



connections

... a leader and innovator in Community Care

VOL. 1

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our mission:

Care Connect will work in partnership with the community to achieve excellence and demonstrate leadership in the provision of case management services to people with complex care needs and their families and carers.

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NATIONAL HEAD OFFICE

(All accounts correspondence please)

PO Box 1388,
Collingwood 3066

PH: (03) 9415 9560

FAX: (03) 9415 9724

EMAIL: info@careconnect.org.au

WEB: www.careconnect.org.au

Orange ... round! Orange ... round!! Orange ... round!!!

These are the incessant calls of a 13 year old boy called Caden, the youngest son of Elizabeth Curran. No - he doesn't want a piece of fruit. No - it's not a coloured ball to play with, either. It is in fact a vitamin C tablet that he has seen in the cupboard and this took Elizabeth many hours of considerable stress and patient attention to understand his needs. Caden is autistic and coping with his obsessive behaviour is a full time activity. But Elizabeth is also trying to cope with two other sons - one of which is also autistic. Marcus is 14 years of age and has an obsession with trains which he has seen in the children's book series of Thomas the Tank Engine.

When the boys were identified as being autistic more than 10 years ago, Elizabeth accepted her responsibilities and, as a single parent, took on the huge challenge of providing as normal an upbringing as possible for her three sons. She learnt as much as she possibly could about autism and through her own determination and a strong supportive network that has come to her assistance, the family is together and enjoying an improving quality of life.

Since being introduced to Care Connect in 1998, the family has benefited from the respite program on many

occasions from daily outings to the cinema to school holiday programs, camps and family holidays. This flexible service is extremely important to Elizabeth who not only needs free time for herself, but also some quality time to spend with her eldest son whose life has also been affected by his brothers' disabilities.

With the support and assistance of her Case Managers, Elizabeth has been offered other funding opportunities, such as Support and Choice. This additional aid has provided membership of a gym for Marcus who is demonstrating outstanding sporting prowess and a keyboard and music lessons for Caden who is showing a flair for music.

Elizabeth has a positive attitude and is determined to explore all available options to ensure her boys develop the life skills that will enable them to have purposeful lives within the community. Care Connect continues to provide the assistance required for Elizabeth achieve these goals.



News Bulletins

NSW

A recent Information Day run by the Care Connect office at Redfern, Sydney, specifically focused on the South East Sydney Russian Community. The aim of the Information Day was to improve access to services and to increase referrals from the Russian Community, and is the first stage of the Care Connect Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) access project for the South East Sydney region. The Blacktown office now has its full staffing complement for the seven programs administered from our Western Sydney site. New CACP programs have recently been implemented, signalling the start of Care Connect's official operational partnership with Stanhope Nursing in the Nepean Region.

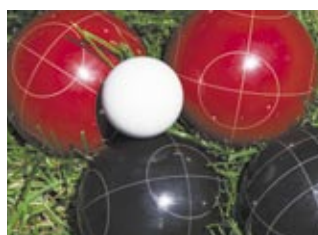
QLD

Care Connect is proud to announce the establishment of our first Queensland office in Sunnybank, Brisbane. The four staff of the Brisbane office provide aged care case management services from the north of Brisbane through to Caboolture. We also have an additional newly established Care Connect office in Ballina, on the Far North Coast of NSW, with two case management staff. Care Connect Brisbane and Ballina continue to work closely with a range of organisations to offer flexible and relevant services to our new consumers.



SA

There's plenty of optimism in the air at the Care Connect office in Adelaide, South Australia. Two Care Connect staff members run three busy day care programs for dementia care recipients, to give respite to their carers. The programs, named Clarrie's Club and Rosie's Club, offer activities to dementia care recipients including card bingo, bocce,



carpet bowls and cooking, and are provided by Care Connect under funding received from the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP).

VIC

The Chinese community in the Eastern Region of Melbourne will be the recipients of an Aged Care Information Session to be held on 7th July at the Box Hill Community Arts Centre.



Run by Care Connect in conjunction with the Migrant Information Centre, the session will provide information on topics such as community care, residential care, advocacy, and aged care assessment. Speakers from a variety of agencies and services will ensure attendees are fully informed. Contact the Migrant Information Centre on (03) 9873 1666 to register your interest.

