

About

Spring 2011 | www.baptcare.org.au



Baptcare

Bringing care to life

Message from the Chief Executive

A role of the 'third sector' in Australian society is to promote the interests of those who are unable to do so themselves. This is sometimes called 'advocacy'. Baptcare has, as one of its key priorities over the next five years, set itself the task of significantly increasing its profile in this aspect of its work.

The Federal Government's Productivity Commission recently released its 'Disability Care and Support' report. Amongst other things, this report recommends establishing a 'National Disability Insurance Scheme'. The aim of the scheme is to provide people with a disability certainty of access to resources that they are able to apply to their needs, entirely at their own discretion. (This is opposed to the current system where funding is predominantly provided to agencies like Baptcare to apply according to more complicated and less transparent criteria.)

The concept of the scheme has attracted strong support and is seen as a means to significantly enhance the social inclusion of people with a disability.

However, in an interesting juxtaposition to the announcement of the terms of reference that would culminate in the report, the Federal Government announced new rules affecting eligibility for the disability support pension in mid-2010.

These 'tougher rules' were expected to make 6500 people ineligible for the payment. The changes included new assessment processes and an overhaul of the 'impairment tables' used to measure how a person's disability affected their

ability to work. (Impairment tables are used to assess a person's work capacity. A person must accumulate a certain number of points to be granted the pension.)

On the government's view, the disability support pension had become a 'parking lot' for those who found themselves out of work, particularly during times of rising unemployment. A new 'updated' system of assessment, based on the latest medical treatment advice, was to be implemented that would include assessment of borderline claims and advice on suitable treatment to help people return to work.

The view was that the system had become outdated and distorted and that the new approach would result in greater efficiencies and enhanced dignity for those who would subsequently be able to participate in paid employment.

The disability support pension is an essential part of Australia's safety net, and it would be generally accepted that it must be 'efficient' to be properly targeted. However, in the debate about the fairness of the proposed pension changes, some must advocate from a perspective other than efficiency; there are plenty of other powerful groups whose 'lens' would be an efficiency one.

From what starting points should Baptcare base its view and its voice? It seems to me that in circumstances such as these, our position could start from the following perspectives:

1. Vulnerable people are easy targets and voices must rally to their defence.



2. Australia is a rich country and we must err on the side of compassion.
3. We should assume that the vast majority of people share similar aspirations – in this case, people would prefer to work than to not.
4. Any human system will always be abused, but those doing so will be the small minority and the prospect of abuse should not drive the design of systems that are harsh for users.

Eduard Schweizer, in his commentary on Mark 10:13-16, in which Jesus blessed the little children despite the disciples rebuke of those that brought them – notes that the reader understands '...the concern of the disciples for purity...'. However, Schweizer's interpretation is that the gospel calls us to look beyond that concern to the needs of the most vulnerable. We too understand the need for 'purity' in a system so that it is well targeted and efficient, but that is not the perspective from which we are called to speak.

Jeff Davey
Chief Executive



Baptcare's Mission

Excellence in Christian care for individuals, families and the community.

Baptcare's Vision

Caring communities for all.

Baptcare's Values

Respect: We value the inherent dignity and equality of all people, regardless of their circumstances.

Justice: We value equality of opportunity and consistency of outcome for all.

Commitment: We value dedication to meeting the challenges of our mission.

Integrity: We value consistency between word and deed.




Accountability: We value the acceptance of personal responsibility.

Co-operation: We value working together toward our goals.

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Support for parents overcoming Post Natal Depression extended

Last year Baptcare provided funding to the West Preston Baptist Church to launch a program targeting mothers overcoming Post Natal Depression (PND).

Officially known as Parents Overcoming Depression program (POD), the service assists vulnerable families by providing practical and emotional guidance and a supported playgroup.

PND affects almost 16 percent of mothers in Australia (www.beyondblue.org.au). There are very few supported playgroups for women with PND and the West Preston Baptist Church is the only group in the northern suburbs providing this service.

When the program was launched, it was incredibly

popular, and as a result the program has grown. Baptcare recently provided a second grant to support this continued growth.

