



Annual Report 2019-2020



About Us

Southern Cross Care NSW & ACT (SCC) has been a part of the community for nearly 50 years. In 1972 we opened our first Retirement Community, Patrick Minahan Village in Marrickville, and in 1975 we established our first Residential Aged Care Home, John Woodward, in Merrylands. We have been delivering in-home care services to the community since 1996. Today we care for more than 3,500 customers and operate in over 40 locations across NSW and the ACT.

We believe that individuality is one of the greatest gifts of being human. Our 'customer at the heart' philosophy means that their happiness and wellbeing is our priority. We celebrate and respect diversity and welcome everyone. Our HEART values help us create supportive environments conducive to our residents' and clients' physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual and social well-being. It means we also create warm and supportive workplaces where our committed staff can flourish and grow. Everyone who works for us stands by our commitment and values.



Our Values

Honesty
Empathy
Acceptance
Respect
Teamwork

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Chairperson's Message



Over the last 12 months, Southern Cross Care NSW & ACT (SCC) has faced many challenges (along with other providers in the Aged Care industry), including financial challenges, the Aged Care Royal Commission and COVID-19.

It is hoped the Royal Commission will recommend a more viable way of financing Aged Care generally in the country and the Government will act on those recommendations. Meanwhile, our organisation has shown itself to be well prepared to meet the requirements of the Royal Commission and has worked with others to present the best way forward in the interests of our residents and clients.

Despite its challenges, COVID-19 has also brought some of its own blessings to SCC. Our Management Team adapted to and found more creative and smarter ways of working with staff at all levels, which will now remain in place.

Our facilities have demonstrated excellence in their infection control measures and procedures. It has been comforting to know that staff, residents and families have had confidence in SCC's management and response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board continues to be grateful to our CEO Helen Emmerson, and all our staff for their constant commitment, to enable those in our care to 'live life to the full'.

Our Board has had its own journey during this time and welcomed three new Board members in October 2020.

I am very grateful for those who have served as Committee Chairs over the last 12 months. To Pat McGannon, Rose-Marie Hoekstra, John Devlin, Ian Chisolm and Angela McKay, I thank you for the constancy of your commitment. I am particularly grateful to Angela McKay for all her work as Deputy Chair of the Board.

My gratitude extends to other Board members who have grown in their understanding of the Vision and Mission of SCC and have worked towards that.

I also wish to acknowledge the commitment, expertise and experience shared by three long-term Directors in Ian Chisolm, John Devlin and Rose-Marie Hoekstra. Your dedication to the Vision and Mission of SCC has been a great gift to the organisation.

It has been a privileged time to Chair an organisation whose mission to care for the disadvantaged, vulnerable and isolated is at the core of who we are.

Anne Lane



CEO's Message



I would like to take this opportunity to thank our residents and clients for continuing to place your trust in us during what can only be described as one of the most challenging periods we have ever witnessed as an organisation, industry and society as a whole.

From bushfires, drought and floods sweeping across our states, to the rise and spread of a global pandemic, 2019/2020 has been defined by truly life-changing events. I am so proud of the way in which Southern Cross Care NSW & ACT (SCC) has responded to these challenges.

Preparing to celebrate 50 years of caring

From our very humble beginnings when the Knights of the Southern Cross established our not-for-profit organisation, to our approaching Jubilee celebrations, our staff have continued to demonstrate resilience and commitment to caring for, and about, our people.

Today, we care for people all across NSW and ACT and encourage them to enjoy their lives on their own terms.

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

At the end of October 2019, the Royal Commission released its 'Interim Report' about the state of Australia's aged care system. The Interim Report, along with much of the media coverage, presents a very negative picture of the sector. And whilst it is clear that Australia's aged care system and services have failed many older Australians, there are also many positive stories and outcomes that should be celebrated. SCC welcomes the identification of improvements to the aged care system and services that will be gained as a result of the Royal Commission.

A need for change during a global pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about changes in the way we all do business and in our approach to risk management. A good example of this is the shift toward online processes and engaging with our staff, clients, residents, their families and representatives through digital channels such as virtual meetings.

Throughout this health crisis, ensuring the safety and well-being of our residents, clients and staff has remained a priority, with visitor restrictions and revised

policies and procedures in place proving particularly effective in reducing the risk of infection and spread of the virus.

