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‘Cooking for you and me’ program a finalist in aged care awards

A New South Wales organisation offering older Australians a four-week cooking program to improve their culinary skills, confidence and knowledge of nutrition has been named a finalist in the 2014 HESTA Aged Care Awards.

Adssi HomeLiving Australia’s ‘Cooking for you and me’ program is one of five finalists in the Team Innovation Award category.

The team has been recognised for offering a positive program using cooking, nutrition and sharing food to reduce the social isolation of older Australians.

Program Manager, Kristin Whitney, said the team formed a joint initiative with the Central Coast Meals on Wheels service and their home economist, Mary Wills, to deliver the program to people living independently in the community.

“Many of our clients are single and lacking in motivation when it comes to cooking and eating well. They rarely get to share a meal with anyone and are missing out on the pleasures and benefits that good food and company can provide,” Ms Whitney said.

The cooking courses are used to boost clients’ confidence in the kitchen, increase their knowledge of the changing nutritional needs of people as they get older and to provide social outings.

“Another very important aspect of the program is the door-to-door pick up and drop off service we offer, without which, many simply wouldn’t be able to participate,” Ms Whitney said.

“Access to practical advice and nutritional information can help prevent hospital admissions due to dehydration and malnutrition, along with premature entry into residential aged care facilities.

“This, in turn, may free up funds for clients to spend on other services, once they’re able to manage this important aspect of their lives.”

Ms Whitney and other interstate finalists will be flown to Melbourne to attend the awards dinner, where the winners will be announced on Tuesday 5 August 2014.

A \$30,000 prize pool will be shared among the winners, generously provided by long-term HESTA awards supporter ME Bank. The Team Innovation and Outstanding Organisation Award winners will each receive a \$10,000 development grant, while the Individual Distinction Award winner will receive a \$5,000 ME Bank *EveryDay* Transaction Account and \$5,000 towards further education.

HESTA is the leading super fund for health and community services, with more than 770,000 members and \$27 billion in assets. More people in health and community services choose HESTA for their super.

Visit hestaawards.com.au for tickets to the awards dinner or to learn more about the awards.

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