"We wouldn't have been able to expand the POD program without Baptcare's support," said Tony Williams, Playgroup Coordinator.

In addition to counselling support, the program allows parents overcoming PND to share their experiences and concerns. This ensures that parents feel supported on their journey to recovery.

Baptcare's grants program provides financial support to Baptist congregations that are responding to identified need in the community, including poverty and disadvantage.



Image is not related to article.



Baptcare supports aged and disability sector reform

At Baptcare we continually seek to enhance our service models, and participate in industry reform for the benefit of people seeking community services.

During 2010-2011, Baptcare responded to two Productivity Commission enquiries: '*Caring for Older Australians*' and '*Disability Care and Support*'.

The Productivity Commission is the Australian Government's independent research and advisory body on a range of economic, social and environmental issues affecting the welfare of Australians. The Commission undertakes inquiries into these issues, and invites organisations and members of the public to submit responses.

Over the past two months the Productivity Commission's final reports were released. The recommendations relating to each sector promote increased flexibility and accessibility for older people and people with disabilities. We are thrilled with these recommendations, but believe there is still room for improvement.

Caring for Older Australians

The Productivity Commission report *Caring for Older Australians* correctly highlights the urgent need for reform in Australia's aged care sector, yet Baptcare is concerned that there is potential for those of limited means to end up being perceived as 'commodities' under the recommendations.

The final report includes a recommendation that all providers be obliged to make a proportion of their accommodation available to financially

disadvantaged older people. However providers are able to transfer up to 50 percent of those obligations during a pilot phase period leading up to what might be a competitive tendering system for supported-resident obligations.

Baptcare fully supports the design of an aged care system founded on the philosophy of entitlement and based on the concept of consumer choice. Those Australians with the capacity to contribute more to the cost of their aged care need to do so in order to provide better outcomes for them and to protect the dignity and options for those of limited means.

Baptcare strongly believes that any reform to the aged care system should provide a fair go for all, and ensure that people from all walks of life have the ability to make choices in regards to their care needs. A system that positions some people as having access to places that others want to rid themselves of is flawed, and we hope the government will address this concern in their community consultation process over the coming months.

Disability Care and Support

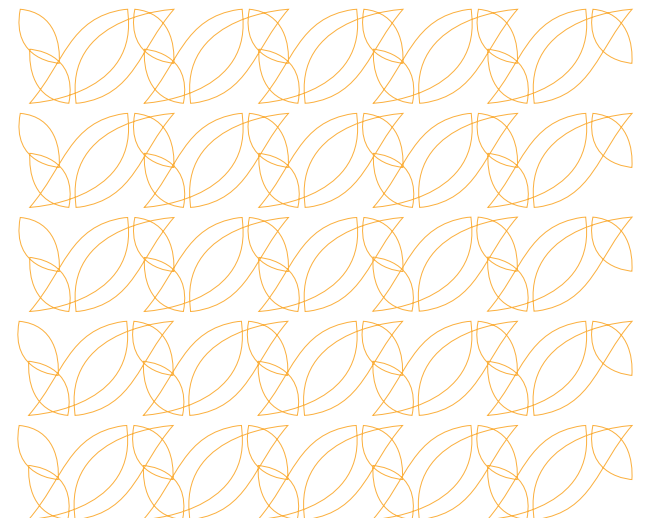
We are delighted that the Productivity Commission's final report *Disability Care and Support* has identified the urgent need for a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) which will include a national centralised intake point for people with a disability.

The functional intake aspect of the Productivity Commission's proposed model is already operating following reform of the disability sector in

Tasmania. Baptcare has been providing disability services through the Gateway model for over a year in Tasmania, and we know the model works. We implore the government to get this valuable model up and running as soon as possible, and to develop the foundations for the implementation of the NDIS.

Following Baptcare's verbal and written submissions to the Commission, Baptcare was approached to explain the detail of the Gateway model and in particular was asked for our advice regarding the best way to protect vulnerable people. This advice was included in the final report, and we are pleased by the role we have played in influencing and shaping the final model.