SCC established a dedicated COVID-19 Task Force consisting of Executives, internal subject matter experts, and Registered Nurses (including myself) to lead our response to COVID-19. Against the backdrop of our Clinical Governance Framework, our Task Force continues to work closely with NSW Health, industry peers and our operations teams on the ground to ensure we remain effective in the fight against COVID-19.

Our Achievements

Whilst COVID-19 has consumed considerable time and resources, SCC achieved some important milestones over the year.

- Our Quality and Clinical Governance Team have worked tirelessly to embed a single set of Aged Care Quality Standards, and National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program for Residential Aged Care, introduced on 1 July 2019 into practice across our organisation.
- We modernised our Nurse Call systems across the network to deliver increased operational, clinical, and patient outcomes.
- Our Thornton Park facility was a finalist in the 2019 UDIA NSW Awards for Excellence in Urban Development, in the 'Aged Care' and 'Retirement Living' categories.
- Our North Turrumurra Residential Aged Care home was completed in March 2020.
- Construction work commenced in late 2019 at our St Catherine's Villa in Grafton, which is undergoing a complete transformation whilst remaining open for business.

I would like to thank our staff for ensuring our residents and clients are cared for, and our families, representatives and volunteers for their widespread support in these challenging times.

I look forward to progressing our Strategic Plan in the next 12 months, as we emerge more resilient and committed to delivering high quality care for the elderly. To this end, I also want to thank our Executive Management Team and Board Members for their unwavering support.

Helen Emmerson



At a Glance



31
Residential aged care services



1,848
Residential aged care accommodation places



50.6%
Concessional ratio



30
Retirement communities



994
Retirement living units



7.9
Years average retirement living tenure



579
Home care packages



16,192
Commonwealth Home Care Support Programme output hours



129,089
Home Care Package service hours



2,641,093
Aged care service hours provided



2,377
Employees



799
Volunteers

Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan documents our objectives, which keeps us on track to achieving them. The three objectives of our Strategic Plan 2018-2021 are:

1. Our customer's lives are enriched through person-centred care;
2. Our customers feel connected to their communities; and
3. Our organisation is well-managed and sustainable.

The Strategic Plan on-a-page (below) includes some of the most significant goals for each of these objectives.



Objective

Our customers' lives are enriched through person-centred care

Achieved by

Continual focus on the needs and choices of our customers

Focus areas include

1. Maintain full compliance with Aged Care Quality Standards
2. Continue to enhance our customers' experience of life, and seek feedback
3. Help more customers by growing our Home Care business by 25% each year



Objective

Our customers feel connected to their communities

Achieved by

Facilitating links and partnerships with local communities

Focus areas include

1. Develop Regional plans that identify and respond to local opportunities
2. Support our customers to access and connect with their local communities
3. Build strategic partnerships to better meet our customers' needs



Objective

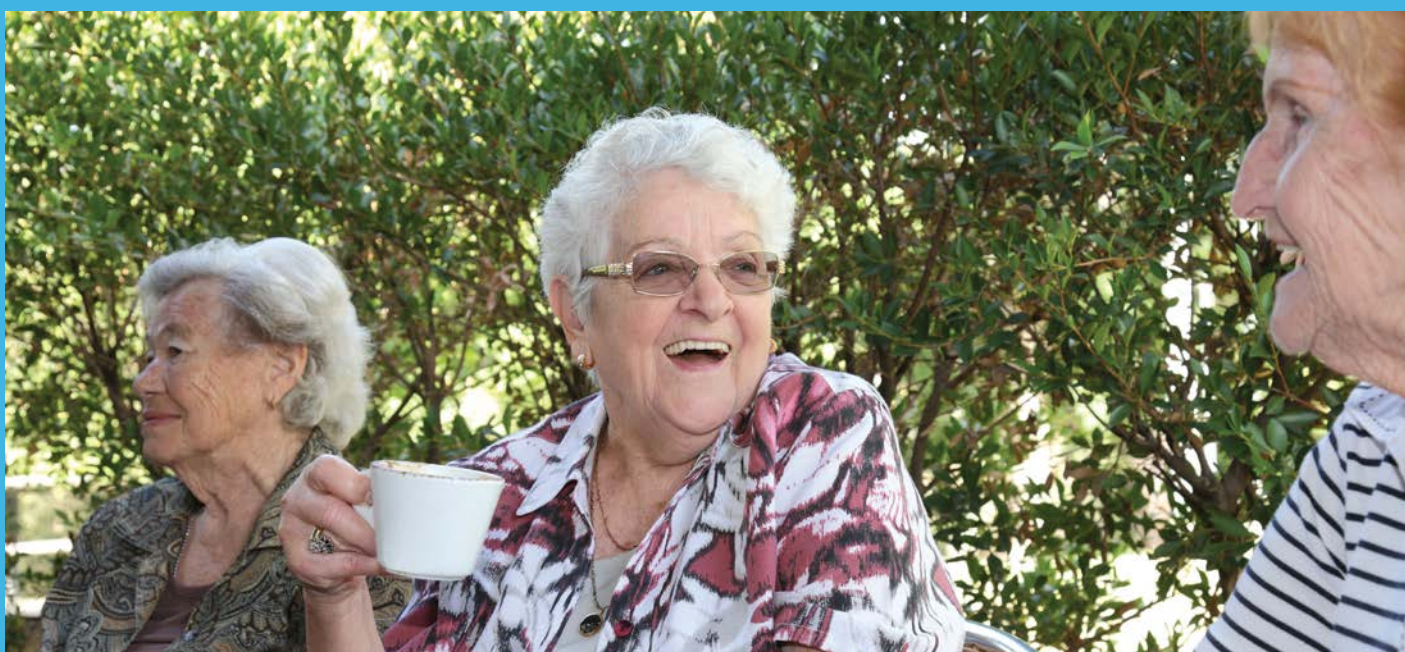
Our organisation is well-managed and sustainable

