



St. John's

VILLAGE

CARE COMPASSION RESPECT

Bishop John Parkes updates St. John's residents and families

9 October 2017

Welcome to St. John's Village. For those of you who don't know me, my name is John Parkes. I am the Anglican Bishop of Wangaratta and Chair of the Board of St. John's Village. I am also functioning as Executive Director after the departure of Glenn Phelps, the former CEO.

It is important that we keep our residents and their families in the loop in the aftermath of this significant epidemic of influenza which has affected four states. The flu outbreak put a record strain on Victorian emergency departments, which recorded a 13 per cent increase in daily admissions to about 3964 admissions each day during August — the highest ever for the month.

More than double the numbers of people have been affected by the flu this year than last according to the Victorian Health Minister. Figures collected late in September showed there had been more than 370 confirmed influenza deaths recorded in four states. Many of these were in aged care facilities. More than 120 elderly Victorians in nursing homes have died from the flu this year, after three horror strains infected more

than 14,000 in the state and led to deaths of an eight-year-old girl and a young father.

Our own St. John's family lost eight residents from flu related illness, a tragedy for eight families and for us. The effects of the epidemic were significant; around 79 residents and 53 staff contracted flu, putting an enormous strain on our resources. I want to pay tribute to the way that the staff rose to the challenge of continuing to provide the best possible care under such trying circumstances.

We spent over three weeks in lockdown, which must have been hard for you families as it was hard for our residents. This was required by state regulation which dictates how such an outbreak must be managed.

At the direction of the Federal Minister for Aged Care Ken Wyatt, the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency conducted a review audit between 19 and 24 September. A review audit is an in-depth examination of the facility in the light of the four standards and 44 outcomes which need to be met to secure accreditation.

The Board of St. John's had already begun to reflect on our experience during the flu outbreak, and had appointed Michelle Harcourt to be our consultant to assist in our process of continuous improvement. Michelle is assisted by Marg Foulson, and now we are joined by Prue Dear. We will hear from them shortly.

We have also been working with Australian Strategic Services on Board Governance for a period of time.

It is fair to say that the review audit threw up some challenges for us to deal with. We have not yet received the final report of that process, so I will not comment in detail at this time.

On Monday 26th September, the former CEO of St. John's Glenn Phelps tendered his resignation to the Board which was accepted. On the same day I stood aside Neale Morris the Clinical Care Manager from his duties on full pay pending receipt of the AACQA report and an internal inquiry. A week later Neale tendered his resignation which was accepted.

Which brings us to today. Let me tell you how St. John's is being managed and care to your loved ones assured in the light of these changes. First, as I indicated earlier I have become executive director of St. John's. Before I became a priest I was a practicing lawyer and bring those skills, together with my responsibility for governing the affairs of the Diocese of Wangaratta and St. John's Village to the oversight of the operations of St. John's going forward.

I have a project management team to help me. I have already introduced Michelle, Marg and Prue. They bring a mix of skills and very significant experience in aged care to the task of ensuring our continuous improvement. Michelle and Marg are both surveyors, as we now call the auditors, working with AACQA, and Prue brings with her great depth and expertise in clinical systems and change management. Michael Goldsworthy and his team are also part of our project management group.

We are blessed to have on the team Paul MacDonald. Paul has a wealth of experience in managing Aged Care facilities in Queensland. He has

seen the light and moved to God's own country here in the North-East. We have appointed Paul as Facility Manager, and his responsibility is to oversee the day to day care of our residents. Paul reports to me through Michelle.

And we have our wonderful care staff. The four AACQA surveyors and our own consultants tell us that we have great staff, and we are determined to work with them to ensure quality of care and continuous improvement of our service.

So you can see that we have already put in place strong clinical resources to ensure that we achieve these outcomes going forward.

To help me manage the business aspects of the Village we have appointed Gayle Lee as business manager and she will join us tomorrow. Gayle is a very experienced senior executive and brings a wealth of knowledge and skill to the task of managing the commercial side of our organisation. And this is critical; we need the right balance between clinical care and business efficiency to ensure that we provide to your loved ones the service they have a right to expect.

As I conclude, I want to make two further observations. First, this is not a matter at arms-length for me. I am both an executive in the organisation but also a family member of a resident. So I am blessed to see from both sides the need to provide best quality care.

Second, I have said that our St. John's family lost 8 residents from this flu crisis. Now as we continue to process our grief, it is appropriate that we hold a memorial service in our St. John's Village chapel to remember

them and to commend their souls into God's care. This will take place Thursday week, 19 November at 6.30 in the evening. All are welcome to attend this act of worship.