

Annual Review
2024/2025



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WHO WE ARE

mecwacare is a caring,
not-for-profit organisation
that’s been helping older
Victorians for over 65 years.

We provide experienced, quality support
in residential aged care, support at home,
community services, retirement living,
affordable housing and disability services.

mecwacare acknowledges the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners of Country on which we operate.

We pay our respects to Ancestors and Elders past, present and emerging. mecwacare is proudly committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ unique cultural, spiritual, physical and emotional connections to lands, skies and waters. We deeply appreciate their rich contribution to the shared society in which we live, work and play.

Our purpose

Partnering with our
communities to live fulfilling
and purposeful lives.

Our vision

Enhancing life changing
experiences with our
community.

Our values

**Caring. Accountable.
Respectful. Ethical.**

Our values are at the centre
of everything we do.



Annie’s Court residents, Legacy Garden Mornington

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Progress and innovation has been the foundation of mecwacare’s 2024-25 financial year. Across the aged care sector, the appointment of the inaugural Inspector-General and a new Commissioner signals a significant step towards implementing the new Aged Care Act. In preparation, we have reviewed and aligned our systems, workforce practices and governance frameworks to support a smooth transition. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to a more transparent, accountable and person-centred aged care system.

Our services have continued to expand, strengthening our impact across the community. As at June 2025, we operate 1,357 residential aged care beds, an increase of 115 over the year, following the acquisition of Long Gully in Bendigo and Allanvale in Altona Meadows. Growth in home and community care has also been strong, with Home Care Packages increasing by 13% to 1,670, Commonwealth Home Support Program clients rising by 25% to 10,962, and the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People growing by 26% to support 2,946 clients.

We have continued to invest in long-term sustainability through our strategy, built around care, workforce, financial sustainability, client experience and technology. Despite the scale of investment, we maintained a surplus of \$3.6m and achieved revenue growth of 23% to \$333.3m. A key milestone this year was the launch of mcare360, our digital transformation project integrating people, practice and services delivery, wrapping around our client, “Margaret”. Mcare360 will support us to deliver efficient, quality, client-centred services into the future.

Our workforce remains our core strength. This year, we achieved an employee engagement score of 79% with 80% participation. These results reflect the focus and humility of our leadership,

improved communication, and investing in greater training and development of our staff and leaders. These efforts have led to improved retention and recruitment outcomes, in a time of sector-wide workforce challenges.

Innovation remains a focus, our partnership with Andromeda has introduced Abi, a humanoid social companion, into residential care. Abi’s presence has brought joy and engagement to residents, particularly through Tai Chi and music sessions, as a light hearted way of helping to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

We remain committed to building high-quality, thoughtfully designed aged care homes. Construction is underway at John Hood Terrace in Richmond and Ballan Aged Care in Ballan, both designed to meet contemporary care standards and provide safe, welcoming environments for residents and staff.

Thank you to the Board of mecwacare for your continued leadership and support. To our employees and volunteers across all sites and services, your kindness and dedication are deeply valued. Together, we are building a stronger, more responsive and innovative aged care organisation, ready to thrive into the future.



Anne McCormack

Anne McCormack
Chief Executive Officer

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This year has been marked by continued growth, strategic focus and preparation for sector reform, as we continue to strengthen our governance and readiness for providing aged care under a new act.

Our financial position remains sound, providing a stable foundation as we prepare to meet the requirements of the new Aged Care Act, effective from 1 November 2025. This stability enables continued investment in systems, workforce capability and governance structures that uphold the rights and wellbeing of older Australians in our care.

The Board endorsed a new Model of Care for mecwacare, placing clients firmly at the centre of decision-making and service delivery. This model will guide our strategic and operational priorities in the years ahead.

During the year, mecwacare progressed its investigation into historical salary underpayments. Back payments have commenced, and measures are in place to ensure ongoing compliance with employment obligations.

The Board has actively engaged with the aged care reform agenda, including the implementation of the new rights-based Aged Care Act. We welcome the legislative shift and are aligning mecwacare’s systems and practices to meet the new standards.

We welcomed five new directors to the Board: Lou Panaccio, Kirby Young, James King, Keith Evans and Felix Pintado. Their diverse expertise and shared commitment to our mission will strengthen our governance as we navigate a changing regulatory environment.

We also farewelled Anne Court, Susan Calwell, Kirby Young and Linden Smibert. We thank them sincerely for their service and contribution to mecwacare’s mission.