Achieved by

Good governance that focuses on what matters, both now and in the future

Focus areas include

1. Focus on effective business practices and management of new initiatives
2. Build a sector-leading workforce that is capable, engaged and productive
3. Transform our systems and processes to better support person-centred care



We Care About People

Residential Care

With the March 2020 opening of our North Turramurra care home there are a total of 31 residential aged care services available across the our SCC portfolio. This translates to 1,848 residential aged care accommodation places.

The impact of COVID-19 on the aged care industry has been significant. Improved measures around infection control and general resident wellbeing has been a focus for SCC since the pandemic began in February 2020. Visitor restrictions and screening measures have been implemented to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our homes, the effects of which can be devastating. To date, our care homes have successfully overcome many challenges to ensure residents remain safe and well.

SCC continues to collaborate with Dementia Training Australia to support the increasing number of residents living with dementia in our homes. We provide individualised support and social interaction for people living with dementia so they can live a meaningful and purposeful life. We apply restorative and enabling therapies in our homes such as pet therapy, music therapy and sensory gardens. The journey for relatives of those living with dementia can be emotionally challenging and diverse so it is key for us to partner with families in our ongoing assessment and care planning strategies.

Caring for the wellbeing of our residents

Stella knows her 'Pawpose' for residents living with dementia.

It's time for work and Stella recognises her role all too well. Stella is so much a part of her Corowa care home that she really should have her own car space and locker. But there are more important things in life for her, like improving the health and wellbeing of her residents and spreading as much joy as she can during her weekly shift.

Stella is a Corgi, an intelligent dog that is easy to train but also very independent. Her role in pet therapy is not new, but it's an important one. And while residents have used recent improvements in technology to help combat social isolation, the physical touch of a cuddly Corgi still performs well in the popularity stakes.

Donna Craig is the Spiritual Wellbeing Coordinator and Personal Assistant to Stella. Donna says it's challenging work, but she does her best to keep pace with Stella's schedule and demands.

"Stella really knows what she needs to do, and that is to be there for our residents emotional support. They also love her, and the feeling is mutual" she says.

Pet therapy can improve the physical, social and mental wellbeing of the elderly and help them feel a greater sense of purpose and self-worth. Depression, anxiety, appetite and even cholesterol can be improved as a result of regular canine connection.

Similarly, Doll Therapy is especially beneficial for those experiencing dementia to put responsibility, caring and structure back into their lives. A typical Alzheimer's Doll needs to be dressed, be lifelike in feel and weight and should also never cry or make noises.

