

CUSTOMER UPDATE

AUGUST 2021 - LIFEBRIDGE AUSTRALIA LTD.



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO - BRONWYN MITCHELL

Who could have guessed 12 months ago that the virus we were all hearing about would be declared a pandemic and affect our way of life as much as it has?

Although an unknown area for us all, the Australian health professionals and our local public health units have done an amazing job. The information that is provided to service organisations is comprehensive and responsive to any changing circumstances. The contact tracing abilities of the State governments has also proven to be effective and efficient.

By following the health advice and supporting the Lifebridge staff in understanding and maintaining COVID safe practices, Lifebridge has managed the COVID risk and had no reported COVID-19 cases.

Now with the COVID-19 vaccine being available there is one more piece of the armor that helps to keep everyone safe.

As you would be aware the Australian Government has not made the vaccine mandatory. It is the choice of each individual whether they receive the vaccine. A copy of our COVID-19 vaccine policy has been included in this customer newsletter for your interest and information.

Please remember that even when vaccinated it will be necessary that all COVID safe practices remain in place and are adhered to. It is the combination of all practices that will provide the greatest protection and provide the safest environment.

I would like to encourage anyone who may be feeling hesitant about rejoining Lifebridge groups or activities to discuss your concerns with your Care Manager. The safety of staff and customers will always come first - and if we all follow COVIDSafe practices the current risk remains extremely low.

Throughout the past 12 months Lifebridge has learnt to do a lot of things differently and introduce innovative ways of delivering services that meet the needs of our customers under such extreme circumstances.

Over coming months, we will be introducing some new on-line activities that we hope will provide diversity and choice for everyone.

We encourage you to give them a go.

We also encourage everyone to remain positive - and as we emerge into brighter times we offer up the following tips for exercising positivity, gratefulness and joy:



GRATITUDE

Focus on what you are grateful for – writing down 3 things that you are grateful for each day or taking the time to reflect on what you are grateful for has wonderful benefits.

Look for the smallest things – a bird flying, a butterfly, the food on your table. Practicing gratitude has been scientifically proven to have amazing benefits for our mental health and overall wellbeing.

POSITIVITY - FINDING YOUR JOY

Sharing something that brings you joy – regularly ring, text, email your friends or family with something positive that has happened during the day. Positivity is contagious!

Try and find something positive in the things that you consider to be negative. For example, being shut in at home is difficult but how lucky are most of us to have a comfortable place to go to for lockdown.

REVERSE BUCKET LIST

Write a reverse bucket list – Instead of focusing on the things you wanted to do and now may be unable to do, begin writing a list of the many things you have done, places you have visited and adventures you have had.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Please remember that Lifebridge is always here to lend a supporting hand. You are never alone when part of the Lifebridge community.

Bronwyn Mitchell
CEO

COVID-19 RESPONSE

AUGUST 2021 - LIFEBRIDGE CUSTOMER UPDATE

We were all hoping that 2021 would be different to 2020 when it came to the pandemic. To some extent, with the introduction of the vaccines, things have changed. However, until Australia increases its vaccination rates everybody must continue with their COVID safe practices. It should be noted that although Lifebridge is strongly encouraging all staff and customers to become vaccinated, vaccinations are not compulsory. The only place where vaccinations are mandatory are for workers in Residential Care Facilities.

To help you understand the steps that Lifebridge is taking to maintain everyone's safety, we have included a copy of our COVID-19 Vaccination Policy for your information. To support you further, we have included answers to some of the questions frequently asked of our staff.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

COVID-19 Symptoms include:

- fever (37.5 degrees Celsius or higher),
- cough, sore throat,
- shortness of breath (difficulty breathing),
- runny nose,
- loss of taste, loss of smell.

Other reported symptoms include:

- fatigue,
- acute blocked nosed (congestion),
- muscle pain, joint pain,
- headache,
- diarrhea, nausea/vomiting,
- loss of appetite.

Unexplained chest pain and conjunctivitis (eye infection) have also been reported as symptoms of COVID-19.

In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia with severe acute respiratory distress.

Rule of thumb - If you don't feel well, ring your doctor immediately and discuss your symptoms with them.

WHERE CAN I GET TESTED?

Even if you only have one symptom, get tested and self-isolate straight away.

