

PO Box 615
Carlton South VIC 3053
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Veteran volunteer turned director wins national aged care award

A volunteer, who began organising chook raffles to set up the Bankstown City Aged Care facility in NSW, has won the Individual Distinction Award at the 2013 HESTA Aged Care Awards.

Forty years later, 78 year-old Helen Williamson is on the Board of Management, having raised more than \$100,000 for the not-for-profit facility.

With no plans to slow down, Mrs Williamson continues to bake, sew and knit to provide additional comforts for the aged care residents.

The veteran volunteer oversees the running of the kiosk at the facility, which sells food and goods to residents and visitors, with the funds going back into extra equipment and improved amenities.

Mrs Williamson also continues to take charge of the barbeque every Friday, cooking her homemade hamburgers for residents, their families and staff.

She also knits beautiful clothes, blankets and toys to sell at the kiosk, with many residents proudly displaying knitted football boots in club colours in their rooms.

The funds raised by Mrs Williamson and her team of volunteers have provided special clocks for vision-impaired residents, shower chairs, TVs, whiteboards and garden accessories, greatly improving the quality of life of residents.

Mrs Williamson was appointed to the centre's Board of Directors this year and is also helping shape the future of the centre — all as an unpaid volunteer.

HESTA CEO, Anne-Marie Corboy, congratulated the winners of the three award categories.

“The judges received nominations from around the country and had a difficult decision choosing 15 outstanding finalists. The winners are a credit to their organisations and are all contributing to improving the health and wellbeing of older Australians,” she said.

The winners of the HESTA Aged Care Awards were announced at an awards dinner in Sydney on 4 August 2013.

Mrs Williamson received a \$5,000 ME Bank *EveryDay* transaction account and \$5,000 towards further education. The Outstanding Organisation and Team Innovation Award winners each accepted a \$10,000 development grant, courtesy of long-term awards sponsor, ME Bank.

HESTA is the leading super fund for health and community services, with more than 750,000 members and \$23 billion in assets. More people in health and community services choose HESTA for their super.

To learn more about the awards visit hestaawards.com.au

MEDIA CONTACT: Luisa Saccotelli 0400 149 901 or Aileen Muldoon 0419 112 503.