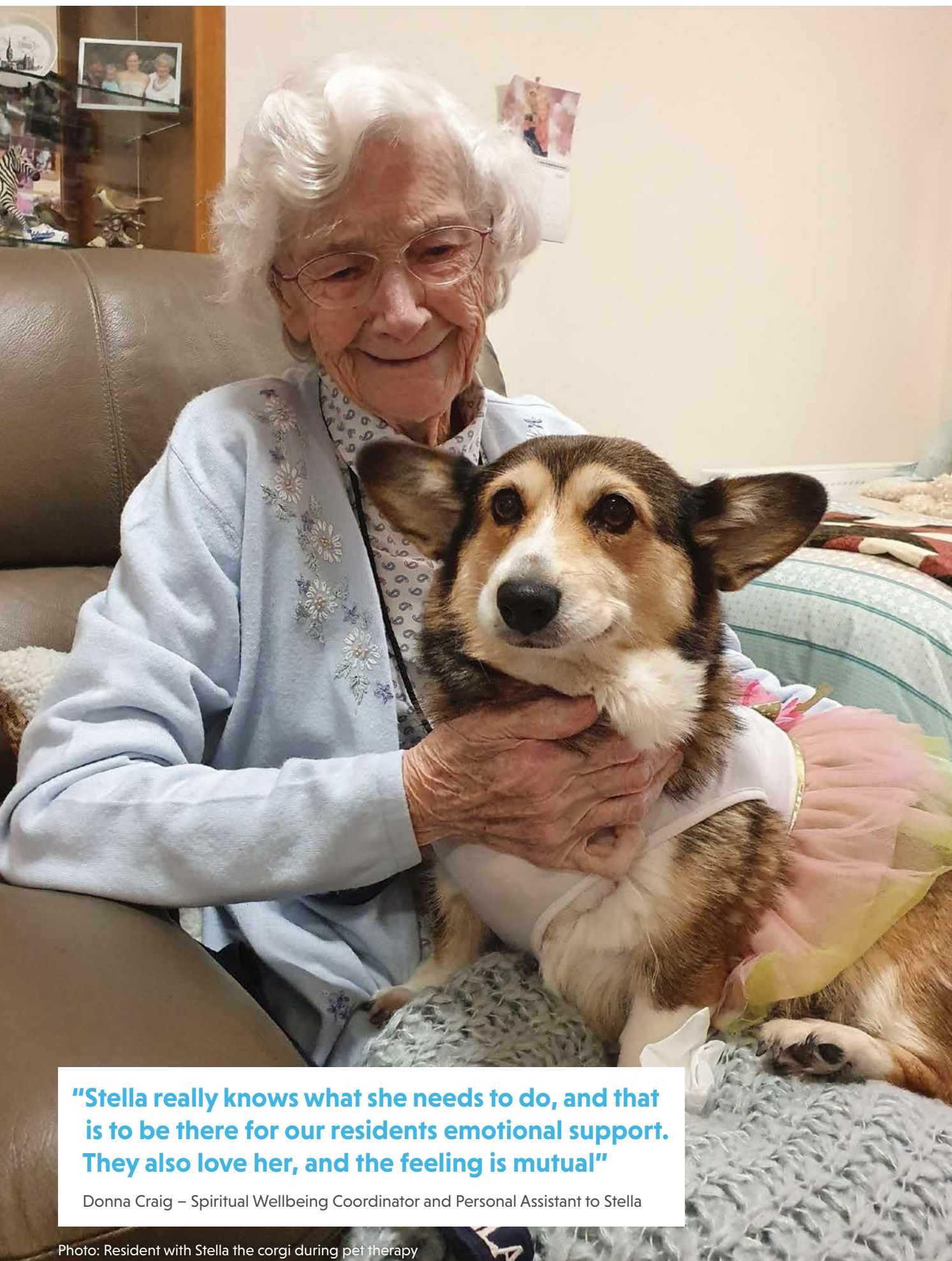
Penny Cleary's mother is a big advocate of Doll Therapy in the Corowa home.

"My mum, who has dementia, had anxiety and separation issues and would wander a lot. When she has the doll, she is calm, happy, less restless and talks and cuddles it. We noticed changes in her mood and general wellbeing" she says.

Corowa Facility Manager, Barbara Robinson says the dolls have meaning for her residents suffering with dementia and provide a sense of purpose and focus for them.



Photo: Resident during Doll Therapy



"Stella really knows what she needs to do, and that is to be there for our residents emotional support. They also love her, and the feeling is mutual"

Donna Craig – Spiritual Wellbeing Coordinator and Personal Assistant to Stella

Photo: Resident with Stella the corgi during pet therapy

Home Care



Photo: Paul Edwards with SCC Home Care Team members Abbie Peucker and Debra Mitchell

A Commonwealth Home Support Program or Home Care Package can provide services to our over 65's to allow them to enjoy living at home longer. Home Care services are in high demand in rural and regional areas like the Riverina in NSW.