To view our responses to the reports, visit www.baptcare.org.au.





Welcome to our newest aged care home!

Baptcare officially welcomed its newest residents, staff and volunteers, after securing ownership of aged care home, Wyndham Lodge on 1 August.

A special welcome morning tea was held on 12 August to officially welcome the community of Wyndham Lodge to the Baptcare family. At the 'handover' event, the President of Wyndham Lodge, Chris Reside, gave a speech that outlined

the reasons for the selection of Baptcare as the preferred acquirer.

Chris Reside's speech*:

During June and July 2010, the Wyndham Lodge Board made the decision to find an organisation to acquire Wyndham Lodge as a going concern. The Board developed the specific selection criteria

which included 15 key objectives, four of those being:

- 1. An impeccable record of resident care.*
- 2. An employer of choice.*
- 3. A financially robust organisation with a substantial balance sheet.*
- 4. A demonstrable record of community engagement.*

Over the next six months, the Board developed a short list of suitors, attended site visits, undertook discussions and negotiations and in February 2011, invited Baptcare as the preferred provider to enter into a Heads of Agreement for the purpose of acquisition, which was both a hard and easy decision; hard because all the providers on our short list were excellent providers, and easy because Baptcare was the stand out best of the high quality field.

For me, it was that Baptcare 'walked the talk'. You translated a caring philosophy into excellent tangible care and you were not just about a glossy brochure, but an organisation of substance.

This is a wonderful outcome for Baptcare and demonstrates our commitment to supporting more people within the broader community. We feel privileged to be given this opportunity to collaborate with an organisation that shares the same determination to provide exceptional care.



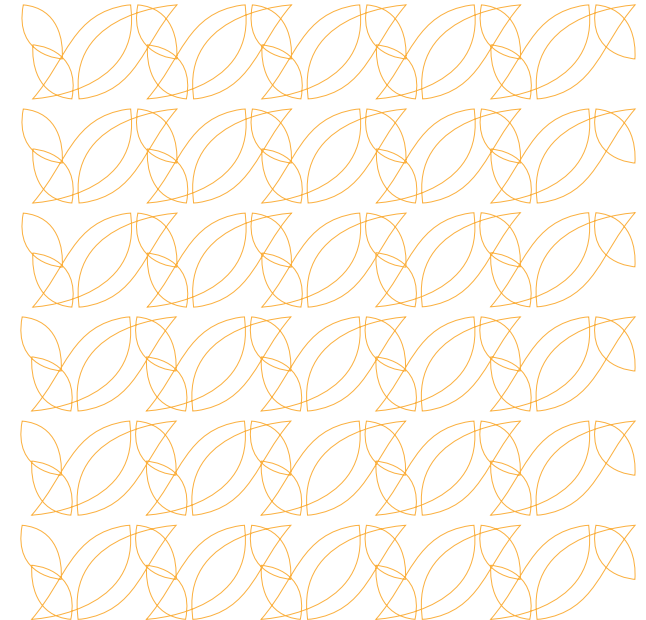
Pictured above: Baptcare welcomed its newest residents, staff and volunteers after securing ownership of aged care home, Baptcare Wyndham Lodge Community.

*The extract above is not verbatim; it is a reconstruction based on Chris' notes.

Standing in an asylum seeker's shoes



Pictured above: SBS documentary, *Go Back to Where You Came From* follows the footsteps of six Australians, who agreed to challenge their preconceived notions about refugees and asylum seekers. Image is courtesy of SBS.



The issues facing asylum seekers and refugees continue to generate complex and divisive debate across the globe.

Recently SBS broadcasted *Go Back to Where You Came From*, a documentary which follows the footsteps of six Australians from all walks of life, who agreed to challenge their preconceived notions about refugees and asylum seekers. These individuals went on a confronting 25 day journey to some of the most dangerous and deprived countries in the world.

Participants had no idea what each day would entail and were deprived of everyday items we

would normally take for granted - wallets, phones and passports were inaccessible during the trip.

