



## Message from the CEO

All of us at MercyCare should be rightfully proud of our values, how we work to keep them alive, how we celebrate and recognise those living our values and how we use them to improve the lives of others. I am so grateful to be a part of this.

So far 2020 has tested everyone's resolve. It has challenged us deeply. That said, what's been clear to me is that MercyCare's values have been on display in spades!

I've been amazed at the extent and commitment shown by our staff and volunteers through the care

and attention that has continued to be provided to all our service users. This commitment has been for no other reason than to ensure that our service users are safe, reassured and their needs met.

The words 'passion' and 'dedication' are often used, but 2020 has been a time when every person in

MercyCare has stepped up, lived their passion and shown unbridled dedication in what we stand for.

What has resulted from their dedication is a strong Mission as Usual mantra.

The response from our staff and volunteers shows me that MercyCare has an incredibly bright future. If the way that we have gone about our work in the first half of 2020 reflects how we continue to work for the remainder of 2020 and beyond, I feel that our values and mission are in safe hands.

**Anthony Smith**  
MercyCare CEO

Each child  
has their own  
special light.  
You can help  
it shine.  


[fostercare.mercycare.com.au](http://fostercare.mercycare.com.au)



Become a  
**FOSTER  
CARER**

While the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging time, at MercyCare we have been heartened by the positive community spirit that has still managed to shine through.



## Village jazz

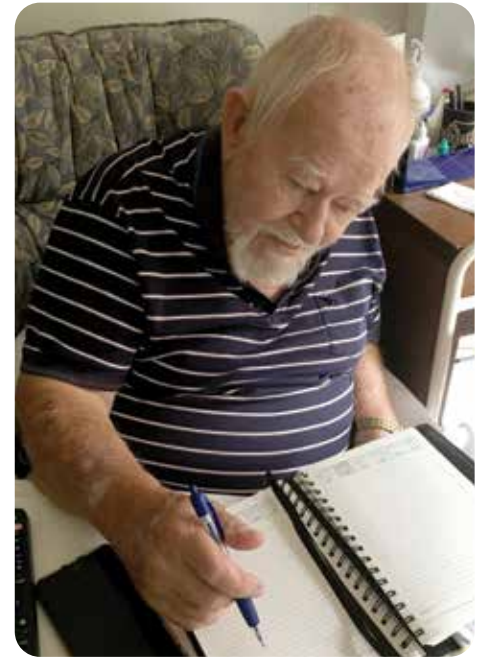
Residents at Mercy Village in Wembley were treated to a special open-air jazz soiree when a former John XXIII College student performed a balcony concert for them. Held in April when gatherings were restricted, this event enabled residents to take part while still social distancing.

## Tech donation

MercyCare's fostering services team was able to distribute computers donated by RSM Australia to seven foster families in order to provide children in care a virtual way to maintain their commitment and attendance to educational attainment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Putting pen to paper

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant letters have once again become an important form of communication for some residents at our Aged Care homes. While many residents began writing to family and friends, some also took the opportunity to connect with others in the wider community.



## Help at hand

Demonstrating the WA community spirit is indeed alive in these uncertain times, Western Australian company Epichem produced and donated high grade hand sanitiser to MercyCare's Aged Care, Disability, Family and Community and Early Learning services.



## Linking together

MercyCare launched Linking Together, a program that uses a raft of ways inside MercyCare's Aged Care homes to connect residents, with the help of MercyCare staff, with their family and friends. Solutions range from staff supporting the traditional phone call and making direct deliveries of presents to residents, to embracing technology through creating email pals and using platforms like Skype, Zoom and Facetime to facilitate video calls. Devices, including iPads and iPhones, were sourced so residents could be supported to access technology.



## Game on

Residents at MercyCare's five Aged Care homes were gifted new games to help them through the coronavirus lockdown thanks to a generous donation from Perth-based business, Games World.

COMMUNITY HERO  
PROUD  
SUPPORT WORKER



I'm continuing to care  
for those who need me

MercyCare

## Community Heroes

In order to give our frontline workers some of the recognition they deserve, MercyCare ran a Community Heroes campaign which shone the spotlight on some of the amazing people who show up to work every day to ensure those depending on them

get the care they need. We shared some of the stories of our support workers, aged care workers and the early learning educators and were overwhelmed with positive feedback about our staff and volunteers who make up the MercyCare team.

## Amber Youth Wellness launches

MercyCare launched a new youth mental health outreach service north of the river during May.

Amber Youth Wellness was designed through a co-design process with critical input from young people and important stakeholders including the WA Primary Health Alliance.

The free outreach service is for young people 12-25 years old experiencing moderate to severe mental health needs or facing complex life challenges. It is designed to help those looking for help to function better, improve mental wellness and relationships.

Amber Youth Wellness is currently working together with an initial group and will open for referrals during August this year.

See [amberYW.mercycare.com.au](http://amberYW.mercycare.com.au)



## Markets celebrate multiculturalism

One of Australia's most multicultural suburbs celebrated its diversity with a series of unique, grass roots markets showcasing authentic food, arts and crafts and uplifting entertainment from around the world.

The final Mirrabooka Community Market took place earlier in the year marking the end of a three-month initiative aimed at bringing the local community together and giving residents an opportunity to learn new skills and establish a small business.

The initiative was led by MercyCare's Multicultural Services team in partnership with The City of Stirling and The Square Mirrabooka and was federally funded by a Fostering Integration Grant.

Stallholders received training on how to market and sell their products; food handling; stall management and sustainability; as well as lessons from the organisers of other Perth markets.





