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## HOMELESSNESS, MENTAL HEALTH AND HOLISTIC SUPPORT: A LIFESTYLE AND WELLNESS MODEL IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

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\*The Salvation Army Aged Care Plus, Australia

The model of care is based on a relationship-based, person-centred focus offered as a specialist care home for men, the majority of whom have a mental illness, history of incarceration/institutionalisation or homelessness, substance abuse and previous failed residential placements. There is a general reluctance to admit this cohort to mainstream aged care for various reasons (substance use/abuse, personal hygiene and compatibility). Further, some residents in the centre have come from the justice system, where disproportionate percentages are sex offenders; not always preferred candidates for residential aged care homes require placement. 150% of the current resident population at Montrose are managed through the Office of the Adult Guardian (Public Trustee) due to a history of incarceration or homelessness. With a basis in equality and empowerment, the model comprises a three staged, resident centric governance process achieving balance between dependence, interdependence and independence by:

1. Focusing on capabilities, not deficits
2. Fostering a shared understanding of importance in the residents day-to-day life, their current situation and the future they desire

Experience has shown the best relationships are reciprocal – thus, the centre philosophy is based on a collaborative, reciprocal and respectful relationship between the residents and care staff. This is vital working with people who have limited family and social networks. The care home is well respected as a unique and dynamic home with a focus on relationships and connection to others.

Since implementing the model in 2013 there has been a reduced resident turnover rate within the home with fewer discharges related to decreased life expectancy or return to a homeless lifestyle. Residents experience an increased sense of contentment and community connect with the local community and residential community at the home.

### Biography

Peter Bewert is a Registered Nurse who has worked in a number of high level roles across the aged care sector. He is a representative of the Australian National Aged Care Alliance, Nurse Administrator and Advisor for Aged Care Services, both advisory roles to the Australian Commonwealth. He has been influential in shaping policy regarding palliative care through expressions of the international Salvation Army and a speaker at national and international conferences. He holds a Bachelor of Nursing and Post Graduate Qualifications in Oncology and Human resource Management.

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