CEO's Report

As this is our first edition, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you. Some of you may have been clients with Care Connect for many years; and some of you - such as our Queensland clients - may be brand new to our services. Welcome! I hope you enjoy your edition of Connections, and that it provides some useful tips and information to you and your family and friends.

Care Connect is a relatively young, and very vibrant and dynamic organisation, and I commend to you our staff and their achievements over the past 12 years. As we celebrate the launch of Connections, my thoughts return to when Care Connect started out with two clients in the West of Melbourne in 1994, and I reflect at how far we actually have travelled since then.

Proudly, I can say that we now provide services to approx 1,700 clients and in four States! This is surely a record! Whilst travelling this journey, we have kept our number one goal in mind: always our clients and

Welcome to the inaugural edition of Connections!

what you have needed to help you achieve your life goals. These inspirational stories will be a feature of this and indeed every edition of Connections. Please join with me in celebrating some outstanding success!

For staff at Care Connect, 2006 will continue to provide many challenges and hopefully rewards for us all. I am looking forward to being a real force in community care services in SE Queensland and Northern NSW; to working with indigenous communities and others for whom cultural and linguistic programs are currently inadequate; and to consolidating our presence with excellence and unparalleled community care in VIC, NSW and SA.

Connections will keep you, our clients, in touch with things that matter to you. I would welcome any feedback you may have. For now, happy reading

Nicholas Woodlock - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Bernie Saldanha

Three years ago Bernie Saldanha was a healthy family man who was employed as a customs officer at Melbourne airport. Without prior warning, Bernie was struck down by a massive stroke, whilst on an evening out. He was rushed to the emergency department of the Alfred Hospital where he was taken into intensive care.

Bernie's wife had only just arrived in India for a holiday when she was met with the tragic news of her husband's misfortune. The prognosis was grim – Bernie was alive but severely incapacitated. Recovery would be very slow and limited in terms of his movement, speech and memory.

On leaving intensive care, Bernie went through several rehabilitation centres but was increasingly anxious to be in his own home. His wife also believed this would be better for him but appreciated the demands that this could bring to the family. So, in order to support Bernie at home, his brother-in-law left India to become Bernie's primary carer.

The Alfred Hospital had referred Bernie to the ABI (Acquired Brain Injury) Slow to Recover Program. It was through this program that Bernie and his family were introduced to Care Connect. Recognising the multiple skills required to enable Bernie to regain much of his independence, Care Connect provided specialised support and carers to speed up what was recognised as a long hard road to even partial recovery.

They organised speech, occupational and physiotherapy services. They assisted in making modifications at home and in sourcing the equipment needed to facilitate ease of movement. His recovery is truly remarkable and life for the family is now significantly improved. A carer visits daily and takes Bernie to the gym where he spends time in the swimming pool and spa, further building his bodily functions.

Bernie has immense determination to make a full recovery and greatly appreciates the "fantastic" support provided by his carers through Care Connect.



NOTICEBOARD

Case Management Disability Information Sheets - Now Available

The Case Management Action Group has released 24 one-page information sheets focussing on key transition stages of birth to school age, 16 to 21, and over 50.

Information is intended for people with a disability and/or their families and carers who are new to the disability service system or need extra information. This is not to replace other services such as case management, but to give people the opportunity to access services and resources independently if so desired. Sheets can be located at www.infonorth.infoxchange.net.au/library.

Go to the Folders box, then under the Aged and Disability heading, click on General Disability Information.

Victorian Seniors Festival

The 2006 Victorian Seniors Festival (VSF) will run from Sunday 1 to Sunday 8 October 2006. Held each year, the VSF includes hundreds of free or low cost events, forums and activities across Victoria, as well as free public transport for Victorian Seniors Card holders. The Festival aims to recognise the valuable contribution older people have made and continue to make to our community.

For more information contact the Office of Senior Victorians on (03) 9208 3333.

Staff in Profile



Roslyn Morton

In this first issue of Connections we profile Ros Morton in her role as Care Coordinator (National Respite for Carers Program) and Senior Administrator:

Ros is one of the longest serving employees at Care Connect, and has worked at many of our office sites over the years. She currently works at our Croydon office, in the Eastern Region of Melbourne, assisting the Contracts Team.