## Technology to help combat loneliness

MercyCare and Queensland University of Technology (QUT) have teamed up to investigate the impact of using digital technology to reduce depression and loneliness in older people.

Research shows seniors who live in residential aged care and those who live alone with mobility-limiting illnesses are more likely to experience loneliness, putting them at greater risk of depression, physical and cognitive decline, and acute health issues including dementia.

The study, which aims to empower older Australians to use digital technology to engage more easily and more often with their family, friends and community, started in February when the first participants received their customised tablets.

Participants have been shown how to make video calls and send messages to family, how to use Google Earth to look up places they've visited or lived, and how to use the app to manage things like home care appointments and social events.

The study includes residents and service users from across MercyCare's Aged Care services, including residential care, retirement living and in-home support. The study will continue for 12 months with an evaluation report by Queensland University of Technology expected mid-2021.

Through our commitment to our vision for people and communities to thrive, no matter what part of life's journey they are currently in, we're thrilled to be involved with two encouraging research projects that seek to improve the quality of life for older Australians.

## Intergenerational Care

Over the next two years, researchers from Griffith University will be evaluating the intergenerational activities taking place between the children and seniors at our Early Learning Centres and Residential Aged Care homes to assist with the development of guidelines around intergenerational care.

The project was temporarily put on hold during COVID-19 due to social distancing requirements, making way for a short-term technology-based intergenerational pilot to run between residents at

Mercy Village and students from Rehoboth Christian College.

The results of these research projects will not only benefit our intergenerational care program at MercyCare, but will help to shape an evidence-based approach for such programs in the wider community, by building new insight into intergenerational programs, developing best outcomes for both generations and supporting new career pathways and training opportunities for the education, care and aged care workforces.

## Diversity Art Collection hits the Terrace

A series of 20 fine art portraits showcasing the diversity of MercyCare's workforce and service users were exhibited on St Georges Terrace earlier this year.

The images were captured by 2018 AIPP Australian Portrait Photographer of the Year, Steve Wise, and were taken to celebrate MercyCare's commitment to inclusion. They were on display for 16 days at Parmelia House, and each portrait was accompanied by the subject's personal story providing insight into their heritage and the challenges they've overcome.

"By sharing what diversity and inclusion looks like to us we hope it triggers authentic, unrestrained conversation and challenges people on how they can be a champion for diversity and inclusion in their workplace and community," MercyCare CEO Anthony Smith said.



MercyCare Diversity Exhibition



## Achievements celebrated at BASSA Community Open Day

Since opening its doors in December 2018, the Broome Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation (BASSA) complex has provided a safe and secure place to stay for almost 4000 guests who have come to Broome from over 100 locations.

To show the local community the work the BASSA team has achieved in providing a culturally safe and secure environment for guests, a Community Open Day was held to welcome them inside. This included open room viewing and performances by local indigenous dancers and artists.

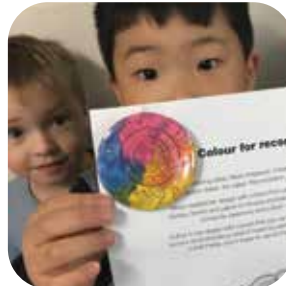
Ensuring BASSA is culturally safe for guests has been a key priority for MercyCare. Working closely with partner, Nyamba Buru Yawuru traditional owners, a number of measures have been implemented to achieve this, including the undertaking of quarterly smoking ceremonies and cultural immersion training for BASSA staff.

## National Reconciliation Week 2020



The activities and events held across MercyCare during Reconciliation Week show our dedication and commitment to the process of reconciliation. Here are some of the ways we recognised this special week...

- Exploring Aboriginal language, history and traditions within our Early Learning Centres
- Enjoying Aboriginal food, music and symbolic activities at our Mirrabooka office
- Creating artwork for display at our Broome Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation (BASSA) facility, with input from some of our guests
- Making Damper and enjoying a didgeridoo performance at our Residential Aged Care home in Kelmscott
- Organisation-wide webinar: “We are all in this together - Yawuru and Noongar perspectives on our reconciliation journey and what this means for us at MercyCare” with guest speakers Jim Morrison, Chair of Yokai, and Diane Appleby, Yawuru Culture Consultant
- Signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Yokai to strengthen and challenge our commitment to reconciliation



## Child's play for our educators

The average Australian stays in a job for three and a half years but there is nothing average about the educators at MercyCare Wembley Early Learning Centre.

The average Australian stays in a job for three and a half years but there is nothing average about the educators at MercyCare Wembley Early Learning Centre.

The average job tenure of those in this photograph is 20 years. The eight educators have each been at the centre from anywhere from 12 to 35 years.

This year is the 35th anniversary of MercyCare Wembley Early Learning Centre's longest serving staff member coming on board.

Anna Germano began working at our Wembley site in 1985 when it was known as the Catherine McAuley Child Day Care Centre.

She said while structures, procedures and policies within childcare may have changed throughout the past four decades, what was at the heart of her role would always be the same.

"The children come first and if they are happy then it all flows," Ms Germano said.

MercyCare Early Learning Services Manager Rosina Smith said having long-term staff like Ms Germano at the centre helped build a positive environment for families.

"For children, there is huge comfort in seeing the same faces at a place, day-in and day-out," she said.

"Continuity of care allows children to form secure attachments and provides them the ability to form connections and build relationships."



The average job tenure for these Wembley educators is 20 years.

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Gifts over \$2 are tax-deductible – your receipt will be mailed out. Thank you.