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## CONSUMER DIRECTED CARE IN RESIDENTIAL CARE ENVIRONMENTS: AN AUSTRALIAN CASE STUDY OF WELLNESS ALLIANCE

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Research in the United States of America has shown substantial benefits for consumer direction for persons of all ages, cultures and backgrounds who need long-term care. Further, the argument that consumer directed services are not appropriate for elderly persons with disabilities or for individuals with cognitive impairments has been debunked, with studies showing many elderly, individuals with disabilities and persons with cognitive impairments can express daily preferences for care and can benefit from consumer directed programs.

As a provider of consumer directed care in home care packages, we are aware of the changes which occur when the locus of control moves to consumers, particularly those who have been financially or socially disadvantaged. However, implementing a unique CDC model into each of our centres will require innovation and flexibility in the type of services offered, as in the future, clients will be much more in control and will expect to have a choice. As an organisation, this means co-ordinated change is required in:

- Care models
- Organisational culture
- Business processes

The development of unique care models in our residential centres has commenced. At the Carpenter Court Aged Care Plus Centre with the development of a person-centred, resident directed behaviour support plan targeted at older people who have a mental illness with severe, persistently challenging behaviours. The model of care is evidence of our vision in action – our uncompromising commitment to all Australians, creating loving home and family environment which enhances health and spiritual well-being, whilst offering a home of peace and acceptance.

### Results have shown:

- Increased occupancy (78% -99%) above the industry average of 93%.
- Resident emotional well-being increased by 10%, with residents reporting a strong sense of belonging to the centre.
- Maintenance of people with severely disturbed behaviours in the community- separations due to mental health problems decreased by 25%.
- increased awareness of staff in resolution of aggressive behaviour;
- stable staff establishment with a turnover well below industry benchmark 4;
- decreased admissions to hospital; and
- development of a sense of belonging in a caring community of peers

### Biography

Peter Bewert is a Registered Nurse who has worked in a number of high level roles across the aged care sector. Peter is a representative on the Australian National Aged Care Alliance and 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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