Ros' great work ethic, enthusiasm, support and amazing culinary talents make her a valuable asset to Care Connect, and its entire staff.

How long have you been with Care Connect?

I'll have been with Care Connect for a total of eight years in July 06.

What's been your Care Connect career highlight?

There have been a number, but currently having found a niche for myself within the Contracts Team, which I'm thoroughly enjoying.

Describe yourself in 3 words:

Friendly, honest, and hardworking!

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Ultimately supporting Care Connect clients, and I do this by making sure that everything required by the Case Managers is available when they need it, and achieving change for the betterment of the organisation.

Describe your perfect day at work?

Being able to complete the tasks I set myself to do and still have time to enjoy the company of my colleagues.

What did you do before working at Care Connect?

I worked in Aged and Disability Services with the Shire of Yarra Ranges, in outer eastern Melbourne.

What's your favourite movie, and what are you reading right now?

Dancing with Wolves, and the book I'm reading is Dancing with Minnie the Twig. It really sounds like I have a thing about dancing doesn't it?!

What's your favourite food?

Anything with an Italian influence.

Is there something that you haven't done yet, that you just have to do!?

Travel more and become a Grandmother.

Have you got a favourite saying or phrase that you live by?

Make the most of every day, and bring a little bit of sunshine into the lives of those around me.

Independence at Home

Mother of five, Kathy Holloway, increasingly found herself close to her limits in coping with her daughter Rachelle, who has a mild intellectual disability. At the age of 20, Rachelle had just completed an office skills course but this had not been followed up by a Transition for Work program, a two year government funded initiative which would have helped her to adjust to a working environment.

Being at home all day, her mother was often at a loss as to how to keep her occupied. But along came a "Knight in Shining Armour" when Kathy was introduced to Care Connect by another respite organisation.

Care Connect's initial contribution was timely. Kathy and her husband had arranged a two week break for

themselves but of course were extremely concerned as to how best to have Rachelle cared for during their period away.

Care Connect provided a carer on a daily basis ensuring that Rachelle remained at her home but was actively involved in daily activities such as going bowling and going to the beach.

Rachelle has now joined the Transition for Work program, working three days a week in a sheltered workshop. Through Care Connect's "Independence at Home" program, Rachelle, has completed a three week travel training course. She is also participating in a budgeting course and is about to launch into a cookery course.

Kathy has found the case managers to be "caring and accommodating" and appreciates Care Connect's ability to be adaptable to individual needs.



The Keys to Teamwork

The people of Beaconsfield in Tasmania have recently given us all a perfect example of teamwork and the positive benefits that come out of groups of people working together for a common cause.

The successful rescue of the two miners involved many numbers of people working together; from mine management, union organisers, local churches, paramedics, families of the miners and the media. Each one of them had a part to play as members of the team that worked towards the miner's release.

Team work plays a vital part for all Care Connect clients, providers and staff members. As employees at Care Connect, we work in teams combining the skills of staff from varied backgrounds such as Registered Nurses, Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and Psychologists. As Case Managers we work as members of a team with our clients and carer families.

Care Connect's Mission is to work in partnership with the community to achieve excellence in the provision of case management services to people with complex care needs and their families and carers. We work together in a collaborative team environment for a specific purpose.



Liz Ellis

Liz is an intelligent and vibrant young woman who is studying for a degree in Social Welfare at Victoria University. Liz was born with cerebral palsy but she is making her life both full and rewarding through participating in disability committees and awareness events.

When Liz turned 18, she and her family were introduced to Care Connect who offered her a flexible respite package. Her Respite Coordinator coordinates the provision of carers throughout the year to assist Liz with a variety of day to day activities and also facilitates introductions to other support and community organisations.

Liz is passionate about promoting disability awareness within the community. She would like to see programs established in schools to teach children that people with disabilities are no different from anyone else. With Care Connect's assistance, Liz has been able to offer her services as a volunteer with the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.