The test is safe, free and you do not need a Medicare card.

Ring your doctor and seek advice from them as to where your nearest testing clinic is.

WHEN SHOULD I GET TESTED?



Get tested if you have:

- any COVID-19 symptoms, even if only mild,
- visited a place or travelled on public transport at the same time as a confirmed COVID-19 case,
- been at an interstate COVID-19 case location during a specific time period,
- been in contact with a person (including family, friends and people you live or work with) who is confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, or is a close contact of someone confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, or has visited a case location during a specific time period.

What should I do if I have symptoms or become a casual or close contact?

Get tested immediately and isolate. Follow all Public Health Directions.

WHAT IS LIFEBRIDGE DOING TO KEEP ME SAFE?

Although the vaccine is only mandatory for staff working in residential aged care, all Lifebridge staff are being encouraged to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine.

It is mandatory for all staff to follow COVID safe practices. Our Infection Control COVID-19 Response Policy has been included for your information.

This describes in detail what Lifebridge is doing to keep you and your families safe.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

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WHAT SHOULD I DO TO KEEP SAFE?

Continue with your COVID safe practices:

- get vaccinated,
- follow the public health orders,
- wear a mask when indoors (other than your own home) or if outdoors and unable to maintain 1.5 metres social distancing,
- use a QR code wherever possible,
- wear a mask in your home if you are unable to maintain 1.5 metres social distancing with visitors,
- Get tested and stay at home if you are experiencing any cold or flu like symptoms (no matter how mild),
- Maintain good hand hygiene.

WHERE CAN I GET VACCINATED?



Please contact your doctor to make an appointment to receive the vaccination.

They can also provide you with other sites where the vaccine is available.

RESOURCES - INFORMATION AND ADVICE

You can call these free services for information about COVID-19 or help with home care, transport, social connection or financial support.

Service NSW

- Phone: 13 77 88
- Open: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Information about COVID-19 and NSW government services
- Service NSW website

National COVID older persons information line

- Phone: 1800 171 866
- Open: 8.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. Closed public holidays.
- Practical help and advice on the current guidelines and support available.

Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)

- Phone: 1800 237 981
- Open: 6am to 10pm, 7 days a week
- The COVID-19 Information Line is available for seniors to talk about your COVID-19 concerns.
- Older Persons Advocacy Network website

National Relay Service

- Phone: 133 677
- Call the National Relay Service if you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment.
- National Relay Service website

Coronavirus disability information helpline

- Phone: 1800 643 787
- Open: 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 7pm Saturday and Sunday
- Information and referrals for people with disability who need help because of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Department of Social Services website

National coronavirus helpline

- Phone: 1800 020 080
- Open: 24 hours, 7 days a week
- Information on coronavirus (COVID-19) or help with the COVIDSafe app.
- Department of Health website

Translating and Interpreting Services

- Phone: 13 14 50
- 24 hours, 7 days a week
- Free help in your language.
- Translating and Interpreting Services website

INTEGRATED SERVICE MODEL

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INTEGRATED SERVICE MODEL

There are a lot of changes and reforms taking place across both aged care and disability services.

The Government realise that both the aged care and disability sectors will have increased demand for support workers over coming years. A demand that will be difficult to meet. In response, they are working towards creating a “care workforce”.

During COVID the importance to support staff in having regular, stable hours reflected in a permanent roster with a single employer has been highlighted.

This has also been the number one request from our customers; to have the same worker at the same time on the same days. You want certainty and you want consistency.

Lifebridge recognise the benefits to be gained by creating our own “care workforce.” Combining our Aged Care and Disability Service departments will assist in providing greater flexibility and stability to current and future service delivery.

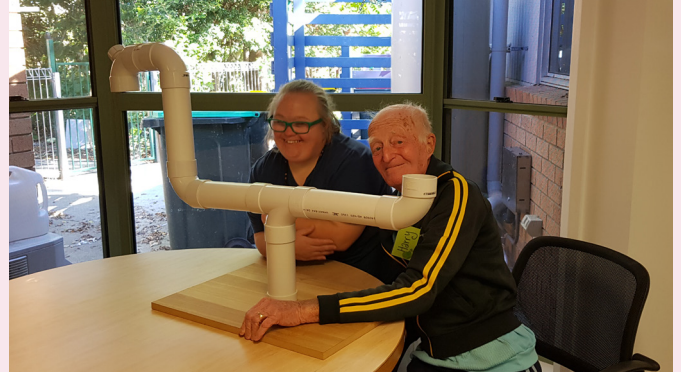
Lifebridge has noticed a shift in recent times where people with an NDIS package have been accessing services that have traditionally been offered through our Aged Care department. This has reinforced the idea that combining departments, sharing staff skills and expertise where it is needed, when it is needed, will increase the opportunity to better target the supports people require.

