

Message from the CEO

The depth of diversity within our organisation – among staff, volunteers, clients and the services we offer – is something we are incredibly proud of.

Our diversity makes us stronger, more inclusive and open to new ways we can support people to live happy, healthy and fulfilling lives, no matter their stage of life, circumstance or ability.

The cover of MercyCare's 2020 Annual Report, a compilation of all that we achieved in the last 12 months, is a celebration of our diversity and inclusion, and a strong representation of our organisation and its values.

This year's report with a fresh, new style showcases our financial performance, service highlights and community achievements

and the challenges we have faced amid the global pandemic.

We've included our learnings, what we stand for as an organisation and our vision going forward.

Our annual report can be found at all MercyCare centres and online – mercycares.com.au/about-us/publications. I encourage you to pick up a copy.

Anthony Smith
MercyCare CEO



What matters to you, matters to us.

Secure your place for 2021 at one of MercyCare's Early Learning Centres.



Visit us to find out more childcare.mercycare.com.au



Wembley: a glimpse into our past

MercyCare staff stepped back in time as they enjoyed a walking history tour of the Wembley Campus as part of Mercy Day celebrations in September.

Heritage tours were led by MercyCare Heritage Coordinator Nigel Wright, who shared stories about the work of the Sisters of Mercy and Benedictine Monks who previously occupied the site.

The Wembley campus is home to some of Western Australia's most beautiful heritage buildings, which were originally used as an orphanage, schoolhouse and stables.



Welcome Harman Park

In July, MercyCare began operating Harman Park Community Centre – a vibrant social centre where seniors and people living with a disability can connect, socialise and enjoy themselves.

Activities at the centre include quizzes, board games, guest speaker events, shopping excursions and themed days.

Participants can also join a range of groups – discussion groups, men's group, arts and culture group, lunch group and coffee club.

There was a friendly atmosphere when MercyCare Chief Executive Officer Anthony Smith attended the monthly roast lunch at the social centre.

"It was wonderful to see that the transition from the City of Belmont to MercyCare has been a smooth one for those visiting the centre," Anthony said.

"Everyone had such kind words for the staff and volunteers and there was a strong sense of appreciation for the activities at the centre that have come to be an important part of their lives."



Mercy Day and the Sisters of Mercy

Every year, we celebrate the anniversary of the opening of the first 'House of Mercy' in Dublin, Ireland on September 24, 1827.

This first 'House of Mercy' was set up by Catherine McAuley who devoted her life to helping the poor, sick and uneducated and eventually formed the Sisters of Mercy.

As the Sisters of Mercy expanded, a group of the Sisters led by Sister Ursula Frayne arrived in Perth, Western Australia in 1846.



Connecting young people

Young people at risk of homelessness or experiencing family conflict can now access refurbished iPhones, laptops and iPads, plus six months free data through MercyCare's Carlow House and its Reconnect program.

MercyCare received a grant for 300 refurbished devices for vulnerable young people aged 16 to 24, through the Department of Communities.

The grant will enable young people to connect with friends and family and access education and training opportunities.

Carlow House provides 24-hour supported accommodation for young people aged 16 to 19 years, who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of becoming homeless.

Reconnect is a free program that supports young people aged 12-18 years and their families who are experiencing family conflict or other issues which could lead the young person being unable to stay at home.

Pilot loans program a success

The Mercy Lending Services Program was part of a three-month national trial that provided no-interest loans to survivors of family violence.

The pilot program, which ended in October, was part of the Good Shepherd Microfinance No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) providing loans of up to \$2000 to women who have experienced domestic or family violence in the past 10 years.

The trial operated from MercyCare's Mirrabooka office and enabled women to seek NILS loans for purposes such as a moving costs, education or training, preparation for work, car registration and repairs, furniture and whitegoods, bond and rent, laptop or phone,

medical and dental, utility bills, legal costs and more.

MercyCare Community, Family and Children Services Executive Director David Holden said the aim of the pilot was to make it easier for women to access and apply for loans.

"This money can provide them with the financial means to escape domestic and family violence and start rebuilding their lives," he said.