Like the residents at Baptcare Sanctuary, our home for asylum seekers who have arrived in Australia lawfully, the participants experienced numerous unexpected challenges and were exposed to situations of grave uncertainty, fear, desperation and loneliness.

Many struggled with the feeling of the 'unknown' and felt helpless. They couldn't see or contact their loved ones.

For 25 days the participants were confronted with the same emotions that many of the residents at

Baptcare Sanctuary have endured. For the people living at Baptcare Sanctuary, the emotional trauma associated with these emotions may linger for many years.

Go Back to Where You Came From not only challenged the participants, it forced us - the viewers - to reflect on and understand the horrific circumstances that asylum seekers and refugees face on a daily basis.

Baptcare Sanctuary provides supported accommodation for male asylum seekers living lawfully in the community, including advocacy and social work support.



Bringing Care to Life via the Active Service Model

Baptcare believes that every individual has the right to lead a fulfilling and dignified life.

Since 2008, Peg and her husband Albert have been recipients of a community package (in-home support to remain living independently at home) through Baptcare.

“A friend told us about Baptcare and highly recommended it. We were happy when we were contacted by Baptcare and accepted the package straight away,” said Albert.

The package provides a range of tailored services, which for Peg and Albert includes case management, showering assistance and gardening.

“The gardening assistance has been very important to us as our garden has been a major part of our lives. We grew champion gladioli’s chrysanthemums, dahlia’s and many other flowers,” said Peg.

Peg and Albert have also been linked to Baptcare’s diversional therapy program. This has assisted Peg to reconnect with her passion for craft and has empowered Peg to remain active and socially engaged.

“It makes me feel more independent. I sort the beads by size and colour and Albert helps to thread. Albert and I help each other with everything. As long as we are together we are alright,” said Peg.

Baptcare was the first community aged care provider to introduce diversional therapy to its community based programs, demonstrating

Baptcare’s commitment to supporting older people living at home facing social isolation.

In 2008 Baptcare started reviewing its care delivery model for clients living in the community. The result was Bringing Care to Life (BC2L), a model that embraces the Active Service Model (ASM) philosophy and focuses on the client’s life goals.

The BC2L model is evident in Baptcare’s social support programs through initiatives such as converting the routine of delivering tea via a tea trolley to using small teapots, milk and sugar on individual tables. This, and other similar initiatives, promote increased participation and interaction among clients, empowering them to be as independent as possible.

The BC2L model directly aligns with the quality improvement initiative released by the Victorian Department of Health in 2009 – (ASM). The ASM initiative focuses on promoting person-centred care, on capacity building and on restorative care through the provision of community based services. The model is all about ensuring a ‘doing with’ not ‘doing for’ approach, which is the principle underpinning Baptcare’s BC2L model.

Peg and Albert are just one example of what can be achieved through the BC2L model. They demonstrate that life at any age can be lived with dignity, choice and independence.

“We feel 100 percent and we don’t want to move. We need all the help we are getting and very much appreciate it,” said Albert.



Pictured above: thanks to in-home support, Peg and Albert are empowered to lead a dignified life in the comfort of their own home.

Baptcare says no to deporting asylum seeker children

Baptcare, Mission Australia and Crossway Baptist church have welcomed the High Court's ruling that it is illegal to send unaccompanied asylum seeker children to Malaysia.

Baptcare and Mission Australia recently announced their support of Melbourne's Crossway Baptist church and its offer to government to accommodate and care for the unaccompanied asylum seeker children rather than see them deported to Malaysia – at no cost to taxpayers.

Baptcare has offered case management to the families prepared to accommodate the unaccompanied minors as well as individualised support to every child in care.

Mission Australia has offered its experience as one of the country's largest providers of homelessness and youth services to support the church with developing procedures to ensure the care of children is delivered at high standards and with cultural sensitivity.

For the past three years Baptcare has provided supported community-based accommodation, social work and advocacy to male asylum seekers while they await the outcome of their visa application.

Baptcare, Mission Australia and Crossway Baptist Church welcome the opportunity to work with government to create options to release asylum seeker children into the community where they will have access to the supports that every child deserves.

