



# Penwood Aged Care Services



Residential Aged Care



Pennington,  
South Australia

## Goal

Embed a sustainable palliative care approach at Pennwood via education, policy, processes, and culture.

## Highlights

- Increased palliative care literacy among staff
- Implemented a palliative care trolley for the comfort of the resident and their families aligning with nurses holistic palliative care approach
- Provided education opportunities in diversity, inclusivity and cultural safety to provide holistic palliative care

As a not-for-profit organisation owned and operated by The Serbian Community Welfare Association of South Australia Inc, Pennwood initially catered specifically to the Serbian community, but now welcomes residents from all backgrounds, religions, and cultures.

Pennwood Village aims to provide high-quality, culturally sensitive services, addressing the unique needs of each individual.

Pennwood's journey with the ELDAC Linkages program has been a gratifying experience, marked by a commitment to provide the very best care for their residents.

A challenging end of life care experience became a turning point for positive change, and participating in the program provided an opportunity to undertake a comprehensive review of services to include palliative and end of life care.

As a culturally specific service, the team at Pennwood often experienced challenges communicating with older European residents, particularly regarding the sensitive topics of death and dying. In Serbia, these discussions have traditionally been a family responsibility, making the concept of hospice and palliative care unfamiliar. As a result, only around half of the residents were willing to have conversations about their wishes communicated as an advance care directive.

Before participating in the ELDAC Linkages program, Pennwood was searching for appropriate evidence-based resources to broach these subjects with residents and families. While the staff are dedicated, additional skills and knowledge to feel confident to engage in such conversations effectively were needed.

Connection with national programs and access to palliative care resources, made available through the ELDAC Linkages program, have been invaluable. With guidance from the ELDAC Linkages facilitator, the Pennwood team developed a comprehensive resource folder for families and residents, helping them navigate the various issues they might face.

Since partaking in the program, Pennwood's software system has undergone significant and important improvements, making it clear who can legally make decisions on behalf of residents. The Next of Kin section now accommodates advance care directives and 'Substitute Decision Makers',

ensuring better care provision. This has been very welcomed by all, but particularly family members, bringing clarity at a time that can be difficult.

Through the ELDAC Linkages program, Pennwood has now established more comprehensive policies and procedures on palliative care and advance care planning, in line with recommended practices. The positive feedback since implementing these improvements has been heart-warming. A family member expressed their gratitude, acknowledging the team's care, attention, and the uplifting environment that made their mother's stay comfortable and respectful.

Upskilling the team was also a primary focus, which was approached by bringing all staff together to learn and raise awareness across the team. Ensuring that learning opportunities were available for all staff took commitment and focus from the leadership. On completion of the program, care workers demonstrated increased knowledge, skills and confidence, along with passion in their daily care provision. This was strengthened by a series of key awareness-raising activities which aligned with palliative care and advance care planning national events. Having evidence-based resources on hand to support communication with residents and families, some translated to ensure clear communication, was another key outcome through participation in the program.

"Being part of the ELDAC Linkages program has given us the opportunity to focus our minds and resources on palliative and end of life care at Pennwood with some excellent results. We have worked hard to improve staff skills and knowledge and our care for residents and their families at such a significant time in their lives. We have only had positive feedback since!"

*Kimberley Moss - CEO*

## Key outcomes

- Significantly improved palliative care awareness among the staff
- Improved awareness among families regarding advance care directives, substitute decision makers and palliative care
- Improved identification of the bereavement needs of families
- Enhanced comfort and quality care to residents at the last days/week of life.
- Enriched connections to external organisations to develop staff skills and knowledge
- Improved the way Pennwood honours/commemorates residents post death
- Culturally sensitive approach to palliative care



## A note from a family

Our participation in the ELDAC Linkages program helped us to achieve our overarching goal of providing the very best care to the older person and their families. The feedback received summarises our achievements best.

"A note of thanks to you all for your time, care and attendance for my mother at Pennwood, an unknown identity that is now a jewel to us all. We give credit to the team, the care and attention given by all aided in making mums stay comfortable, respectful and happy, and further aided us, as a family, to be more at ease with the whole process. Credit to you all for the service provided, the care given, the clean uplifting environment and staff vibrancy which all aided in providing a warm and friendly atmosphere where mum was always happy and comfortable. Thankyou! We need more Pennwoods!!!" Family member of former resident

Since implementing our improvements, driven by our participation in the ELDAC Linkages program, we have only received positive feedback about our care and services to residents at the end of life.