"Money is often a big hurdle to overcome in order to leave or stay safe in an abusive relationship.

"Women may not have access to bank accounts, their own income or savings, are being financially controlled, or have had their partner's debts put onto them.

"Money is often a big hurdle to overcome in order to leave or stay safe in an abusive relationship.

"These loans offer fast access to that money without being saddled with unrealistic repayment terms and conditions."

MercyCare was one of three Western Australian referral partners in the nation-wide pilot.



Aged Care, more than just a job

It takes a special person to work in aged care.

At MercyCare, the dedication and passion of aged care staff members was celebrated as part of Aged Care Employee Day on August 7.

Having the right skills and qualifications is important, but all MercyCare aged care employees share that special something – compassion.

Compassion is one of the most important qualities MercyCare values in its aged care team.

Along with respect, integrity, justice, excellence and courage, compassion is one of the

organisation's defining values and shapes the work and ethos of its staff.

Every employee shares these values and lives them through their work.

To be an aged care employee is to hold one of the most important roles in our society; workers are highly skilled, provide incredibly important care and support to some of our most vulnerable citizens.

COVID-19 restrictions in Western Australia and the situation in Victoria highlighted the essential

and often challenging role of aged care workers.

Like other essential health care workers, aged care workers have risen to the challenge throughout this crisis, continuing their work in the face of unprecedented challenges.

Compassion is one of the most important qualities MercyCare values in its aged care team.

A sincere and heartfelt thanks goes to all MercyCare's aged care teams.



Norma Wright, MercyCare Joondalup Aged Care Home

From pamper sessions during COVID-19 lockdown to ice cream parlours, occupational therapy assistant Norma Wright is as creative as she is caring.

During the early stages of the pandemic, Norma opened a ground floor shop for residents when they could no longer go out and about.

With a selection of stationary, lollies and chocolates available in their new shop, residents loved the whole shopping experience.

It was so popular, demand dictated she open a second shop on the first floor.

Norma's shop lifted spirits and enabled residents to socialise and come together for a coffee and chat.

With a background in hairdressing, Norma pulled out her skills during lockdown and worked extra hours to ensure residents were pampered and that their hair was always in style.

Ever ready for a challenge, Norma has now opened an ice cream parlour for residents.

Always with a smile on her face, Norma is a valued team member and loved by those who call Joondalup home.

Brendan Lyons– MercyCare Wembley Essential Hospitality Services team

The beautiful courtyards and pristine interiors of Wembley Aged Care Home are by no accident.

They are due to the hard work of the Wembley Aged Care team, including the essential Hospitality Services team.

As part of the hospitality team, Brendan does so much of the behind-the-scenes work, from ensuring weekly orders are made, steam cleaning carpets or removing any pesky cobwebs.

Brendan has been an integral part of the team for four years and enjoys the satisfaction of seeing the home looking its best.

He is known as a hard worker and for having a “nothing-is-too-much-trouble” attitude.

He is a friendly face to new residents; always on hand to help them settle in and to make their room feel like home.



Back to nature

Staff from MercyCare's People, Culture and Brand department left their office desks and headed into the Beelu National Park to plant native seedlings and hone their team skills.

In July, about 20 staff joined not-for-profit organisation Trillion Trees in Glen Forrest, where they worked in teams to plant a variety of seedlings that, in time, will help to combat salinity and soil erosion and improve biodiversity.

Earlier this year, almost 400 trees were planted in the Perth Hills on behalf of MercyCare.



“By introducing these kits, we're able to make these sessions more enjoyable and engaging for our clients, while supporting their cognitive function at the same time.”

MercyCare Community and Home Support client Jenny Jenkins, 66, was diagnosed with early onset dementia in late 2017.

Jenny is now almost completely non-verbal.

Jenny's support worker uses the Memory Kit during their weekly respite sessions.

As a former avid traveller, Jenny especially likes looking through the nature scene picture book within her kit.

She also enjoys listening to music by her favourite artist Andrea Bocelli and will often sing along quietly.