We believe this is a justice issue; to have sent unaccompanied asylum seeker children to Malaysia would have been letting them down.



Thank you

Are you one of our wonderful supporters?

Through a mixture of donations from people like you, grants from trusts and foundations, and bequests from people who provided for us in their Wills, last financial year we raised enough money to ensure Baptcare Sanctuary can keep running, maintain the homeless project, provide aged care homes with new equipment and initiate new family service programs.

This is the way that you contribute to the lives of the people we care for. Your involvement has made all this possible, whether as an individual or part of a community group or church. We are truly grateful.

Thank you also to those of you who completed our recent supporter survey. We are enjoying reading the responses and look forward to filling you in on some of our findings soon.

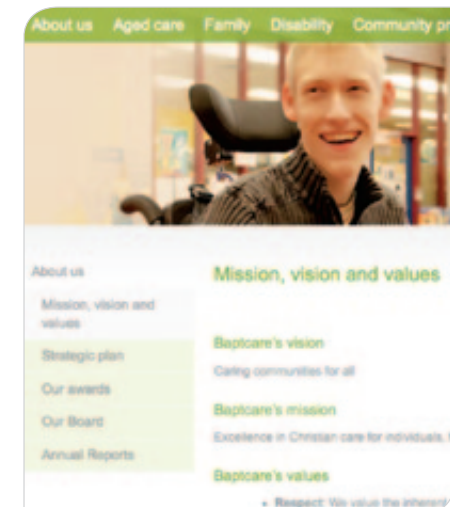
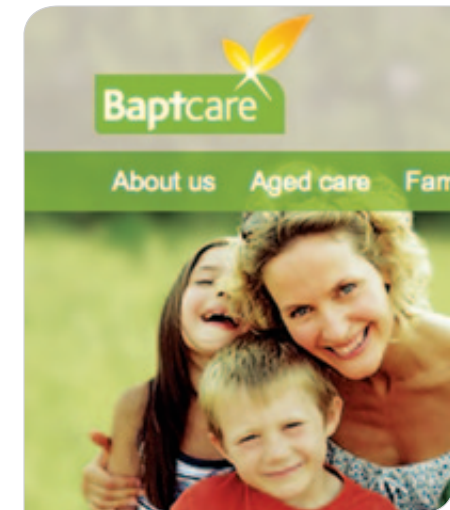
See the back page for our current appeal featuring Trudy & Judy.



Our new website!

Baptcare has launched a new website! You'll notice a completely new look and feel as well as fresh imagery and simple to use navigation tools, making it easier for you to find out how we can support you. The website also includes new content such as Baptcare's involvement in research, advocacy and social policy.

To view our latest website, visit www.baptcare.org.au.



Positive thinking challenges reality

Alex is a vibrant boy who enjoys school and is viewed as one of the popular kids by his class mates. He also has Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) Type 2.

SMA is a disease that affects the voluntary muscles that control walking, crawling, head and neck control and swallowing. Respiratory muscles are also affected leading to an increased risk of lung infections and associated problems. Alex uses special equipment to assist with breathing which also supports his lungs to expand well enough to help ease recurrent lung infections.

Life for the eight year and his family has come with many day-to-day challenges.

Three years ago, Baptcare started assisting Alex and his family through case management.

Baptcare's Case Manager, Rose, assists the entire family in various capacities including: monitoring Alex's medical and overall support needs; working with the family to set goals; applying for funding for equipment; and, ensuring Alex's needs are met within the planning timeframes.

"Due to Alex's condition, he is not able to

participate in many of the activities which his siblings are able to participate in.

"We have the most wonderful Case Manager. She has been supporting us for several years now. Not only does she source equipment but she provides us with the right support," said Lina, Alex's mum.

To keep Alex physically and emotionally stimulated, Baptcare purchased a special swing for him. The swing gives Alex a sense of joy and freedom away from the confines of his wheelchair which he relies on every day to get around.

"Alex loves the swing, he always has a good time in it," said Lina.

With Baptcare's support, Alex attends mainstream school. He receives support from integration aides with his school work and personal care needs.

