



Murray Mudge RAC (Uniting Communities)



Residential Aged Care



Glenelg,
South Australia

Goal

To enhance end of life services for older residents by integrating cultural and spiritual diversity into advance care planning.

Highlights

- Strengthened communication and collaboration between internal teams and external service providers
- Fostered a supportive, inclusive environment for residents and their families
- Enhanced understanding and integration of cultural and spiritual diversity in end of life care planning

Murray Mudge Residential Aged Care is a 76-bed facility located in Glenelg, South Australia, operating under Uniting Communities, a South Australian-based not-for-profit organisation offering community services from youth to the elderly.

The Glenelg home accommodates residents from diverse cultural and spiritual backgrounds and prides itself on promoting inclusivity and diversity, reflecting the ethos of Uniting Communities.

Recognising the significant roles that culture and spiritual beliefs play in the dying process, Murray Mudge participated in the ELDAC Linkages program to enhance and improve their palliative approach and end of life services for older residents. The goal was to expand current practices to better understand and integrate diversity into palliative care and end of life care planning, ensuring preparedness for the changing needs of future generations.

While staff at Murray Mudge already receive basic education on death and dying, participation in the ELDAC Linkages program, with support from the facilitator, provided advanced training opportunities. This extra training increased staff knowledge, allowing them to better support residents and their families during this critical time.

"We have been able to refine the contents of our Information Pack that is more targeted towards what the future residents may want to know about palliative care in our service rather than what we think they want to know."

Prior to joining the ELDAC Linkages program, Murray Mudge recognised that a key challenge faced by staff was initiating conversations about death and dying. Although nursing staff were skilled and qualified, discussing end of life wishes was difficult for many. The ELDAC Linkages program helped shift the focus from starting these conversations after admission to beginning them during the pre-admission process. Information brochures and contact details were included in information packs, encouraging future residents to start conversations with their families before entry.

An additional adjustment with a great positive impact was redefining the role of the Spiritual Care Practitioner as a support person for staff, residents, and families during end of life. This change strengthened communication and collaboration between internal teams and external service providers.

During the period when the Voluntary Assisted Dying bill was passed in South Australia, Murray Mudge introduced a policy on Voluntary Assisted Dying. This policy provided staff with guidance and direction in this new area, offering clarity on roles and procedures to follow if a person chose to end their life due to a diagnosed chronic life-altering condition. Advance care policy was also reviewed along with end of life law information and resources to support staff, introducing conversations about advance care planning. The team clarified and upskilled on aspects of the law in care provision such as substitute decision making and the issue around capacity in South Australia.

Through these efforts, Murray Mudge has not only enhanced its end of life services but also fostered a supportive, inclusive environment for residents and their families.

"I feel I have a better understanding of the importance of knowing what a person wants during palliative care. The ELDAC Linkages program has helped me to understand on a deeper level."

"Through linking with external organisations, I have a greater understanding of what types of referrals are available for palliative care services. This helps me when discussing possibilities with our doctors."

