

Welcome to the **39th** edition of the **Work Health Safety News Bulletin**.



*Pictured above: Sunrise taken from the Bluff precinct on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2017.*

## FAREWELL



*Pictured above: Rosemary Burt RN (Nurse Manager) last day on the job after 9 ½ years as a member of the Meercroft Management Team. Photo taken: 27/04/17 following a farewell morning tea held in her honour in the main staff room.*

Rosemary resigned to take up a senior management position in the north east of the State. Rosemary was also a long serving member of the Work Health Safety Committee.

A farewell morning tea was held recently in honour of **services employee** Suzanne Phillips who retired after 18 ½ years of dedicated and devoted service to the Home.



*Pictured above from left: Wendy Shearer CEO/DON with retiree, Suzanne (Sue) Phillips taken during the presentation ceremony.*

## EASTER CELEBRATIONS



*Pictured above: Meercroft residents Colleen Gibbons (left) and Eileen Cannell with Easter Bunny.*



## SAFE SYSTEMS

Meercroft Care Inc. recently commissioned the manufacture of 3 purpose built stainless steel trolleys to carry individual pad bags associated with resident care needs.

The new trolleys were custom built locally in order to alleviate safety concerns associated with the existing trolleys that were rendered unsuitable for their given task



*Pictured above: one of the new trolleys laden with individual pad bags.*

## ResQsheet

*For emergency evacuation of non-ambulant residents.*

The Home recently introduced 17 **ResQsheets** for the emergency evacuation of non-ambulant residents from the **Bluffhaven** secure unit should the need arise.

The **ResQsheet** is kept in position under the mattress with strong elastic straps. Daily bed making is as normal.

If a fire or other emergency evacuation response were to occur, the webbing straps are removed from their pockets and quickly done up around the resident. The mattress and the resident are then lowered to the floor for very a fast and safe evacuation.

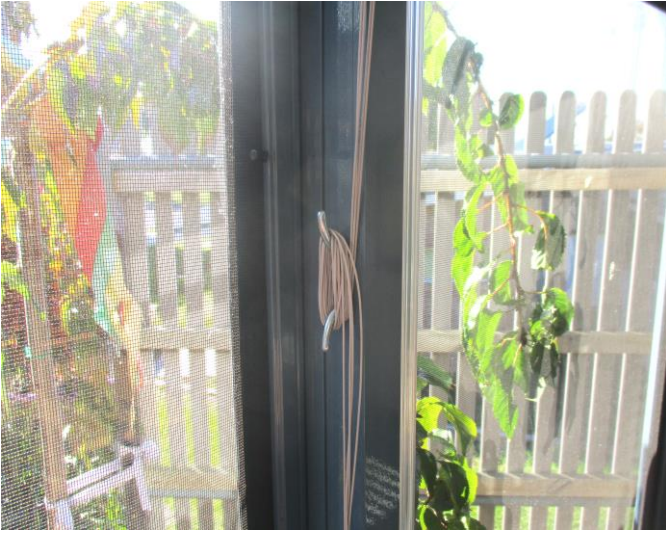


*Pictured above from left: Rosemary Burt RN and Melanie Muir RN*

To this end, a new Rescare policy and procedure **RES091** ResQsheet has been developed. Staff can access same via the Policy Document **Icon** located on their desk top and or via a hard copy located in the Staff Library.



## HAZARD PREVENTION



Although it may only appear to be trivial, staff in the Munnew Day Centre recently raised concern about a potential **trip hazard** involving a number of venetian blind cords being unsecured / touching the floor.

The matter was subsequently investigated, evaluated and resolved with the appropriate fitting being installed to minimize / negate the hazard.

## FALL OUT MATTRESS

Instances of **fall out mattresses** being incorrectly placed on the floor upside down has created a potential **slip hazard**, despite the mattress clearly being clearly labelled “THIS SIDE UP”.

The underside of the mattress is manufactured with grip nipples, thereby ensuring the mattress does not slip! Whereas, the exposed (upper side) has no grip at all.

Care staff are therefore reminded to ensure all fall out mattresses are placed on the floor with the labelling exposed as *pictured below*:



## SKIP BIN - CARDBOARD RECYCLING



All staff and volunteers are cordially reminded that the skip bin (*pictured above*) is only to be used to **recycle cardboard**. Please ensure that all cardboard boxes are collapsed (broken down) prior placing in skip bin.



Recent examples (*as pictured above*) of cardboard boxes being placed in the skip bin not collapsed has caused some major issues involving the contents of the said skip bin having to be removed in order to rectify the situation.

All other items such as newspapers, magazines, plastic milk bottles, tins etc. are to be placed in the green wheelie bins provided which are located in the adjacent recycling shed (*pictured below*).



*Reproduced: courtesy autism spectrum Australia*  
[www.autismspectrum.org.au](http://www.autismspectrum.org.au)

## What Is Autism?

Autism is entirely unique to every person on the spectrum. People on the spectrum are often described as having varied characteristics such as being logical, honest, quirky, passionate, shy, or anxious.

Like everyone, they have strengths & interests but can also experience significant difficulties.

Autism is often defined diagnostically as a lifelong developmental condition characterised by difficulties in social interaction & communication, restricted and repetitive interests and behaviours, and sensory sensitivities.

People on the spectrum have amazing potential but without support this is often not realised.

Some people may be able to live relatively normal lives, while others may have accompanying learning challenges and require continued specialist support.

The main areas of difficulty can be in social communication, social interaction and restricted or repetitive behaviours and interests.

For example:

- ▶ A person on the spectrum might not answer you right away (as it can take time to process verbal information)
- ▶ Flapping hands (a form of stimulation that many people find comforting)
- ▶ Not liking everyday sounds and textures such as hair dryers, vacuum cleaners and sand.

The word spectrum reflects the wide range of challenges that people on the spectrum experience and the extent to which they may be affected.

An estimated one in 100 Australians are on the autism spectrum; that is around 230,000 people. It is four times more common in boys than girls.

The quality of life for many children and adults can be significantly improved by an early diagnosis and appropriate evidence informed treatment.

Aspect supports people on the spectrum and their families by providing information, education and a variety of services and supports aimed at meeting the specific needs of each individual.

## Ageing with Autism

### What is the issue?

It is reported that 1 in 100 people in Australia are diagnosed with autism.

There is now an emerging awareness that as the population ages the people who are diagnosed as a child with autism in the 1940's and 1950's, or have been more recently diagnosed as an older adult, are now starting to need additional support.

Until recently, most of the research attention has concentrated on early detection for children.

For those who are now aged in their 60's and 70's, and often entering aged care facilities, new and appropriate support options need to be developed.

## In Summary

As the autism community ages, and more of the individuals who have been diagnosed over the last four to five decades reach older age, the community needs to find ways to provide relevant, appropriate and effective support.

In the meantime, medical community newsletters are starting to discuss the issues of people living on the autism spectrum who are ageing, and this may raise the awareness of medical practitioners in the community and influence the way older patients with autism are supported.