On behalf of the Board, I extend appreciation to all directors, past and present, to Anne and the Executive Leadership Team, and to every mecwacare staff member and volunteer. Your leadership, dedication and adaptability in progressing key strategic projects and embracing reform have positioned mecwacare to thrive under the new legislative framework and beyond.



Ian McHutchison

Ian McHutchison OAM
Board Chair

WHERE WE WORK



Residents Mary and Annette enjoy the comfort of their familiar neighbourhood, the safety and support of their community and the joy of tending to their flourishing vegetable garden. mecwacare The Pines, Canadian (Ballarat)

Our Model of *Care*

At mecwacare, our care begins with our values: Caring, Accountable, Respectful, and Ethical. These aren't just words, they guide every decision we make and every interaction we have, ensuring the people we support feel valued, safe and understood.

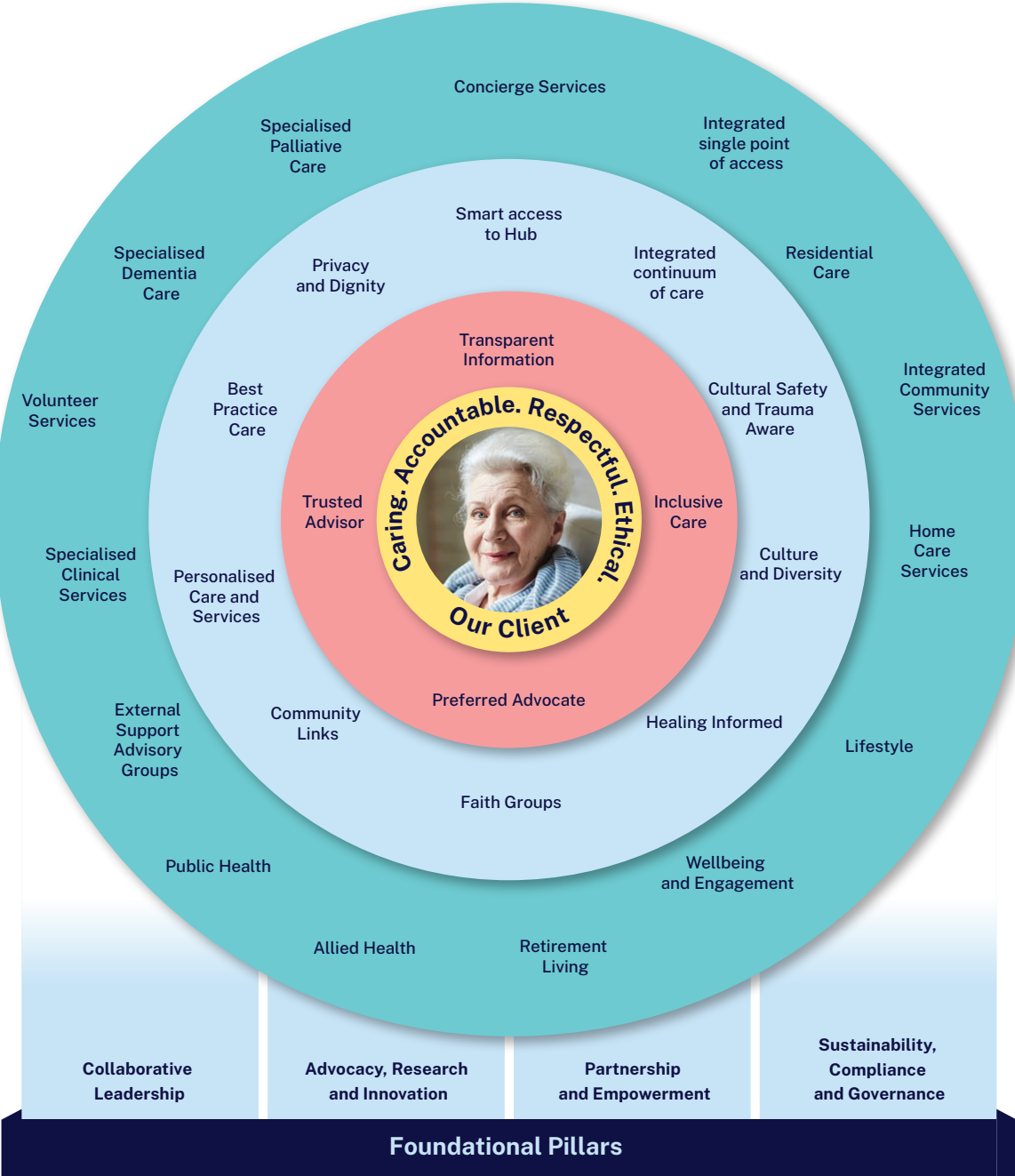
Finding the right care should never be complicated. We are implementing concierge services and single point of access to make it simple to access the right care. Our Wellbeing and Engagement programs focus on connection, independence, and a richer quality of life. Advisory Groups give clients and families a voice, offering guidance and advocacy at every step.

