



Darlingford

Upper Goulburn Nursing Home



Annual Report

2024 – 2025



Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home

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Vision

Aged care that cherishes quality of life

Mission

The provision of excellent residential aged care services

Our Values

We value people

We act in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness and worth of every person.

We are committed to serve those in our care

We will promote a culture that is positive, cohesive and honest, dedicated to creating fulfilling life experiences for older people.

We value our community

We will build strong, open relationships with our partners-in-care. That includes our consumers and their families, as well as allied health providers, suppliers and our community.



Board of Management

Kevin has a long history of Board Governance, both at a local level throughout the Shire of Murrindindi and the Goulburn Valley and also at a broader State Government level.

He has served on the Board of the Dame Pattie Menzies Centre, is a past President of the school Council of the Alexandra Secondary College and was a Director of the Goulburn Regional Youth Committee and the Murrindindi Development Board.

Kevin also served as a member of the Board of Alexandra District Ambulance Service from 2005 and went on to be Board Chair. When the service was merged to form Ambulance Victoria, Kevin was appointed to the inaugural Board.

Kevin was a Director on the Goulburn Valley Medicare Local Board until its conclusion and was subsequently appointed to the Board of the Hume Primary Health Network as well as serving 9 years on the Primary Care Connect, a large Community Health organisation in Shepparton. Eight of those years as Board Chairman.

In 2023 Kevin was appointed to the NCN Health Board, (Numurkah, Cobram, Nathalia Health) where he serves as a Director, and as Chair of Clinical Governance sub Committee. Kevin was also appointed to the SRV Board (Shepparton Retirement Villages) as Deputy Board Chair.

Kevin has extensive experience in the fitness industry, project management and human relations management through his employment as project manager for a diverse range of organisations including; Tenix Alliance, Alexandra Gym and Community Centre and the Reddrop Management Group.



Kevin Boote
President

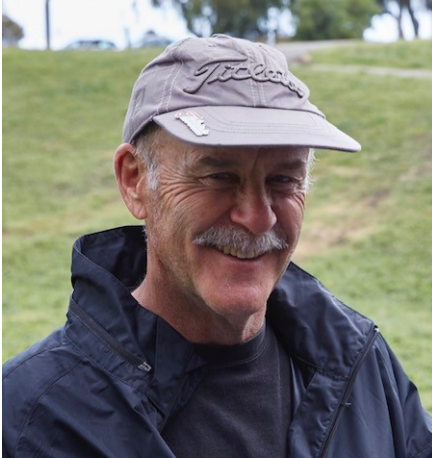


Deb Loveday is a true local, born in the Eildon hospital, and attending Eildon Primary School then Alexandra High School. Moving all the way to Alexandra to work at the local solicitors led to a career in conveyancing. Deb has been managing her own conveyancing practice for the past 28 years.

Deb's interest in Aged Care has come from having a mother who was diagnosed with dementia in her early 70s, observing her mother's decline and supporting her father through the adjustment from caring for her in the home and transitioning to the nursing home. She sees the importance of having a facility such as Darlingford in a beautiful, peaceful area like Eildon to make the transition for those who need care, less stressful



Debra Loveday
Board Member

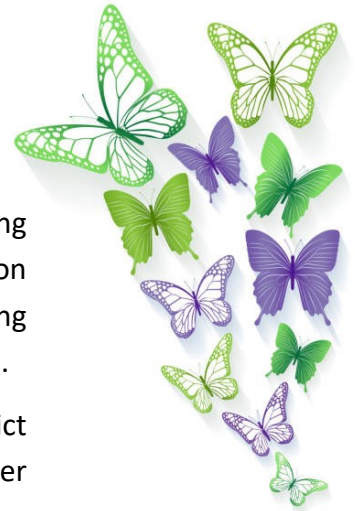


Tony Jacobs
Board Member

Tony is a retired Chief Financial Officer having spent all of his career in the construction industry with lengthy assignments in Hong Kong, the US, Dubai, Sydney and Melbourne.

He is a past President of the Yea and District Memorial Hospital, and a committee member of the now defunct Alexandra Ambulance Society.

He is currently the Chair of the Yea River Landcare Group, Treasurer of the Murrindindi-Woodburn Rural fire brigade, Secretary and Treasurer of the Goulburn Valley Suicide Awareness Group and President of the Yea Rotary Club. He is also the Chair of Blue Dragon International, an Australian NGO based in Hanoi, Vietnam. Blue Dragon looks after vulnerable street children and rescues women who have been trafficked into sexual and domestic slavery.