Many areas in this region are experiencing strong growth in the number of people aged over 70, and we are well placed to meet the needs of the elderly wanting support to remain in their own home.

Debra Mitchell is the Senior Service Advisor for the Riverina region and has witnessed substantial growth over the past few years. "We started our business here with just 16 clients; now we have around 140 and its growing fast thanks to referrals and word of mouth," says Debra.

Paul Edwards is a SCC client in Hay and a strong advocate for Home Care. It has allowed him to remain at home with his wife of 54 years and maintain his connection with the community he loves.

Paul found out about Home Care packages through a relative but thought that he was probably not 'sick' enough and that it would be too much money. He decided to give it a try and was amazed at the service

and how it has improved his life. Paul wanted to spread the word about SCC in the community and set about telling all his friends.

"I love the service Debra and her team provides me. At the age of 74, I am not as mobile as I used to be so my package helps me with home maintenance. I was so thankful for the service and wanted my friends to find out about Home Care and all the benefits. Many did not know about the types of services available and subsidies. More importantly for them, it can mean a better life at home and keeps them out of hospitals", he says.

Remaining at home, Paul continues to be as active as possible in the community, including volunteer work and helping at the local Jockey Club and RSL, where he has acted as President and regularly assists veterans and their families.

Debra's team operate throughout the Riverina, including towns like Hay, Deniliquin, Cootamundra, Leeton and Wagga Wagga. "Our point of difference is that we are personable. We always try to meet face to face and develop trust with our clients. Our values of honesty, empathy and respect are important when caring for these elderly Australians", says Debra.

Retirement Living

During the current COVID-19 environment and changing restrictions, we have focused on being able to interact with people. Human connection is a core human need and during 'COVID lockdowns', it was retirement village and aged care residents who felt that more acutely.

In the retirement village environment, residents are not able to get out to socialise as much and many families and friends are avoiding making those regular visits and wellbeing checks.

Our flagship state-of-the-art retirement living development in Penrith continues to attract retirees who value human connection. Thornton Park sits at the gateway to the Blue Mountains and the Nepean River and is one of 30 SCC retirement living communities in the portfolio.

A sense of belonging and community has never been more important during this pandemic, so being in a community like Thornton Park can have a positive impact on resident wellbeing. Residents were also able to take advantage of the shared community spaces of the development to stay physically connected with each other.

Joanne Barry is SCC's Lifestyle Coordinator at Merrylands and provided support and advice to village residents about the pandemic to help them stay safe.



Photo: SCC Lifestyle Coordinator, Joanne Barry with village residents

Joanne developed activity packs to combat isolation and ensured residents felt connected to each other and the community.

"Some residents said they felt a little lonely at times, but everyone has a good community environment with good friends here in the village, so they didn't feel too isolated. I regularly allocated time to contact residents by phone to check in on them and see how they were coping, both mentally and physically. I also engaged the help of others to reach out to their fellow residents during this pandemic which often resulted in some much-needed conversation and reassurance, and acted as a reminder that support was always close by," says Joanne.



Photo: SCC Operations Manager, Paul Maston at the National Retirement Living Summit

The National Retirement Living Summit was held in 2019 and provided the opportunity to gain insights from the industry and other providers. The Summit highlighted the important role of Village Liaison Officers in the sector. Paul Maston, SCC Operations Manager says Village Liaison Officers are a critical to better resident support and care in the home.

"These Liaison Officers are absolutely critical in supporting our residents and in the delivery of home care services. They can work closely with Home Care Advisors and ensure the residents care is provided in a coordinated manner and can achieve that within a position of trust and familiarity," says Paul.

Our Organisation

Aged Care Quality Standards



Clinical and Quality Governance

The increased focus on clinical and quality measures across all our services aims to improve the quality of those in our care.

Since the Aged Care Quality Standards were introduced on 1 July 2019, the Quality and Clinical Governance Team have worked to embed the new Standards into practice through the development of policies and procedures and an auditing program that reflect the new Standards. Staff have been provided with resources and education to assist them with understanding how the new Standards affect the way they provide care.

The National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program for Residential Aged Care also commenced on 1 July 2019. The program measures important aspects of quality of care that can affect a resident's health and wellbeing and help us to measure, monitor, compare and improve the quality of our services.



The COVID-19 pandemic is also providing additional challenges for the Quality Team and our staff at the facility level, with much of the team focused on the development of new policies and procedures. This will ensure we are prepared to respond to a potential outbreak and to support our staff and residents to remain safe and well.