We are building specialist dementia care and end-of-life support that is truly person-centred, prioritising comfort, dignity, and individual needs. From in-home support and community programs to residential aged care and retirement living, our services are designed to wrap around people and their families, providing seamless care throughout life's stages.

Care at mecwacare extends beyond services. We nurture Care Connections through strong community ties, partnerships with faith groups, and a respect for culture and diversity. Our healing informed, personalised approach ensures every person feels understood, supported, and valued.

Our Model of Care is more than a structure. It's a promise. A promise to provide compassionate, connected, and high-quality support, wherever and whenever it's needed, so every person can live life with dignity, independence and joy.

My *Life.* My *Journey*



OUR STRONG FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

REVENUE
\$333.2 Million

GROWTH IN REVENUE
\$62 Million

ASSETS
\$601.5 Million



REVENUE BY SECTOR

63%
Residential Aged Care

32%
Home and Community Services

4%
Retirement Living and Housing

1%
Other



Care where you need it. From retirement villages to home and community services and residential homes, we’re here to support you to age well, on your terms.

Care in your home.

From a little extra help with daily tasks to more specialised support, we're here to make life easier and more enjoyable - right where you feel most at home. We're proud to go above and beyond, bringing care, companionship and joy into the everyday. It's an honour to be welcomed into our clients' homes and lives, sharing in their stories, experiences and the moments that matter most.

15,578

Care and support packages tailored to individual needs

Rosa's journey with mecware began through the Commonwealth Home Support Program. As her needs changed, she transitioned to a Home Care Package, which now helps her stay active and independent in her much-loved two-storey home in Torquay.

No longer driving, Rosa receives transport assistance that allows her to keep up with her appointments, shopping and community activities. This support has been key to helping her maintain the lifestyle she values most - living at home, connected to her community and surrounded by the things she loves.

For Rosa, the relationship with her Care Partner, Meagan, has become an important part of her life. On a recent visit, the pair spent the morning baking together before sitting down to enjoy coffee and a chat. Rosa's warmth and generosity shone through when she encouraged Meagan to take the leftover treats back to the office to share with the team.

Rosa, a talented baker and proud owner of Rosa's Designs, creates cakes for local markets. To grow her passion, she requested an iPad through her Home Care Package. With the help of her trusted Support Worker, Alicia, Rosa is learning to use it, helping her grow her business and stay connected with family in Melbourne through recipes, photos and video calls.

Recently, Rosa was encouraged to explore physiotherapy with a mecware provider and reconnected with Jen, another local client she had met at a social support group. Their renewed friendship is another example of how mecware fosters meaningful community connections.

Our Home Care team is here to make everyday life easier and more enjoyable. From practical support to genuine companionship, we encourage independence and embrace the moments that bring joy to our clients.

ROSA AND MEAGAN, Torquay



“My *connection* with Meagan is so much more than practical help.

I love the joy we share when we cook together and swap stories.”

Rosa, Home Care Client

Care in our homes.

Life in our residential homes is about more than rooms and facilities, it's about happiness, connection and meaningful days. We take pride in keeping our residents engaged, supported and part of a vibrant community.

This year, we acquired and warmly welcomed two new residential homes to the mecware family. Long Gully in Bendigo and Allanvale in Altona Meadows adding 115 more rooms for residents to call home.

92%

average occupancy
across our 21 homes

115

new rooms across 2 new homes

1,357

ensuite bedrooms available
supporting more residents
than ever before

"I never imagined I'd be living in aged care," says Allan Walls, resident at mecware Wahroonga in Ballarat. "Not because I thought I was invincible, but because I'd always lived life on my own terms."

Allan grew up on a farm in the Hunter Valley and left home at just 13. By 16, he was working in Newcastle and playing the sport he loved most, Rugby League, proudly wearing the Hunter Valley jersey.

Life eventually led him to Victoria, where he took on many roles, but being a foster carer remains one of his proudest achievements. "Providing a safe home for children, offering them what I never had, that mattered most."