"Alex loves school and he is popular with his class mates...he's always attending birthday parties. Without Baptcare, life would be a lot more difficult. We've always been given the best information for Alex, ensuring he has the best possible life," said Lina.



Pictured above: thanks to the support from Baptcare, Alex is able to enjoy the simple joys in life, like his special swing.

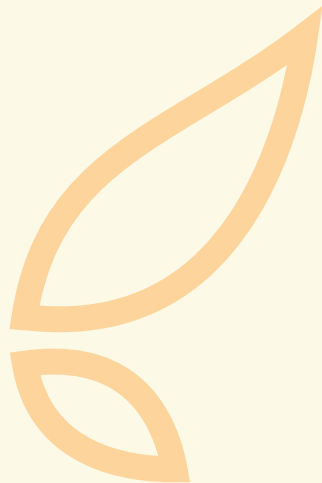


Pray for...

- More opportunities to purchase much needed equipment for families such as Alex's (p 10).
- Our asylum seekers waiting to hear the outcome of their visa applications.

Give thanks for...

- Baptcare, Mission Australia and Crossway Baptist's offer to care for unaccompanied minors (p 8).
- The Postnatal Depression Program at West Preston Baptist Church (p 3).
- All the staff who worked on the transition for Baptcare Wyndham Lodge (p 5).



Contemplation corner

I was reminded of the story of Alex and his swing (page 10) when I was reading the gospel passage for this edition of About (Matthew 11:16-30). This passage teaches us about God's call to joy, to lightness of being – this is the picture I have of Alex on his swing.

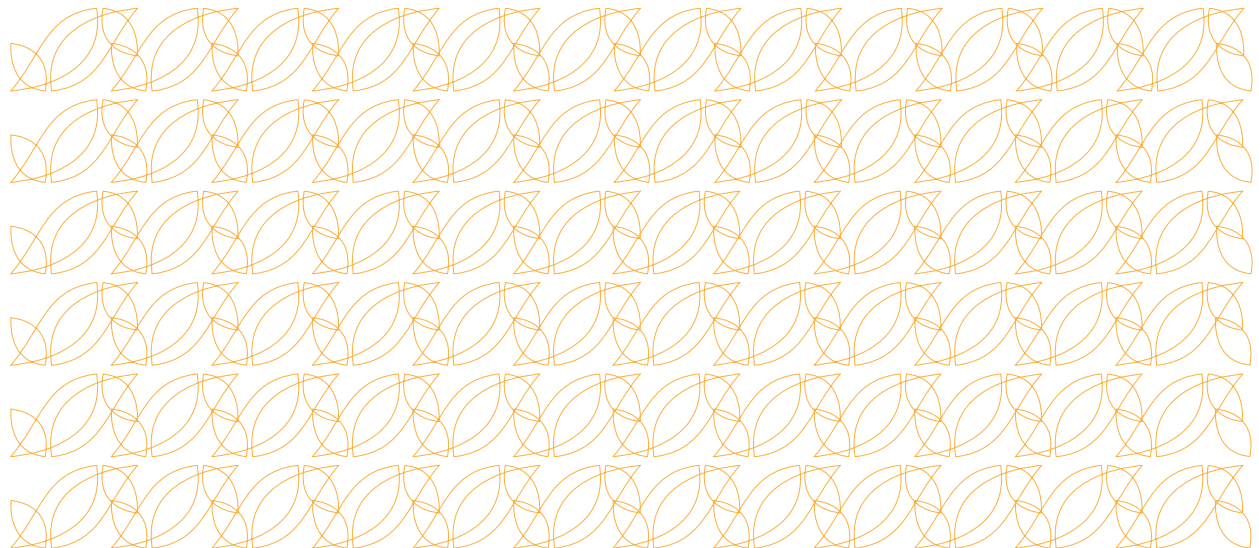
This passage also tells us that God has shown the truth to children, and reminds us of the importance of deeds ("wisdom is vindicated by her deeds" v19). In his enjoyment of his swing, Alex shows us a sign of the kingdom of heaven. Alex has also given us the chance to act, to respond to God's call to compassion. Alex is showing us how Jesus wants us to be in the world.