“It's wonderful to hear how Jenny is responding to her Memory Kit,” Ms Maddaford said,

“This tells us her memory is being engaged effectively through these activities.”

Nostalgia unlocks memory

A collection of nostalgic games, music and activities is helping to engage and stimulate clients living with dementia.

MercyCare Memory Kits contain activities selected to elicit cognitive responses from clients.

The kits are being used to tailor at-home respite sessions for clients across Perth.

MercyCare Support Advisor Jacquie Maddaford came up with the idea after receiving feedback from support workers looking for new ways to effectively engage their dementia clients.

Mrs Maddaford, a Dementia Change Champion for Alzheimer's WA, was supported by MercyCare to develop the kits, which have been funded by a Commonwealth Home Support Programme Innovation Grant.

“We have many clients living with dementia or some form of cognitive decline,” Mrs Maddaford said.

Eco Warriors

Early Learning Manager Rosina Smith shares how three-year-old eco warrior Tate set MercyCare's Early Learning Centres on a journey to environmental sustainability.

"This story is about how my four-year-old son, Tate, has inspired and challenged me to be more environmentally responsible.

When Tate was three years old, he started picking up rubbish during our outings.

Naturally as parents do, I freaked out about germs and encouraged him to leave it alone.

But every time he spotted rubbish, he wanted to pick it up and put it in the bin and it suddenly hit me: Why was I asking him to stop?

I realised I should be supporting him and empowering him to make our surroundings less 'yucky'.

So, I purchased some tongs for Tate so that he could pick up rubbish safely.

Later I reflected on Tate and the concept of empowering and supporting people who are passionate about environmental responsibility.

And I wanted to apply this to the 14 Early Learning Centres at MercyCare.

Environmental responsibility is a key part of the Early Learning National Quality framework and it is part of MercyCare's Early Learning philosophy.

I decided to elect an Eco Warrior at each centre and give them the tools, knowledge and opportunity to make a difference.

In September, after a year and a half of sharing ideas and information we got our early learning Eco Warriors together for a full-day workshop on how to be environmentally responsible.

Seeing everyone together and their commitment to creating and implementing the Early Learning Centre



Environmentally Responsible Action Plan and contributing to a less "yucky" world really inspired me as a leader.

I wanted to share this story to remind leaders especially, that we don't have to have all the answers or even particularly want to do something.

But we can empower others to do what they are passionate about."

Want more early learning news and tips? Head to MercyCare's Story Corner for activities, recipes, tips on child-led learning and more – mercycares.com.au/child-care/story-corner



Calling Swan and Wanneroo communities

Do you know a community group in the City of Swan or Wanneroo that MercyCare could support?

MercyCare's Community Exchange program has supported local communities to mobilise local initiatives that bring people together and help them feel connected.

"Community Exchange is about developing genuine connections and relationships within a community based on trust and transparency," said MercyCare Placed Based Services Manager John Palmer.

"We have worked with and established grass roots community groups, individuals wanting to

connect with a group or build their own, and potential and existing community leaders and businesses."

Community Exchange works in partnership with the BeFriend social enterprise and is funded by the State Government, through the Department of Communities.

Community Exchange has supported community groups and organisations to find, write and apply for community grants; connect with businesses for mutual benefit; build capacity and skills with professional mentorship; and build skills to host successful events.



Community Exchange operates in the City of Wanneroo including Burns Beach, Clarkson, Merriwa, Mindarie, Quinns Rocks, Jindalee, Butler, Alkimos, Eglinton, Yanchep and Two Rocks; and the City of Swan including Bennett Springs, Brabham, Caversham, Dayton and Henley Brook.



Do you know a community group that could benefit? Contact Matt, maitken@mercycare.com.au – City of Swan or Tracy, ttuari@mercycare.com.au – City of Wanneroo

Make the 2021 school year brighter for our children and young people. Your donation can help buy supplies ready for school. Donate at mercycare.com.au/support-us/donate

Make the leap into school

Get your child school-ready with MercyCare Early Learning Centres and make the transition easy for pre-kindy children.

Now taking enrolments for 2021. childcare.mercycare.com.au