In recent years, multiple health conditions slowly took away Allan's mobility and independence. His wife became his full-time carer, until the demands became too much. In early 2024, Allan moved into residential care. "It was tough. I felt like I'd lost control, that my life's story had ended. I stayed in my room, convinced there was nothing left."

But a gentle nudge changed everything. A staff member noticed his love of gardening and encouraged him to reconnect with the soil. "At first I resisted, but little by little, joy returned."

Today, Allan helps manage the gardens with the maintenance officer, proudly showing them off to visitors. He organises BBQs, contributes to the men's group and garden club, and even plans Christmas gifts for fellow residents. His bottle recycling collection has raised more than \$200 for the lifestyle program and he happily donates his footy tipping winnings to the garden.

"I feel seen, supported, and above all, useful again. To anyone who thinks aged care is the end, it's not. It's a new chapter, a chance to rediscover joy, purpose and connection. Life really can bloom again."

ALLAN, Ballarat



Allan has found joy and purpose in gardening. With support from the mecware Wahroonga team, he says, 'I feel *seen*, supported, and useful again.'

Allan, Wahroonga resident Ballarat

Care in our communities.

Life in a mecwacare retirement village is all about safety, connection, purpose and wellbeing. Our villages nurture independence while creating opportunities for residents to come together through social activities, lifestyle programs and engaging community experiences.

6

retirement villages

79%

average occupancy

17

units refurbished across
Berwick Brae Gardens
and Ballan lifestyle villages

When Scott, a resident at Robin Syme, experienced a stroke that impacted his vision and balance, life changed suddenly. He spent a month in respite care at the adjacent mecwacare Malvern Centre, focusing on recovery and adjusting to a new way of living. It was a difficult time, both physically and emotionally, but what stood out was the unwavering care and community spirit around him.

Throughout his stay, staff and fellow residents from Robin Syme kept in touch, arranging dinners, visits and regular check-ins. These thoughtful gestures reminded Scott that he was part of a community that truly cared. The combination of professional support from the care team and the kindness of friends made all the difference in helping him feel valued and supported.

The dedicated staff at the Malvern Centre provided attentive care and rehabilitation services, ensuring Scott had the encouragement he needed to take each step forward. With this support, and the ongoing connection to his retirement community, Scott gained the confidence to keep working on his recovery.

Now back home at Robin Syme, Scott continues his journey with the help of mecwacare's in-home services. He stays motivated and active, often spotted doing his rehab exercises around the village.

Remaining in his own home has allowed Scott to maintain his independence while staying socially connected. Surrounded by a close-knit community, Scott continues to thrive, embracing life with resilience, gratitude and a renewed sense of purpose.

SCOTT, Malvern



Where care meets
Connection

Robin Syme residents enjoy their weekly card game, sharing laughter and community spirit, with the support of our dedicated and energetic care team.

Caring culture.

At mecwacare, our caring culture is brought to life by 4,549 employees and volunteers supporting over 20,000 people each week across Melbourne and regional Victoria. With compassion at the heart of everything we do, initiatives like the Aged Care Volunteer Visitor Scheme have sparked over 200 special friendships, helping reduce loneliness and bringing joy, connection and a true sense of community to those we care for.

20,000+
residents and clients

3,971
employees

578
volunteers

When Mark retired from a long career in education earlier this year, he knew he wanted to give back. Inspired by his wife's volunteer work and with his loyal Labrador, Fabio, by his side, Mark joined mecwacare's Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS).

Through the program, Mark was paired with Peter, a mecwacare Home Care Package client and ACVVS recipient. After two strokes, Peter was spending much of his time indoors. A former engineer and biochemist, Peter had an impressive career spanning multiple industries, and his home is filled with certificates and milestones that reflect a life of achievement.

"Peter was a little reserved at first," Mark says. "But once we started talking, we realised how many interests we share. That's when our friendship really blossomed. He's such a fascinating man."

Now, the two meet regularly for coffee or quiet afternoons at Mark's home. Peter shares his passion for cars, plants, and music—he even plans to teach Mark how to play the didgeridoo. Between visits, they keep in touch by phone and email. "Peter knows I'm not just there to fill an hour," Mark explains. "I genuinely care."

While his dog Fabio stays home when Peter's cats are around, he is a star visitor at Annie's Court, where residents adore his gentle nature.