This is my second round, as I was on the board for several years but resigned in 2014 when I moved to Gippsland. I have been in private practice as a psychologist for the past 25 years, a big part of that time has been spent in Alexandra. My time in Gippsland was offering counselling to aged care residents as well as training staff working in aged care. Over the course of my career in private practice I have worked with a huge range of issues across the lifespan. This has included childhood disorders, working with high-risk adolescents and also homeless youth, anxiety and depression, grief, substance abuse and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder to name just a few. I have always focused my own professional learning across the lifespan as a result, and I have a strong commitment to the outcomes of the Royal Commission into Aged Care.



Graham Brewer
Board Member



President's Message

I am very pleased and proud to present the 2024-25 Annual Report on behalf of the Board of Directors of Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home, (Darlingford).

It has been a busy year of progress toward meeting the strengthened standards and expectations that are coming with the new Aged Care Act (2024) that takes effect from 1 November 2025.

Darlingford has long been committed to providing excellence in aged care and this commitment is in the process of being further reinforced by updated mandated industry-wide quality standards across seven key areas.

These strengthened standards relate to The Individual, The Organisation, Care and Services, The Environment, Clinical Care, Food and Nutrition, and The Residential Community. Taken together, these standards are designed to be more person-centred, provide measurable outcomes, and focus on the rights and choices of older people in aged care.



Kevin Boote
President



The way in which outcomes and progress are measured is via a Star Ratings system that takes account of performance against The Standards, with three stars considered adequate for compliance (though with room for improvement); four stars being considered to be above minimum compliance levels; and five stars being seen as outstanding. With quarterly Star Ratings already bring compiled and published by the government, I'm pleased to note that Darlingford has achieved a four-star rating, an outstanding result and testimony to the hard work and dedication of the entire team.

At a time of dynamic change and development, it has been important that the Board of Directors maintain diligent attention to governance standards. While we are small in number our focus has remained on ensuring that prudential standards are met and maintained and that rigorous oversight of clinical governance standards is in place.

A personal thank you to my fellow Directors, Tony Jacobs, Debra Loveday and Graham Brewer for the dedication they have shown throughout the year, helping to ensure that not only does Darlingford continue to adapt with flexibility and openness to changing times, but also that this happens without any loss of due diligence or strategic oversight.

President's Message cont.



I take pride in being associated with a Board of Directors able to operate at such a level, mindful of the voluntary nature of the service being given and the busy lives of all involved.

The Board was also supported by important advisory bodies during 2024-25.

In particular, the Consumer Advisory Body (CAB) which is a committee that residents and representatives are invited to participate in, and provides them with a direct line of communication with the Board of Directors.

Another important forum is the Resident and Foodies meeting held every two months. I would like to make particular mention of Graham Brewers' work in this committee on behalf of the Board. Open discussions at the Resident meeting are invaluable. The Board appreciates the time and effort shown by all who contribute to this important advice and feedback process.

The Board committed to a number of improvements throughout the year, new furnishings were purchased, internal painting, new carpet in some areas and new art works have been installed. All with a view to improving the amenity of the facility and improving the lived in environment.

I would like to thank our Executive team, CEO, Donna Walsh, Executive Manager, Judy Brookes and their support staff who have supported Darlingford tirelessly though 2024-25. A particular thank you is extended to Shane Kirk from Indigo North Health who acted as CEO for a period of time and who has continued to provide support and mentorship to our Team

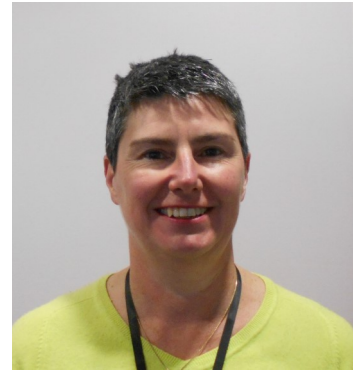
Last but not least, I want to note the outstanding contributions made in less conspicuous ways by so many other people right across the organisation: the care givers, the administrators, the food and domestic staff, the lifestyle and leisure staff, the maintenance and gardening staff, the specialised service providers, and all of the others – including our wonderful volunteers – who do so much every day to quietly improve the living experience of all the residents at Darlingford.

You are our “unsung heroes”, and on behalf of the Board of Directors I thank you all most sincerely.

Challenges will continue in 2025-26, however I feel confident that we will be well placed as an organisation and a community to meet these challenges with diligence and vigour through 2025-26.



Chief Executive Officer



A whole new management team was appointed during 2024/2025.

In May 2025, I was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer. Judy Brookes had been on extended leave for the past 12 months and decided to step down from the CEO role. We thank Shane Kirk for stepping into the Acting CEO position for the previous 12 months

We were very fortunate that Judy was willing to take on a new role within the organisation as Executive Manager. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Judy Brookes and acknowledge the work Judy has undertaken in the CEO role over the past six years. Judy 's leadership and organisation skills have been exemplary in leading the organization, especially during the years of Covid-19 pandemic. Her work has enabled the organisation to develop significantly and puts us in good stead for the future. Judy's new role will encompass supporting myself in the CEO role as well as project work and quality/accreditation. Judy will now be working on a part time basis.