Kylie Maddern is a Facility Manager in Sydney and she has her resident's wellbeing as her top priority. The pandemic's impact on aged care in Australia is significant and highlights the importance of being prepared and proactive.

"The pandemic is impacting on all of us and at a facility level, infection control procedures and resident and family communication are vital, to ensure the safety of our residents. There is an increased emphasis on infection control procedures, cleaning and administration. We all had to complete Australian Government COVID-19 training to ensure our preparedness for an outbreak, and we must ensure our residents feel at ease. Many are fearful and do not understand the virus and its implications for the elderly," says Kylie.

The Quality Team continues to monitor and measure our response to the pandemic to ensure the best possible care is provided. Feedback from visits by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission is also used to provide facility staff with an understanding of how the new Standards are being interpreted and assessed, and where appropriate, this information is integrated into our systems and processes.



Information Services

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about changes in the way we all do business, with an increased emphasis toward online processes and a shift toward interacting with customers and staff through digital channels.

We are modernising our Nurse Call systems across the network to deliver increased operational, clinical, and patient outcomes. 85% of sites have now upgraded, which also provides real-time visibility of call bell response data.

An upgrade of our Epicor financial systems has now taken place and we have migrated to their cloud-based platform, allowing us to focus on business growth and more consistent access to data from any device. Part of this project also included integration from our property development project system (Uniphi) to Epicor. Our network links were also upgraded at this time to provide core speeds back to our main office systems.

SCC is focused on finding advances in business, customer engagement, and the way we provide support, to provide better customer experience and employee experience. In 2020 we continued the overhaul of our IT service systems and structure, including full training of the IT Team in customer-centric service delivery, alongside the implementation of our new service desk ticketing system. We are also completing upgrades to our HR and payroll platforms. Work has now commenced and is expected to be completed in 2021.

Our North Turramurra residential care home was completed in March 2020, which allowed for a new Nurse Call system and all resident communication services to be implemented. This included phones and internet services using NBN broadband technologies to enhance resident's social connectivity. This has a positive impact on residents' state of mind, helping to reduce loneliness and increase overall happiness.

Technology – Keeping Our Residents Connected

Technology connects loved ones during COVID-19

COVID-19 has changed the way we think about connecting with each other. Social distancing, home isolation and travel restrictions have all impacted on our lives. Keeping our most vulnerable safe and well in aged care has meant even tougher restrictions, which is challenging for families wanting to connect with residents.

For most aged care residents under lockdown, families are unable to visit, hold or hug their loved ones. Some families may be spread across the country, or even the world, so technology plays an important part in connecting families.

"It's all about the importance of embracing technology in our homes, in order to better connect residents with their family, friends and communities" says Beate Stellar.

Beate is a Spiritual Wellbeing Coordinator who uses iPads to assist residents with the available technology,

like Skype and FaceTime, guiding the conversations and problem solving.

What we are all learning is that physical isolation does not necessarily mean you have to be socially isolated. Technology in aged care means access to online programs and streaming of religious services and activities such as dance and exercise classes to ensure our resident's emotional wellbeing.

Intergenerational programs can also continue without the need to visit facilities, using the latest in video technology. Intergenerational learning programs with local schools, using video conferencing technology, allows students to interact and engage with residents remotely and regularly.

Thinking creatively and adapting the way we engage with our loved ones in aged care will help us stay socially connected.



Photo: Lifestyle team member Beate Stellar helps a resident to connect with family during COVID-19



Property

Our mission of supporting and caring for people as they age is part of everything we do. Our resident's wellbeing includes considering the environment they live in, so we build innovative homes and retirement communities that benefit residents and improve their lifestyle.

Our new North Turramurra residential care home was completed in March 2020, setting a new benchmark for SCC and the broader Aged Care Industry. Nestled alongside the Ku-Ring-Gai National Park are 113 residential rooms across 6 aged care wings and 1 Dementia specific wing. The design of the home is intended to maximise the connection and relationship of residents and staff with the natural bush setting, the heritage-listed Huon House and Chapel.

The redevelopment of our St Catherine's Villa residential care home in Grafton is underway. Construction commenced in late 2019 and the facility will undergo a complete transformation while remaining open for business. St Catherine's will increase in size from 63 beds to 83 beds and provide new courtyards and landscaped areas for residents and family. Inside there will be café facilities, kitchens, Chapel and a wellness hub incorporating a library, hair salon and lounge areas. Sustainability initiatives include solar panels and



Photo: St Catherine's Villa in Grafton (artists impression)

LED lighting throughout. The first stage of the project is anticipated for completion in early 2021.