In September last year, Liz accepted membership of the VicNord State Committee (Victorian Network on Recreation and Disability). Taking an active role as a committee member,

Some of the principles of team work include:

- Positive interdependence involving asking for ideas, opinions and suggestions and involving people in choices and decisions that effect them. Developing goals and negotiating tasks.
- Communication, actively listening, explaining why things are important, finding creative ways of sharing information and encouraging people to keep themselves informed.
- Shared responsibility is important in client-Case Manager relationships, we need to be able to both give and receive. Partnership involves taking the perspective of others and actively seeking to learn from others.
- Development of interpersonal skills, such as problem solving, mediation and conflict resolution.
- Reflection and giving recognition to others' ideas and achievements.

(Boyd & Dalton, 1993. T.E.C.S.S.A. (North) Initiative. Eleanor Curtain Pub, Melbourne).

Team work is multi-levelled, as with the miners' situation where there were two main considerations in planning the rescue - the safety of the two men and the safety of the rescue team. As we work together at Care Connect, we place high value on the benefits of team work and the relationships we have with all our clients, providers and funding bodies to achieve our mission.

Liz was invited to attend the VALID Conference in Geelong. This conference - the Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability - was of great value. Liz's Respite Coordinator assisted her by allocating and funding a carer to attend the conference with her.

Liz has found the carers provided by Care Connect to be "of a really high standard ... very friendly and understanding ... really fantastic". She was extremely impressed by the warmth and friendship expressed towards her at the recent Care Connect AGM, making her feel really special.



About Care Connect

Care Connect is a not-for-profit and registered charitable organisation that supports people with complex care needs to remain living in the community, by providing specialist assessment, case management and brokerage services.

Care Connect was established in October 1994, with our first office situated in Werribee, Melbourne, and consisting of only three staff.

Today, Care Connect has grown to approximately 140 staff operating out of 12 offices in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia.

Care Connect receives funding from State and Commonwealth Governments to provide case management services through specific programs. Our programs are specifically available to:

- frail aged individuals who have complex needs;
- people with disabilities who have complex needs;
- adults with multiple health problems or dementia requiring input from numerous services in a coordinated way;
- families at risk of breakdown due to caring for an adult or child with a disability or complex care needs;
- carers are also supported by our programs.

The Care Connect Case Manager will access community supports and coordinate care services on behalf of the client, each of whom has been individually assessed with regard to their specific care needs. In addition, Care Connect also undertakes a range of contractual and private case management services. Contact us at any of the locations below.

Office Locations

NATIONAL HEAD OFFICE (All accounts correspondence please)

2-12 Rokeby Street,
PO Box 1388,
Collingwood 3066

PH: (03) 9415 9560

FAX: (03) 9415 9724

EMAIL: info@careconnect.org.au

VICTORIA

CROYDON OFFICE

16-18 Croydon Road
Croydon VIC 3136

PH: (03) 9724 1666

Footscray Office

Ground Floor
75 Moreland Street
Footscray VIC 3011

PH: (03) 9362 8000

KEW OFFICE

283 Cotham Road
Kew VIC 3101

PH: (03) 9816 9495

KNOX OFFICE

Suite 404, 4th Floor
Knox City Shopping Centre,
Burwood Highway
Wantirna South VIC 3152

PH: (03) 9801 0666

LILYDALE OFFICE

111 Main Street
Lilydale VIC 3140

PH: (03) 9737 6511

NEW SOUTH WALES

EASTERN SYDNEY OFFICE

Suite 2B, 199 Regent St
Redfern NSW 2016

PH: (02) 9310 3699

WESTERN SYDNEY OFFICE

16 Hereward Hwy
Blacktown NSW 2148

PH: (02) 9676 4685

BALLINA, FAR NORTH COAST, OFFICE

52 Norton St,
Ballina NSW 2478

PH: (02) 6681 5251

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SOUTH AUSTRALIA OFFICE

14 Tucker Street
Adelaide SA 5000

PH: (08) 8232 7408

QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE OFFICE

Suite 9A, 309 Mains Road
Sunnybank QLD 4109

PH: (07) 3323 3731



www.careconnect.org.au

ABN 23 094 121 810

Feedback

Readers of Connections are encouraged to make contributions and provide feedback.

Send your contributions and feedback to:

The Editor, Connections,
PO Box 1388,
Collingwood VIC 3066

Or phone (03) 9415 9560, or
email: ajames@careconnect.org.au

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