

Media Release

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For immediate release

Using animal therapy to stimulate seniors in Camberwell

Everyone loves to cuddle a baby animal and seniors at Uniting AgeWell's Condare Court residence in Camberwell are no different.

Baby chicks, lambs, calves, goats and rabbits will strut their stuff at the newly refurbished Uniting AgeWell Condare Court site on Monday, April 11, from 1.30-3pm, for an afternoon of fun and interaction.

The 61-bed residence has undergone a major renovation and now has a pampering salon and hairdresser, multipurpose room, café and al fresco dining area.

Manager Integrated Services Helen Page says the animal visit is part of their sensory activity program for people with dementia.

"Research shows there are many therapeutic benefits with animal assisted therapy or activities and can reduce anxiety and improve self-esteem and social skills," she said.

"They provide people with dementia tactile and sensory experiences, eliciting a sense of comfort and security, and an opportunity to express their emotions through interacting and talking about the animals.

"Seniors also get a sense of validation and purpose by taking care and feeding the baby animals, promoting social behaviour such as smiling, laughing and eye contact.

"Some of our residents have farming backgrounds or a general love of animals. This will also provide opportunities for them to reminisce, triggering happy memories."

The afternoon will see residents, staff and visitors get close to the baby animals, interacting, patting and feeding them.

Helen says Condare Court has a pet friendly policy and supports and encourages visits from family pets.

"Two of our residents live on site with their cats," she said.

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Uniting AgeWell is an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia

Helen said residents were already enjoying the new amenities and are looking forward to using the area for more activities previously not possible.

Media are invited to attend the event:

Monday, April 11, 1:30pm-3pm

Uniting AgeWell Condare Court

8 Joffre Street Camberwell

Please contact Communications and Social Media Advisor John Le on: 0417 647 000, or email JLe@unitingagewell.org

About Uniting AgeWell

Uniting AgeWell is an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia with a long tradition of providing quality aged care services for older Australians. With services available throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria and Tasmania, Uniting AgeWell offers a range of specialised options to support health and wellbeing include independent and assisted living, home care, social support and therapy programs, respite and residential care communities. For further information visit www.unitingagewell.org