Our recently opened Thornton Park facility was a finalist in the 2019 UDIA NSW Awards for Excellence in Urban Development, in the 'Aged Care' and 'Retirement Living' categories.

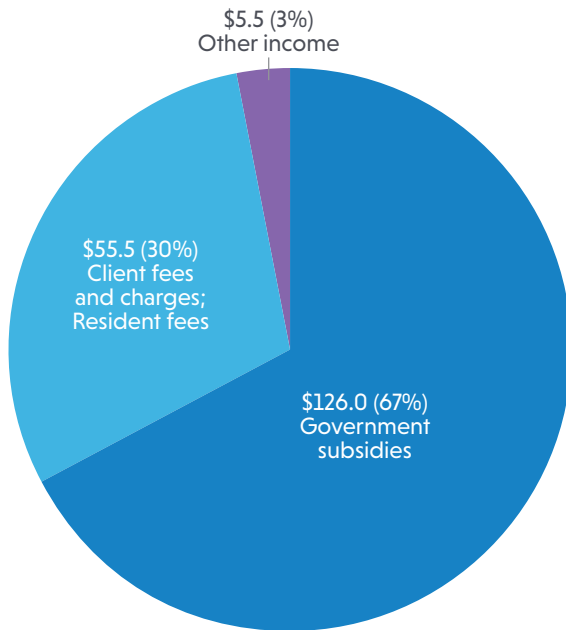
Thornton Park is a state of the art, seniors living development in Penrith NSW and provides an innovative 'continuum of care' solution for seniors, featuring a spacious 100 bed residential aged care facility, 48 self-contained Retirement Living units and a Community Centre.



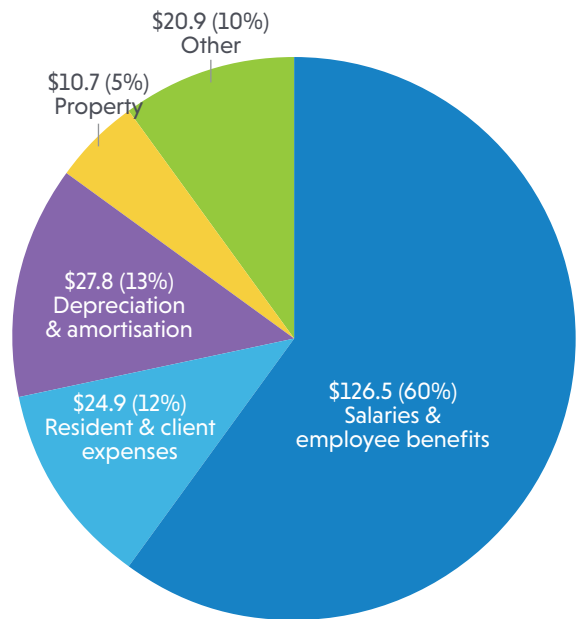
Photo: St Catherine's Villa in Grafton (artists impression)

Financials

Revenue 2019/20 (\$ Millions)



Expenditure 2019/20 (\$ Millions)



Revenue by Services (\$ Millions)



Net Assets (\$ Millions)	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Cash and cash equivalents	147.1	121.7	128.9
Financial Assets	27.8	29.2	29.0
Trade and other receivables	79.9	91.8	34.2
Property, Plant & Equipment	363.9	393.1	447.5
Intangibles	2.6	2.2	2.0
Total Assets	621.3	638.0	641.6
Trade and other Payables	45.7	54.3	45.1
Accommodation Bonds & Refundable Deposits	353.6	367.3	402.2
Provisions	10.7	11.9	12.9
Borrowings	4.2	4.3	4.7
Total Liabilities	414.2	437.7	464.9
Net Assets	207.1	200.3	176.6

Caring in the Year of the Nurse



Photo: Florence Nightingale

The famous nurse, Florence Nightingale, continues to be remembered for her dedication for caring. So perhaps it's fitting that in this International Year of the Nurse and in the midst a pandemic, that we take time to acknowledge our nurses of today, for following in the footsteps of this amazing nursing pioneer.

The determination by nurses and carers to keep our most vulnerable safe at this time has resonated across the aged care industry, and it's a timely reminder about the importance of nursing, and to show our appreciation of their value every day.