For Mark, volunteering has brought joy and perspective. "You realise what really matters—connection, family, being present," he reflects. "Sharing those moments means everything."

PETER AND MARK, Hastings



For Mark, volunteering
has brought joy and perspective.

**"You realise what really
matters—connection, family,
being present,"**

Mark, mecwacare volunteer

Celebrating diversity.

At mecwacare, we embrace and celebrate the richness of every individual. With compassion and respect, our team delivers person-centred care that prioritises safety, dignity and inclusion. Across our homes and communities, we support people and families on their unique care journeys, ensuring everyone feels valued, respected and part of our vibrant, caring community.

When the John Atchison Centre (JAC) team received the Team Excellence Award at the 2025 Employee Awards, it was a proud moment for everyone. Their dedication to providing person centred care and creating a vibrant, engaging environment for residents has set JAC apart.

The aged care home is supported by a multicultural team who bring that diversity to life through a rich calendar of events. Festivals from around the world such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, Greek Independence Day and Bastille Day give residents the chance to have fun, learn about new cultures and stay connected to the community.

While the team brings energy and celebration to daily life, their journey hasn't been without challenges.

The home was significantly affected during Covid and struggled with occupancy, at times operating at only half capacity. Since then, the team has worked tirelessly to rebuild trust with the community, strengthen resident engagement and transform the reputation of the home.

Today, a waitlist shows how sought-after the JAC has become, with loved ones frequently praising the team for their warmth, passion and exceptional care. Many describe JAC as a loving home where staff go above and beyond, making everyone feel like part of the family.

Much of this success is credited to Facility Manager Santosh, who joined in 2023. Her leadership has nurtured a supportive, motivated team where input is valued, strengths are recognised and teamwork drives every decision. Together, the JAC team has created a home residents love and a workplace that staff are proud to be part of.

JOHN ATCHISON CENTRE, Hoppers Crossing



John Atchison Centre residents and staff celebrate cultural *diversity* in vibrant traditional dress, enjoying joy, community and life as part of an extended family.

Innovation

supporting care

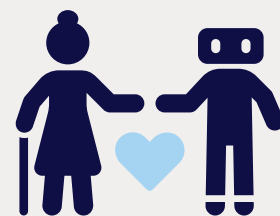
At mecwacare, innovation is at the heart of how we continue to enhance the care experience. We see technology as a powerful enabler that helps us deliver more personalised, connected and compassionate care throughout every stage of the ageing journey.

Our goal is to lead the way in using technology to uplift the lives of residents and clients. From advanced digital systems that monitor wellbeing to tools that support independence and reduce isolation, innovation is helping us create a more responsive and fulfilling care environment.

We are equally focused on privacy, cybersecurity and data management, ensuring all information remains safe and compliant. By combining innovation with empathy, we are building a future where technology strengthens care and keeps people at the centre of everything we do.



This year we proudly launched **mCare360**, our **digital transformation project** bringing people, practice and service delivery together around each client. mCare360 will give us a complete, 360-degree view of every individual, helping create greater continuity, efficiency and truly personalised support. By harnessing data, analytics and AI, it enhances how we deliver care today while building a smarter, more connected future. This important initiative reflects our commitment to putting clients at the heart of everything we do, supporting them through every stage of their ageing journey with the right care, at the right time, in the way that suits them best.



In February, we introduced **Abi**, **Australia's first humanoid companion**, to our residential homes. Created by local robotics company Andromeda, Abi uses advanced AI to recognise faces, understand emotions and recall past conversations. Residents have delighted in Abi's playful and cheeky presence, chatting in one of the 90 languages she speaks, singing, dancing, or playing bingo. Abi especially brightens the days of those living with dementia, bringing joy, connection and laughter during Tai Chi and music sessions. This innovative partnership reflects our ongoing commitment to enhancing wellbeing, reducing loneliness and creating moments of fun and engagement for everyone in our care.



Hao, usually reserved, lit up when humanoid companion Abi greeted him in Chinese. With wife Qin Ying by his side, he enjoyed their first *conversation* and now looks forward to chatting and joining in with Abi's activities.

