We are an employer of choice who values our staff, offers flexibility, competitive salaries, incentives and a community focused approach to aged care across a variety of different roles.

We also have opportunities for volunteers wanting to support and connect with seniors in our community.

To find out more, give our office a call.

