



Bene has comfortable, well-appointed facilities in the Adelaide metropolitan area offering accommodation to age-in-place.



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Bene Aged Care



Aged Care, Italian Style

The Italian Benevolent Foundation was established in 1974 by a group of community leaders who saw that there was a need for high-quality aged care services to cater to the growing Italian community in South Australia. Bene Aged Care, a fully owned subsidiary of the Italian Benevolent Foundation SA Incorporated, has three facilities in the Adelaide metropolitan area.

The commitment of the initial founders can be gauged from the fact that some of the members used their houses as security to develop the first aged care site. The group's residential facilities are at The Italian Village in St Agnes, Bene Campbelltown located right in the core of the Campbelltown community and Bene St Clair at Woodville.

Bene Aged Care is an independent provider of aged care services. Since its establishment four decades ago, it has succeeded in earning a reputation for setting benchmarks in high-quality aged care. Its income, which was at a level of \$6.9 million in 2000 has risen to \$34 million currently. In the same period, the number of residents at its facilities has risen to 254 from 168. The number of community packages has also shot up to over 300 from 71.

The Living Longer Living Better and

AT A GLANCE

WHO: Bene Aged Care

WHAT: Bene has comfortable, well-appointed facilities in the Adelaide metropolitan area offering accommodation to age-in-place.

WHERE: South Australia, 5073

WEBSITE: bene.org.au

Consumer Directed Care reforms have provided direction to the organisation to embark on a programme to train its customer facing personnel in the specific knowledge and skills required for 'selling' aged care services. The focus of this exercise is to bring about even better outcomes for customers and also for the business across residential, community and home care services.

Rebranding

The aged care services offered by the organisation centre around several essential aspects, all of which have to do with the Italian heritage of the founders. These include the food, the passion with which services are delivered and the respect and love for family that is inherent in Italian culture.

In 2014, the Bene Board realised that it was important to convey this to



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potential customers and stakeholders. Towards this end, the Board made a joint and unanimous decision to adopt separate names for the charitable, fundraising side of the organisation and the operational entity that offers aged care services.

As a result, it was decided that the aged care services would be provided under a new trading or brand name, 'Bene', which highlights the 'good' in all the organisation's facilities and services, especially good food, good lifestyle and good quality.

Meanwhile, the name 'Italian Benevolent Foundation' would continue and this body would remain responsible for

the overall administration of all activities and also drive the fundraising efforts and charitable works.

Adelaide's Brand Partners conducts rebranding exercise

Brand Partners was engaged to do a complete exercise to deliver a comprehensive marketing strategy for the organisation's aged care facilities and services. The rebranding of the aged care services was done to capitalise on the opportunities and challenges brought about by aged care reforms in the country.

There was a common perception that



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Bene Aged Care’s facilities were only for the Italian community. The new marketing strategy sought to convey that the facilities were available for other ethnic groups too. A new slogan was adopted to get this message across.

Andrew McFarlane, Chief Executive Officer, who has been with the organisation for more than 18 years, explains, “Our slogan, ‘Aged Care, Italian Style’ is to indicate that our services are not exclusively for Italians.

“It is aged care, appreciating the Italian style and cultural aspects. These are food, community, family and enjoyment. We have 64% Italian clients across our facilities. Most people real-

ly like the Italian menus.

Food is quite an important dimension of your life. In our facilities, we create a really nice village atmosphere with residents enjoying their food, wine, singing and talking. And that is quite unique as compared to other aged care organisations.”

Residential sites

The Italian Village at St Agnes offers its 163 residents every level of care and a range of services. It is located on a hillside overlooking a creek, giving residents a marvellous view. There are spacious rooms with private en-





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The facilities include a beautiful on-site chapel, hairdressing services, Wi-Fi, RAI TV and a host of other thoughtful add-ons that make life in The Italian Village a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

The aged care facility is constructed amongst beautifully landscaped surroundings and its location makes it easy to access nearby shops and public transport. The building itself has dining rooms, lounge areas and numerous sitting nooks. Residents enjoy the numerous activities that are organised and also go on outings and excursions on a regular basis.