LEADING THE WAY



Anne McCormack
Chief Executive Officer



Steven Lambert
Executive General
Manager Enabling
Services until 21/04/25
EGM HSC from 21/04/25



Linda Smart
Executive General
Manager Home and
Community Services
until 17/04/25



Samuel Sharma
Executive General
Manager Residential
Services



James Cramond
Executive General
Manager Strategic
Growth and Business
Development



Rob Guest
Executive General
Manager People,
Culture and Safety



Gaye Sheppard
Executive General
Manager Retirement
and Affordable Housing



Lyndal McNamara
Company Secretary



Dele Sanusi
Executive General Manager
Enabling Services from 21/04/25

OUR BOARD



Ian McHutchison OAM
BJuris, LLB
Chair. Appointed 2021.
Area of expertise:
Finance, law and housing



Susan Barton AM
Deputy Chair.
Appointed 2005.
Area of expertise:
Not-for-profit sector



Colin Squires
BE (Hons), MBA
Treasurer. Appointed
2008. Area of expertise:
Corporate finance



Lachlan Cameron
Appointed 2022.
Area of expertise:
Business and project
management



Linden Smibert
Appointed 2022.
Retired 27/05/25.
Area of expertise:
Public health and medicine



James King
Appointed 2024.
Area of expertise:
Housing and project
management



Kirby Young
Appointed 2024.
Area of expertise:
Healthcare and project
management



Lou Panaccio
Appointed 2024.
Area of expertise:
Business and healthcare



Prof Keith Evans
Appointed 2025. Area
of expertise: Health and
community services



Felix Pintado
Appointed 2025.
Area of expertise:
Healthcare management
and aged care

Life Governors

Barry Fenton
John Atchison
John Hood
Robin Syme

Recently Retired
Board Members

Anne Court
Retired 27/11/24

Susan Calwell
Retired 27/11/24



Board Committees

Finance, Audit and
Risk Management
Committee (FARM):
Mr Squires (Chair)
Mr McHutchison
Mr Cameron
Mr King
Mr Pacaccio

Clinical Care,
Quality and Service
Development
Committee (CQSD):
Dr Smibert (Chair)
Ms Barton
Mr Evans
Mr McHutchison
Mr Young

Nominations,
Remuneration
and Governance (NRG):
Mr McHutchison (Chair)
Ms Barton

Caring supporters and partners.

We are grateful for the generosity of individuals and organisations across Victoria who continue to stand beside us. Their support helps us provide compassionate, person-centred care that enriches the lives of older Australians. With this spirit of giving behind us, we are well placed to adapt, evolve and keep leading the way in aged care.

Individual

- Oi-lam Chan

June Danks

Barry Fink

Peter Lemon

John Nicko

Helen Paterson

Beth and Andrew Ray
- Mrs Margaret Robieson

Fred Russell

Ann Sylvester

Robin Syme

Cedomire Tabain

Jarred Walton-Bhim

Corporate and Community

- Alltech Ent

Aidacare

Artazan Property Group Pty Ltd

Bega Dairy and Drinks Pty Ltd

Bidfood

Big Ben Services

Bold Urban Planning

Booran Motors

Bunnings

Bunzl

Canon

Caring for You

Carlton Football Club

Chefs Choice Meats

Citrus Commercial Group

Domain Chandon

Ecolab

Flos Florum Florist

Hyundai

In 2 Fire

Kustom Living
- LeasePlus

Lite n Easy

Majestic Services Group Pty Ltd

Malvern Club House

Medsafe

Medsafe Pharmacy

Modern Promotions

ProCafe

Q Signs

Recom Cleaning Pty Ltd

Sheen Panel Service

Skechers

Southern Impact

Spectrol

Swift Electrical

The Print Department

Total Construction

United Physiotherapy Group

Watson Young Architects

Yarra Valley Lodge

Trusts, Foundations and Bequests

- Australian Communities Foundation

Joan Lavender Charitable Trust

Keith Chenhall Charitable Trust

Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation

Government Support

mecwacare wishes to thank the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, and the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services for their continued support through a variety of funding programs, grants, and initiatives.



“Here, *mum* isn’t just a resident. She’s part of the family and I can see how much that means to her.”
Susan, Clinical Care Coordinator and her Mum, John Atchison Centre, Hoppers Crossing



Connection continues.

When Audrey became withdrawn, Trescowthick's wellbeing team listened with care, uncovering her frustration over lost independence. They introduced an electric wheelchair, restoring her freedom to explore and reconnect with life. Audrey's renewed confidence and joy highlight how compassionate support and choice are vital to true wellbeing beyond physical care.

mecwacare

mecwacare.org.au

ABN 59 004 927 244



Registered
NDIS
Provider



Supported by the Australian Government
Department of Social Services. Visit the
Department of Social Services website at
www.dss.gov.au for more information.