

Southern Cross Care NSW & ACT (SCC) has a long-standing commitment to environmental sustainability, which is about to become more comprehensive and effective.

We are proud to announce that SCC has joined the Catholic Church's *Laudato si'* Action Platform.

Laudato si' is the Latin name of Pope Francis' 2015 letter that encourages all people to live more sustainability in response to "*the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*"¹.

In his letter, Pope Francis says, "... *all creatures are connected... for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another*"². The positive and negative actions of each of us impact people and the environment.

He also says, "*the effects of the present imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now*"³. SCC acknowledges we have a common home, planet Earth, and we can always do more to preserve it to protect society's most vulnerable and bring *Laudato si'* to life.

The *Laudato si'* Action Platform will guide us as we take our commitment to environmental sustainability and social injustices further.

Each year, we will develop a comprehensive plan and report against our activities and achievements in:

- Environmental sustainability
- Empowering staff, residents and clients who experience disadvantage
- Addressing disadvantages among potential clients and others

We have set several targets that we aim to achieve by 2025

- Sourcing over 25% of electricity from renewable energy sources
- Reducing energy consumption by 20%
- Reducing vehicle fuel consumption by 15%
- Harvesting more than 15% of our water supply from rainwater
- Reducing waste-to-landfill by 15%.

This approach of both assisting people experiencing disadvantage and improving environmental sustainability is integral to our core values. Keeping residents, clients, and staff safe is our priority and responsibility. That's why responding to climate change and protecting our environment is so important to us.

¹ Pope Francis (2015) On Care for our Common Home (*Laudato si'*)
https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html paragraph 49

² *Laudato si'* paragraph 42

³ *Laudato si'* paragraph 161

In recent years, we have seen our staff, residents and clients directly impacted by floods, bushfires, heatwaves, and droughts. To keep our community safe, our response has included evacuating sites, altering services, turning facilities into emergency shelters, and providing support during and after the crisis.

We have seen those who are already disadvantaged suffer most from extreme weather events. For this reason, we are committed to improving our prevention, preparation, response, and recovery efforts. A crucial part of prevention is working on environmental sustainability.

Our initiatives to reduce our waste and use of energy, fuel, and water have been important first steps in our sustainability journey. They have helped reduce our running costs and contributed to preserving our planet.

Now, as we step up our commitments, we know we can best meet our goals through the cooperation of all our people. Pope Francis invites us to “... cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation”⁴.

We hope that we can count on you to join us in making a positive difference for our people and for the planet.

⁴ *Laudato si'* paragraph 14