Florence Nightingale was born on May 12, 1820, so 2020 is the 200th year anniversary of her birth. She became known as the "Lady with the Lamp" after working night shifts and being put in charge of nursing British and allied soldiers in Turkey. The story of Florence continues to inspire our nurses and champion her work, especially across our aged care homes.

Samjhana works at St Francis Residential Care Home in Plumpton and has developed a special kind of appreciation for the elderly. As we continue to learn more about COVID-19, it's increasingly clear that the risk of severe illness increases with age, especially those with chronic health conditions.

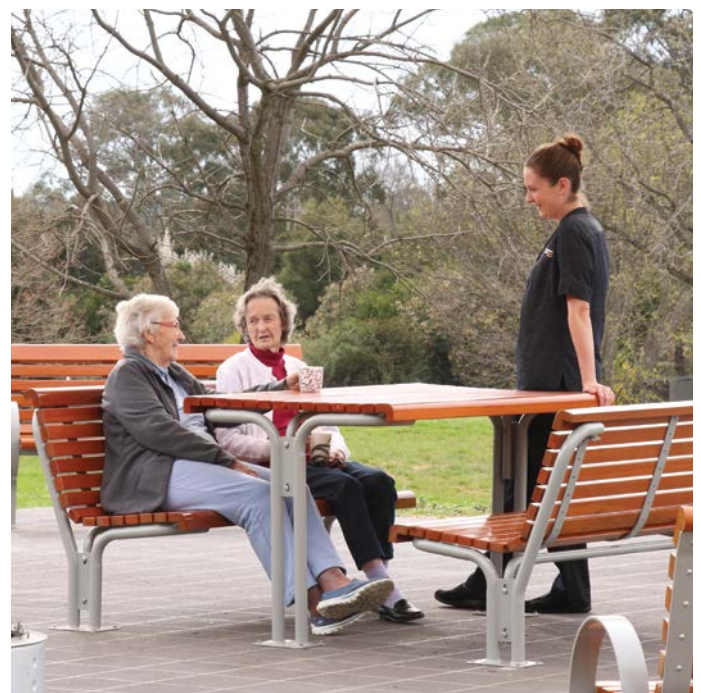
Samjhana knows the risks for these most vulnerable members of our community and is determined to keep her residents safe and well. But she has always held a deep respect for the elderly and realised from a very early age that she wanted to lend her skills to the medical profession.

"From childhood I wanted to work in the medical field. My mother was a midwife and I grew up watching her care for others. When I migrated to Australia, I completed my Diploma in Nursing and worked as an AIN and it was then that I realised it was a profession I would really enjoy", she says.

Many aged care workers like Samjhana will tell you that being a nurse can be extremely rewarding because you become a part of a resident's life and help improve their quality of life. "Every day is another wonderful memory for me. Our residents always appreciate the care we provide and that makes me feel happy".

Working with the elderly also helps nurses to understand the importance of social connectedness. Their physical and mental wellbeing is a concern when social distancing, home isolation and travel restrictions have all impacted on our lives. Nurses and carers often take on another important role in these challenging times, forming relationships and ensuring loneliness and isolation do not impact on the wellbeing of residents.

There is an incredible sense of purpose as a working nurse in aged care. To know that what you do has a positive impact on residents and clients can be a powerful inducement to keep turning up day after day. This passion for compassion is the reason we have been able to get through these uncertain times. Let's acknowledge and thank our amazing nurses and carers for taking care of the elderly and brightening our days.



"Every day is another wonderful memory for me. Our residents always appreciate the care we provide and that makes me feel happy"

Samjhana Rajak – St Francis Residential Care Plumpton





Care with Us

Help Make a Difference in Someone's Life

Donations and Bequests

We appreciate all bequests and donations and sincerely thank those people and their families who have named us as a beneficiary.

Join our team

We love what we do and the communities we provide care and support services for. We offer a broad range of careers in retirement living, home care, residential care and corporate roles.

Volunteering

Whether it's in one of our care homes or a retirement village, many older people have lost family and friends and loneliness and isolation can be very real for many. Becoming one of our volunteers can enhance the lives of people in countless ways.

Tell your friends

Recommendations and referrals are important, so telling your family and friends about our great work and sharing your experiences is another way we can help more people. You can also follow us on social media.

For more information on any of our services, or to enquire about ways in which you can support the organisation, phone **1800 632 314** or email enquiries@sccliving.org.au



Call **1800 632 314**
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