We are reminded by Matthew yet again about God being revealed not in what the tradition expects but a new way. Jesus has called us to let

him carry our burdens. How hard is it to let go of what weighs us down? How free are we to let down our guard and risk being called, as Jesus was, a drunkard and a glutton? To be associated with those who may be disruptive or have bad reputations – the sinners and tax collectors in Jesus' day (v19)?

Jesus doesn't want us to carry a heavy burden of piety, but rather, for Christians to feel the lightness of him carrying our burdens: "come to me, all you that are weary ...and I will give you rest," (v28). Let that be our prayer this season – that we will take a few risks in letting God handle those things that hold us back and that in doing this, we are freer to act wisely.

Ilsa Hampton
Pastoral care Manager





"I'm on my own and I never see anybody in the street. I only see neighbours once in a blue moon."

"Baptcare is keeping me going... They are absolutely wonderful, the whole lot of them!"

Spring appeal

At 88, Trudy is still living in the house she and her late husband built out of recycled materials just after the war in the 1940s. It is her home.

Four years ago when Trudy fractured her pelvis, daughter Judy was concerned about her Mum being at home alone for six weeks while she and her husband went overseas.

Judy looked into some options, but was "really discouraged" with the options available. Then she found Baptcare Brindabilla, a day centre for older people. "When Mum got involved with Baptcare Brindabilla, to me it was a great relief and a great joy," Judy said.

Being able to go on outings with Baptcare Brindabilla is improving Trudy's quality of life while living at home. She's not in isolation and its keeping her stimulated.

Four years on, Trudy still goes on an outing every Saturday. It could be anywhere from the Dandenongs to Werribee Mansion to the Footscray Market.

Baptcare Brindabilla (alongside Baptcare's other day centres in Melbourne and Tasmania) provides a wide range of programs which aim to encourage participation in a variety of activities, as well as friendship and connectedness within local communities.

Baptcare believes that every individual has the right to lead an independent lifestyle, filled with choice and flexibility.

We also understand that growing older comes with its unexpected obstacles, like Trudy's broken pelvis.

With more services available for support, older people are able to remain as independent as possible, while maintaining social connections.

As daughter Judy says, "Mum's always been out in the garden and that's marvellous. But it's still not the same as having that social contact and having somewhere like Brindabilla."

Your gift will help programs such as these to continue and develop. Our staff and carers are always coming up with new ideas to support our clients in the community and often the only thing that stops them from happening is the lack of funds.

While Baptcare receives government funding to provide general care, our commitment to caring for people at home leaves limited funds to help people connect to their community, through social support and lifestyle programs, such as the planned activity groups run through our day centres that Trudy attends, or new initiatives. It is these programs that can make the difference between a lonely life and a socially active life in the community.

Please donate today, at www.baptcare.org.au/SpringAppeal or via the attached coupon, so we can continue to provide such services, and create new ones, to alleviate the loneliness and vulnerability that older people living alone can so often feel.

Please help Baptcare to continue this important work.
Donate now at www.baptcare.org.au/SpringAppeal.

Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible. 100 percent of your donation will support Baptcare's lifestyle programs.

Yes! I will help Baptcare support people like Trudy.

Please accept my gift of:

\$25 \$50 \$120 \$200 OR \$ _____

OR I would like to give ongoing support of \$ _____ per month until further notice via a credit card deduction (please provide credit card details to the right).

Name: Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Email: _____

I would like to receive Baptcare's email newsletter.

DOB*: ____/____/____

Payment by:

Cheque (please make cheques payable to Baptcare)
 Mastercard Visa

Card number:

Expiry date: ____/____ Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

Please send me information on:

Bequests In memoriam donations
 I no longer wish to receive communications from Baptcare – please remove me from your mailing list.

Send to: The Fundraising Coordinator, Baptcare
PO Box 230, Hawthorn VIC 3122 OR phone (03) 9831 7222.
Visit www.baptcare.org.au to make an online donation.

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