Of course, not all activities should be combined. It will always depend upon individual goals, needs and wants - but it does open a whole new area of opportunity to be explored.

We have been giving a lot of thought to how we can create a single Aged Care and NDIS department.

How can we combine our workforce, better align our programs and redesign our rosters so they better meet expectations? After a lot of analysis, it is our intention to explore and trial service integration that has a more localized teams-based approach.

Although you will still have key workers for group and one to one activity, there will also be a designated team of workers who will come to know you well. This team will be able to support you with minimal interruption to your roster if the key worker is absent, or you require additional unplanned services.



This will provide greater consistency and reliability in your service delivery. Something you have asked for.

We hope to have our first teams-based pilot up and running within the coming months. In parallel we will begin creating and commencing programs that have a more integrated approach. It is interesting to note that we already have some integrated programs that have evolved naturally.

As part of the design process, we would like your input to ensure we are developing a service that is right for you.

To begin, there are 5 simple questions that Lifebridge would like you to answer:

1. What I value most about Lifebridge and need you to keep is?
2. What I don't value about Lifebridge and need you to change is?
3. My thoughts about an integrated teams-based model are?
4. The activities, supports and services that really have the most value to me are?
5. Anything else you want to add?

You can call us on 1800 043 186 to book a time with one of our managers to discuss these questions and anything else that is on your mind.

Alternatively, your worker will ask you if you would like to discuss these questions with them during one of your next visits. Your thoughts will be brought back to the office.

I hope you choose to participate as your thoughts and ideas are important for finalising our service design and making sure it meets your needs.

AGED CARE SERVICES NEWS

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WHAT IS RESPITE CARE?

Caring for a person can be very demanding and there is help and support available to help for those in a caring role. Carer Gateway can tell carers about respite services that may be available. They can help carers to find respite care in their local area and answer questions about types and costs of respite.

Carer Gateway provides specialist services across Australia for carers, including counselling, advice and information.

The following contacts can be passed onto carers to find out more information, visit Carer Gateway or call 1800 422 737, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Dementia Australia also offers support, information, education and counselling for people with any type of dementia, their carers and family.

To find out more, visit the Dementia Australia website or call the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500.

CLOSED CIRCUIT TV (CCTV)



Lifebridge has received advice that customers receiving in-home service should declare the use of Closed Circuit Television inside their home.

For reasons of privacy and confidentiality Lifebridge staff should be made aware if they are being observed or recorded while providing in home services and supports to customers and carers.

This information will be recorded in the Customer Management System for ongoing reference and a declaration requested of customers during set up and review meetings.

The use of CCTV is not prohibited nor will it impact on the delivery of service, however Lifebridge and its staff should be made aware of its existence.

SOMETHING FISHY IS GOING ON



Creating and maintaining an environment where living things can thrive can have a wonderful flow-on effect for our staff, volunteers and customers, which is why we have added the stunning addition of a fish pond to our Cottage Garden.

From the soothing sounds of rippling water to the calming nature of fish swimming in and out of the reeds, the fish pond will bring a quiet moment of contemplation for all to enjoy.

Ponds invite native biodiversity to create a beautiful little ecosystem and attract wildlife like birds, bees, dragonflies and frogs which may make our pond their home. Butterflies and birds pollinate the garden and control pest populations as well.

A huge thank you goes to Bunnings Tweed Heads who, as part of their Hands-on support program, donated the pond and all the necessary pumps etc to Lifebridge.

This donation was made possible by support staff member Jack Blades, who thought of the idea in the first place and submitted our application to Bunnings. A huge thank you for your help Jack.

A huge thank you also goes to support staff member Ben Simpson and volunteer Damien O'Neill who provided the manpower to get the pond into place in the garden.