Speaking about the various residential and other facilities of Bene Aged Care, Andrew McFarlane says, “We have 254 residential aged care beds. We have over 300 community packages and we have over 1200 community centre based and home care clients. We are open from early in the morning till late at night to accommodate shift workers who want their parents to spend time with us.”

Bene Campbelltown, located on Lower North East Road, has 39 rooms in single and twin sharing formats. Each room has electronic high/low adjustable beds, built-in wardrobes and nurse call points.

The facilities at the site include a

multidenominational chapel, generous common areas, entertainment units and a piano that provides much enjoyment and entertainment for the residents. The site is conveniently located close to a local shopping centre and across the road from North Eastern Community Hospital.

In April 2015, Bene Aged Care acquired the Woodville Nursing Home located at Jelly Street, Woodville SA. Simultaneously, the ownership and management of Bene Aged Care’s Domus Operosa at Burton was transferred to national aged care provider, Estia Health Limited. Since the acquisition of Woodville Nursing Home, it has been renamed Bene St Clair.



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This new facility located in the western region of metropolitan Adelaide has 52 beds in single and twin-share rooms. It offers palliative care and a number of specialist services including physiotherapy, speech pathology, podiatry and other allied health services.

Community care

Bene also provides services to those elderly persons who are still able to remain in their own homes. It offers a comprehensive range of respite, care and support programs encompassing both in-home and centre-based services for the aged as well as their carers.



Alan Mitchell, GM



Ruth Ryan, Director



Andrew McFarlane, CEO

Home care services include help with showering, dressing, mobility, meal preparation and eating and fitting sensory communication aids. Support services such as help with laundry, house cleaning, gardening and transport for activities like shopping, doctor visits and attending social activities is also provided.

The Bene Pass Tempo programme helps to link elders back with the community by offering one to one support, home visits and social outings.

Centre based care is also on offer at the Padre Pio Centre where a range of activities and services for elderly Italians is available. These include gentle exercise, music, song and dance, cul-

tural games, arts and crafts.

Bene signifies excellence

The organisation has nearly 500 employees and 200 volunteers. Its volunteer programme is highly successful and has a waiting list. Bene Aged Care is one of the few in the industry that actually provides freshly prepared food for all its meals.

It has found that this simple practice allows residents to enjoy food that is healthy and high in nutrients. As a rule, it does not serve frozen food that has been reheated. The whole dining and eating experience is one of Bene's unique features. After all, it's aged care, Italian style.



The organisation has also internalised the Mediterranean culture of respect for elders. Residents are treated as part of the family. This is a key point of differentiation for the services offered by Bene Aged Care.

Great stress is laid on personalised care delivery. The management has adopted a training regime for its employees that encompasses cultural training rather than just mainstream care delivery training. The staff is provided with focused training in Italian culture, in addition to being given inputs on respecting other cultures.

The Board of the Italian Benevolent Foundation has played a crucial role in

the success of the organisation. Andrew McFarlane says, “We have a Board of 11 members of mixed skill base. Lawyers, doctors, psychiatrists, pharmacists, clinical nurses. It is a volunteer board.

“The growth and expansion have been possible because of the support and leadership provided by the Board. We have one Board member, Dr De Pasquale, who has been on the Board since commencement of the organisation. He is one of the founding members and he has been truly inspirational on setting the agenda for the organisation which has probably expanded 10-fold.

“We are now in the list of the top 10



aged care providers in South Australia. We feel we have got a really good opportunity to support the community and expand.

“We are a medium-sized not-for-profit organisation. We are expanding on the basis of our service. We are still unique with our service delivery model and we believe that we will take that forward and expand our service delivery to the Italian and other communities, with specialist expertise in dealing with multicultural needs.

“We are investing in our staff education more and more to enhance our service delivery. As a not-for-profit, we do not distribute our profits and we

use the funds we generate to enhance the quality of service and re-enablement of our clients.”

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