



MEDIA RELEASE

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Montessori model of care a finalist in national aged care awards

A group of aged care organisations has been recognised for championing a new care model for people with dementia based on the principles of famous Italian educator, Dr Maria Montessori.

The Montessori Methods for Dementia framework, developed by Montessori Ageing Support Services, focuses on a 'doing approach', with activities based on a person's strengths, interests, needs and abilities.

Montessori Ageing Support Services is one of five finalists in the Outstanding Organisation 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.

Montessori Ageing Support Services Managing Director, Anne Kelly, said the new care model puts information such as cue cards and task breakdown into a person's environment, which enables them to engage in the roles, routines and activities of daily living in an independent and meaningful way.

"The Montessori program allows older people to increase their independence and safety by relearning daily routines like locking a door, using a walking frame or feeding themselves," Ms Kelly said.

"These strategies have been shown to increase safety, reduce anxiety and responsive behaviours while improving quality of life, self esteem and independence."

Ms Kelly said the creation of a Montessori environment for dementia has led to a reduction in the use of psychotropic medications, incident reports, falls and improved resident, family and staff satisfaction.

"As a result of the work we've done with one aged care service, there was a 100 per cent reduction in the prescription of psychotropic medication," she said.

"Another resident who, when allowed to choose what they wanted to eat from a bain marie, began returning for seconds or thirds and no longer required nutritional supplements.

"Involvement in purposeful, life-affirming activities enables people with dementia to live their life with meaning, dignity and respect."

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**.*