It is not quite finished yet as there are still some additions to add but when it is finished it will be a beautiful addition to our Cottage Garden.

With a little help from our friends we can achieve wonderful things that will provide joy to our staff, customers and volunteers and that is something worth celebrating so great job everyone!

AGED CARE SERVICES NEWS

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ADVOCACY



If you are concerned about the quality of service you are receiving or a person that you represent is receiving, an advocacy service may be able to help.

Advocacy is defined as 'the process of standing alongside an individual and speaking out on their behalf in a way that represents the best interests of that person.'

An advocate will assist the person to achieve the best outcome for them.

Your rights are set out in the Charter of Aged Care Rights - <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/consumers/consumer-rights#charter-of-aged-care-rights>

We encourage you to raise any concerns with your Customer Care Manager or the Aged Care Manager first as this is often the best way to have your concern resolved.

An advocate can support you to do this by contacting the Manager and speaking on your behalf.

Anyone receiving Australian Government funded Aged Care Services for help at home can access free advocacy services by contacting the National Aged Care Advocacy line on **1800 700 600**.

For further information visit the Older Persons Advocacy Network website - <https://opan.org.au/advocacy/>

CLINICAL NEEDS - HCP CUSTOMERS



To meet the increasing clinical needs of our Home Care Package customers, Lifebridge now has Registered and Enrolled Nurses on staff who will be available to directly provide clinical care that can be funded through your home care package.

Care can be provided in your own home or at Cudgen Cottage and includes:

- Wound care, medication assistance and education
- Health assessment and monitoring of chronic disease
- Blood pressure and blood glucose monitoring
- Weight monitoring and nutritional education
- Stoma and catheter care, Continence support

Our nurses have extensive experience in community care and can provide you with direct care, or access to additional care through referrals. This will provide you with the clinical care that suits you and supports you to live well in your own home. Should you wish to discuss these services contact your care manager.

YOUR RIGHT TO BE FREE OF ABUSE

We all have the right to live free from abuse of any kind. Our age or circumstances should have no bearing or effect on this basic right. In NSW, five forms of abuse of older people are recognised:

- Financial abuse
- Psychological abuse - (including social isolation), neglect - intentional and unintentional
- Physical abuse and sexual abuse

In this context, abuse is generally perpetrated by a relative of the older person where the trust relationship involves dependency and proximity to the older person such as an adult child or spouse. Any form of abuse is unacceptable, no matter what justification or reason may be given for it, and it is very important to know that support is available.

1300 353 374 (ELDER Help) is a free call phone number that automatically redirects callers seeking information and advice on elder abuse with the existing phone line service in their jurisdiction. Elder abuse phone lines are not crisis support services, and operating hours and services vary across jurisdictions.

If you require immediate assistance in an emergency or life threatening situation, contact **000**.

DISABILITY SERVICES NEWS

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FAREWELL STACEY KNIGHT



After almost 12 years of service with Lifebridge, Stacey has resigned to take up a different role as a Home Support Assessor and pursue a new career path in Aged Care.

Stacey commenced with Lifebridge at the age of 19, as a cheeky, young, and enthusiastic support worker. Given Stacey's love of Lifebridge and her role, it was only natural that she would go onto a range of other roles including Team Leader, Accommodation Officer and Customer Support Manager.

All the time growing in knowledge, understanding, maturity, and confidence. Stacey was also an important part in preparing Lifebridge for the transition into the NDIS.

One of Stacey's greatest highlights was growing up and getting to know many customers, their families and sharing in their lives through their growth, milestones, and achievements. She has been instrumental in nurturing a family centered approach to her work and her knowledge will be greatly missed

A 'Living Lifebridge Legend' and a 'Human Lifebridge time capsule', she has witnessed many changes from Tweed Heads to Dungay, Caloola, Coolangatta and Kingscliff. Stacey will always be part of the Lifebridge culture and will remain strongly connected to all of us.

Stacey's last day will be Friday, 20 August 2021 - Missing you already!

MAKE THE MOST OF LIFE!

All our Disability Services customers should have received the new Lifebridge Social and Community Participation program (July-October 2021). It was circulated to all customers and families a few weeks ago.

Included was an additional page, 'Make the Most of Life' inviting customers to enrol in a range of new groups including Fishing, Sailing, Golf, Horse Riding, Gardening and Weekend Adventures. These are new activities in addition and on top of your existing programs.

