



Delivering Creative Ageing programs in regional, rural and remote NSW

AAG and ACS Regional Conference 2016

Life is a journey


The **Whiddon** Group

Where does the term come from?

- US Psychiatrist Gene Cohen in his landmark study *The Creativity and Ageing Study* (2001 – 2005)
- First study to prove the health benefits to older people of engaging in creative activities

Proven benefits include:

- Reducing boredom and apathy
- Increasing purpose and accomplishment
- Building self-esteem and confidence
- Reducing anxiety, stress and depression
- Reducing loneliness and social isolation through social interaction

Creative Ageing at Whiddon

- Creative Therapies
- Creative programs delivered and **run by Whiddon** services – include cooking, gardening, arts and crafts, storytelling, drama, photography, singing and choirs, dance, circus and film
- Creative programs **delivered by a third party**
- Pockets of innovation across Whiddon services **developed by Whiddon** services
- Whiddon trials of international programs – **run by Whiddon or in conjunction with University/Academic partners**
- Training and skills for staff – communication and engagement



The SMILE study – where Play Up began

DCRC, UNSW July 2009 – May 2011

Life is a journey

Whiddon and Play Up

Engaging the isolated



- First provider to roll out Play Up across all 20 of our services
- Play Up comes every week, even to the most remote services
- Proven to be an effective therapy for people with moderate to advanced dementia – enhancing mood, positive engagement and reducing agitation
- A great boost of energy every week, particularly to our remote services



Whiddon and SOLT

Intergenerational boost



- Run in all our services where it is possible to include local primary schools
- Strong bonds are formed between residents and the schoolchildren
- Stronger relationships between our local Care Homes and schools, families and schoolkids



Whiddon and HenPower

Creatively creating community



**creative opportunities
with older people**

Life is a journey



HenPower Trial

The benefits



- Greater purpose for residents
- Calming and soothing for residents with dementia and depression
- A catalyst for socialising, fun and engagement between residents and between residents and staff – relationship centred care
- Normalises life in the care home – and encourages residents to spend time outside



Trial run at Casino, Condobolin, Maclean and Bourke

Memory Groups

*Creative ways of addressing cognitive decline – CST**

- Memory groups are run with 8 participants with mild to moderate dementia across 6 – 8 months
- They use orientation/grounding techniques and structured themes with multi-sensory props to aid conversation, interaction and fun
- Activities include many themes including creative and hands on activities eg cooking, gardening, arts and crafts, music making, discussions on poetry and visual arts
- The regularity of the small groups, structured and failure free and supportive environment with an emphasis on enjoyment and conversation is a powerful combination.



* Cognitive Stimulation Therapy. An evidence-based group programme to offer CST to people with dementia.
Orrell, Woods, Hoe, Aguirre, Spector, Streater

CST Trial

Results

- Over half of participants experienced significantly improved PAS scores. Of these, 40% dropped 5 points or more from baseline to end of trial.
- QoLAD, no significant improvements on mean scores

But in semi-structured interview feedback:

- Big shifts in resident confidence, self esteem and social interaction, which extended outside the group
- Improvement in general mood and spirits
- New networks and bonds formed between participants
- Staff enjoyment and forming stronger bonds and understanding of residents



Carnivale Trial

Circus skills and Giving Back

- Improvisation and non structured programs can work well if you have skilled facilitators
- The program had great benefits for the school kids sent on this program. Their teacher reported a big increase in self confidence, self esteem and positive behaviours at school. They had learnt that making others happy, made them happy and feel valued.
- The residents loved the relationships that were formed and interaction with young people.





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