



MEDIA RELEASE

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Innovative Victorian wellness team a finalist in aged care awards

A Victorian aged care team's innovative wellness program has resulted in a 99-year-old woman undertaking a daily workout and a wheelchair-bound resident using bars to repeatedly walk the length of the gym.

The Holistic Wellness Program — developed by Southern Cross Care in Keon Park — combines exercise and a strict nutritional diet to improve the physical and mental health of residents of its aged care home.

The Holistic Wellness Program team is one of five finalists in the Team Innovation category of the 2015 HESTA Aged Care Awards. The Awards recognise those in the aged care sector who make an exceptional contribution to improving the quality of life of older Australians.

Manager of Southern Cross Care Keon Park, Barbara Stacpoole, said the Program was developed to support older people in residential care to live well for as long as possible.

"Residents work with a personal trainer experienced in aged care, to develop an exercise program tailored to their specific abilities and goals," Ms Stacpoole said.

"If residents are unable to attend the gym due to mobility issues, arrangements are made for the personal trainer to visit them in their room, so nobody misses the opportunity to get fit.

"Our personal trainer has motivated a wheelchair-bound resident to begin exercising. He now walks up to 100 laps of the walking bars in the gym per session, three times a week. A 99-year-old is spending 20 minutes in the gym each day doing a range of full body movement exercises to strengthen her muscles and limbs."

Almost 26 residents are now regular gym users and another 40 residents attend group exercise sessions.

Ms Stacpoole said a full-time nutritionist also has a strong involvement in the Program, focusing on increasing the variety of healthy and appetising meals.

Finalists are in the running for a share of the \$30,000 prize pool provided by proud sponsor, industry super funds' owned bank, **ME**.

The Team Innovation and Outstanding Organisation Award winners each receive a \$10,000 development grant. The Individual Distinction Award winner will receive a \$5,000 **ME EveryDay** transaction account and \$5,000 towards further education.

ME CEO, Jamie McPhee, said, "we're delighted to give these outstanding individuals, the opportunity to develop and continue to progress their profession, and support innovative health programs that ultimately benefit the entire industry and community."

The winners will be revealed at the HESTA Aged Care Awards dinner on Thursday 27 August in Canberra.

Learn more about the Awards at hestaawards.com.au

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*The 2015 HESTA Aged Care Awards is an initiative of HESTA, run in partnership with the National Aged Care Alliance and proudly sponsored by **ME**.*