All you need to do is nominate your selections and return to Martin or Andrew by way of email, post or hand delivery, so, Sign Up, Sign Up, Sign Up! and 'Make the Most of Life'. If you want to know more, just let us know!

INTRODUCING TANYA TAGGET

Lifebridge is pleased to announce the appointment of Tanya Tagget to the role of NDIS Support Coordinator. Tanya commenced on Tuesday, 20 July 2021 and will work alongside Christine MacFarlane in providing high quality Support Coordination supports to Lifebridge customers.

Tanya's is full time and being the modern professional woman will work between home and Kingscliff Office.

Tanya has extensive experience in disability services including tutoring year 11 and 12 students, working with CASSI, Local Area Coordination roles with both FEROS care and more recently Carers Queensland.

A NEW ADDITION TO THE LIFEBRIDGE FLEET

Lifebridge has been successful in a funding application through the NSW Government Infrastructure grants program for \$55,500 to purchase a new bus.

The new bus with Lifebridge signage will become part of the fleet and be used as part of Social and Community Participation programs to deliver services for both disability and Aged Care services.

The bus will also be used to establish new Lifebridge 'pop up' infrastructure program through delivering outreach services, including community promotion, arts and cultural, education and referral services to older people, people with a disability, their families and carers.

It is intended that the mobile service will build upon and complement existing community networks and infrastructure including dementia friendly communities, positive and healthy ageing, disability, community events and Council programs.

BUSINESS SERVICES NEWS

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PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY



Your privacy is important to us.

Lifebridge Australia Ltd. accepts and abides by the Australian Privacy Principles for the protection of personal information set out in the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection Act 2002 (NSW) and other privacy laws.

In doing so all personal information pertaining to customers collected by Lifebridge will be carefully protected to ensure the individual's privacy is maintained.

We collect personal information from you so that we can get a better understanding of your requirements to enable us to plan and provide service and support to you.

We keep your information secure by ensuring that we maintain the use of firewalls, intrusion detection systems and virus scanning tools to protect against unauthorised persons and viruses accessing our systems.

For further information, Lifebridge's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy is available to view on our webpage:

<https://lifebridge.org.au/privacy-policy/>

HOW TO EXPRESS A CONCERN OR A COMPLAINT

At Lifebridge, we recognise that effective customer complaint management is fundamental to the provision of quality services and we value your feedback.

We promote the right of our customers to raise complaints, concerns and/or suggestions and they will be addressed promptly and given due consideration.

To raise a concern, complaint or suggestion you can contact us:

- By telephone on **1800 043 186** or by email admin@lifebridge.org.au
- Feedback section of our website- <https://lifebridge.org.au/feedback/>
- Contact the CEO confidentially in writing to Bronwyn Mitchell, CEO Lifebridge Australia Ltd. PO Box 1403, KINGSCLIFF NSW 2487 or email Bronwyn.Mitchell@lifebridge.org.au
- or to an external complaint agency

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission,
GPO Box 9819, SYDNEY NSW 2000

1800 951 822

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/>

PROTECTING PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

Many of our customers find it difficult having strangers enter their home, and it can also be difficult for a support worker until they get to know the customer and develop a rapport. It becomes even more difficult if there is a suspicion that something of value has been stolen and this can be difficult for Lifebridge employees who run the risk of being accused of such a crime when providing services to our customers.

Recently there have been examples where items that were presumed stolen, had been misplaced and were eventually found. The investigations undertaken were stressful for customers, their families and the employees involved. Lifebridge will be updating their agreements with customers to include the following to ensure that they and Lifebridge staff are protected:

1. If you have anything of significant value such as jewellery or documents, you are to lock them away or put them out of sight when a Lifebridge employee is visiting.
2. If you have schedule 8 medications that Lifebridge employees are not required to support you in taking you are to lock them away or put them out of sight for the duration of the visit
3. You agree to not discuss, show or make mention of any valuables or medications that you have in the home.

If at any time you believe that a crime has been committed, you are strongly encouraged to contact the General Manager or Customer Care/Support Manager immediately. Lifebridge takes all complaints extremely seriously and always conducts a robust investigation.

Hopefully these simple steps will give everyone piece of mind and protect the rights of everyone.