Greg Marthick stepped into the Corporate Services Manager position and is working on a part time basis. Greg has a wealth of knowledge and experience after working numerous roles in the aged care and will be a welcome addition to the team

Gee Nair was appointed to the Director of Nursing position in September 2024. Gee was previously in the role as Nurse Unit Manager and is a very skilled and competent Registered Nurse. Reigan Kuttikadan and Shintu Thomas now job share the position of Nurse Unit Manager and will provide valuable support to Gee and the clinical team.

As an organisation, Darlingford is working towards meeting the requirements of the new Aged Care Legislation and with the support of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, the requirements of the new strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards.

The organisation continues its pursuit of excellence, while faced with the many challenges in the current aged care environment. Darlingford is well placed to manage the upcoming legislative changes and the significant changes to the aged care quality standards from 1st November 2025, both which will serve to ensuring all people been provided with Residential aged care services will receive the best possible care.

Finally, thank you to all staff members of Darlingford, who through their dedication to aged care, we continue to provide excellent aged care services to the community of Eildon and surrounding districts.

Corporate Services Manager



The 2024–2025 has been one of continued progress and commitment to excellence in aged care. Our organisation remains dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and enriching environment for all residents.

This year saw meaningful developments across several key areas — including enhanced food and dining services through collaboration with the Maggie Beer Foundation, ongoing investment in maintenance and grounds, and a strong focus on staff wellbeing and recognition.

We are proud of the dedication shown by our entire team, whose professionalism and compassion ensure that every resident receives the highest standard of care. Our continuous improvement approach has strengthened our compliance, operational efficiency, and overall quality of life for those in our care.



Greg Marthick

Maggie Beer Foundation Partnership

In collaboration with the Maggie Beer Foundation, funded by the Australian Federal Government’s Department of Health and Aged Care, our organisation is participating in a national initiative aimed at improving the dining, food, and nutritional outcomes for older Australians in aged care.

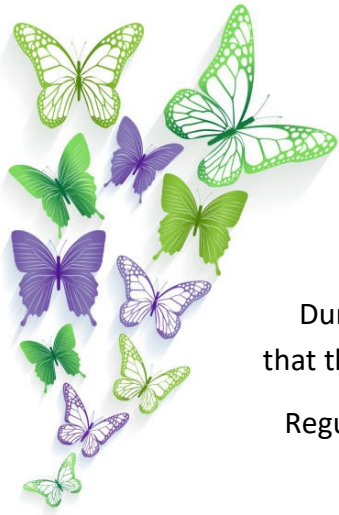
The Foundation’s education and training programs provide comprehensive support to aged care providers, home management teams, cooks, and chefs — all offered free of charge.

Through the Trainer Mentor Program, our kitchen team, paired with a qualified chef trainer who provided hands-on mentoring to enhance the flavour, nutrition, and overall dining experience for residents. The program is delivered on site at Darlingford, fully tailored to the specific needs of our residents, and supported continuous improvement and compliance with current regulatory standards.

This partnership has contributed significantly to enhancing the quality of life for our residents, ensuring that meals are not only nutritionally balanced but also enjoyable and engaging.

In addition, our external audit on the Food Safety Program successfully met the requirements of Section 19D of the Food Act 1984 (Victoria), confirming our continued commitment to safe and high-quality food service in aged care.

We extend our sincere thanks to our catering and domestic staff for their ongoing dedication, hard work, and care in providing nutritious meals and maintaining high standards of cleanliness and service. Their commitment ensures that our residents enjoy a safe, comfortable, and welcoming environment every day.



Maintenance and Grounds

During the reporting period, our maintenance and grounds team continued to ensure that the facility remains safe, functional, and welcoming for residents, staff, and visitors.

Regular preventative maintenance schedules were upheld to minimise disruptions and maintain compliance with health and safety standards. Key activities included:

- Routine servicing of essential equipment and building systems.
- Landscaping and garden enhancements to provide residents with inviting outdoor spaces for relaxation and recreation.
- Improvements to accessibility pathways and outdoor seating areas.
- Timely responses to maintenance requests to ensure a comfortable living environment.

These ongoing efforts contribute to the overall wellbeing of residents and support a high quality care environment that reflects pride in our facility and community.

Thank You to Our Staff

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all staff for their dedication, compassion, and professionalism throughout the year. Your unwavering commitment to the care and wellbeing of our aged residents continues to make a profound difference in their daily lives.

Your teamwork, resilience, and genuine care embody the values of our organisation and ensure that every resident is treated with dignity, respect, and kindness.



Thank you for your ongoing efforts and for contributing to a positive, nurturing environment where our residents can truly feel at home.

Director of Nursing



Gayathri Nair
Director of Nursing



It has been a very busy and productive year, particularly with the introduction of the new Aged Care Act. Much of our focus throughout the year has been invested in preparing for these changes—strengthening standards, understanding the new audit methodology, and ensuring we are well-positioned for ongoing compliance and the delivery of high-quality care.

This year also brought significant staff movement. We had several long-serving team members retire, others move on from the facility, and many new faces join our workforce. Despite these transitions, our team has continued to work collaboratively and maintain stability in resident care.

We have successfully utilised a wide range of allied health services, including podiatry, dietitian services, occupational therapy, Residential Medication Management Reviews (RMMR), mental health nursing support, and specialist telehealth services. We also welcomed a new GP who has joined us as a consulting doctor, significantly improving accessibility of medical care for our residents. We now have two GPs visiting weekly—on Tuesdays and Fridays—providing consistent and timely medical review.

We introduced a daily training and discussion session during shift handover to enhance communication with staff regarding resident-specific care needs. These sessions include discussions on individual residents, general clinical care, targeted clinical improvement areas, and educational topics such as Infection Prevention and Control (IPC), SIRS, eCase training, Behaviour Support Plans, and more.

One of the most beneficial components of this initiative has been the education series on each of the seven strengthened standards. These sessions were conducted every Monday and Tuesday across a two-week period, ensuring that staff became familiar with the new standards and were fully engaged in the discussion and implementation process.

The year has also been challenging, with resident occupancy pressures on one side and staffing concerns on the other. I would like to sincerely thank all our staff who have worked tirelessly and provided exceptional support during this time. Your dedication has ensured that our residents continued to receive the highest quality, respectful care despite the difficulties we faced.



Grants and Donations

DETAILS	INCOME	PURCHASES
Alexandra Opp Shop	\$10,000.00	Maxi Sky Rail with bar
The Late K Chanter	\$8,209.37	Carpet and replacement blinds
Eildon Opp Shop	\$6,650.00	2 King Single Air Mattress
Andrew James Schreuder Foundation	\$5,268.64	Education
K Pollard (Anne Tate family)	\$2,000.00	Carpet and replacement blinds
Eildon Lions Club	\$2,000.00	Carpet and replacement blinds
Eildon Opp Shop	\$978.50	Lifestyle and Leisure Supplies
Miscellaneous Donation	\$375.50	Resident Purchases
CWA Yarck	\$350.00	Carpet and replacement blinds
F Williamson	\$109.80	Activities
TOTAL	\$35,941.81	

Thank you to the Community of Eildon for numerous donations and time provided to Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home.

A special thank you to our regular volunteers being -

Jo McCarthy and Neil Campbell

Thank you!

Long Service Leave



Rebecca Smedley

Jay Sarada

Margaret Lorimer

Das Vijayakumar

Rima Fox



Congratulations!



Photo Gallery



Ron enjoying the garden



Yvonne, Shintu and Les celebrating



Peg feeding our friendly King Parrots





Alex testing his skills on the Velcro golf / dart board

Staff members happy and willing to assist at all times





Alex and Les enjoying a beverage on an outing



Peg at left, and Ray below enjoying the view at the Eildon Boat Harbour



George fishing at the Pondage



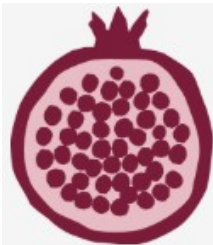


Tayo
enjoying the
afternoon



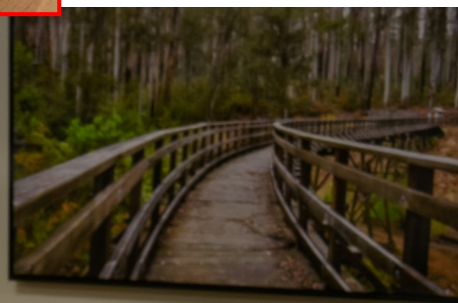
Ellen and Yvonne enjoying
a dig in the garden, to plant the
new seedlings for springtime





**MAGGIE BEER
FOUNDATION**
CREATING AN APPETITE FOR LIFE

Staff have been participating in the Maggie Beer Foundation program to enhance the meals and nutritional value of the meals that we cook fresh on site.



Dot enjoying sampling the meals



Congratulations to Roma on celebrating her 100th Birthday

Residents attended the recent Seniors Lunch at Rubicon Hotel

Dulcie also celebrated her birthday in August





The Executive Team

Judy Brookes

Gayathri Nair

Greg Marthick

Diane Frankel

Donna Walsh



An enjoyable visit with the massive Easter Bunny