

GOOD NEWS STORIES: CELEBRATION, INNOVATION, CONNECTION & KINDNESS

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Once again, in a time of great challenges and difficulties, we have heard the most uplifting stories from our industry of the amazing things that people are doing and achieving. Whilst undergoing a collective trauma worldwide, we have seen the generosity of humans, the strength of those considered some of the most vulnerable, incredible innovations and kindness radiating from Aged Care workers, Residents, Organisations, their families and individuals across the world.

With a lot to focus on, a great of hard work ahead, and an experience that has turned normal life upside down, we think it is important that we aren't being bombarded with information. But we also think we get to enjoy our remarkable industry doing incredible things – so here is a collection of our current favourite 'Good News' stories to come out of the pandemic these last few months.

CELEBRATION

A 94 year old great-great Grandmother, in hospital with broken ribs after a fall, [recovered from coronavirus after she was diagnosed with it whilst in care](#). As she left hospital she was given a guard of honour and cheered by nurses. Reportedly she went home to enjoy a lamb roast. You can [watch the beautiful guard of honour here](#) (try not to cry!)

People over 70 are considered a much higher risk of becoming a fatality of COVID-19, so there has been a great deal of celebration for elderly survivors of the virus: A [104 year old](#) American man, a [102 year old](#) Italian woman and a [103 year old](#) Iranian woman have all recovered after being diagnosed with COVID-19.

In Western Australia, 100th birthday celebrations for Gwen Palmer had to be cancelled as a result of COVID-19, however a fellow Resident at her facility worked with other Residents to come up with another form of celebration that could be socially distanced – which ended up [being a trip in a vintage hot rod car](#). The car belongs to the son of another Resident, and is a lovely highlight of people working together to do the best we can in these times.

INNOVATION

With much of the world following strict social distancing guidelines, Aged Care facilities are getting extremely creative in ensuring guidelines are met whilst going about normal life. Some of the ones that have hit the news include:

- A Welsh facility came up with an excellent strategy for a socially distanced take on a board game – Hungry Hungry Hippos. You can [watch \(and thoroughly enjoy\) the video here](#). We've also seen images of socially distanced bingo in hallways of Aged Care facilities as seen in [this video here](#), and images from New South Wales facility [Christadelphian Aged Care's Chamberlain Gardens here](#).
- An 84 year old Italian Grandmother is running [live Pasta making classes](#) that stream online. You can join one of the [Nonnalive](#) sessions for a fee – but the classes are currently so popular it is booked well in advance.
- An Australian man who delivers Creative Therapeutic Engagement sessions to Aged Care facilities in NSW, has [adapted his program to be delivered through windows](#).

CONNECTION

Connection with others in a period where we are all being asked to isolate as much as possible, especially from those who are more vulnerable, has also [opened more doors for innovation](#). Of course, technology has been hugely helpful in linking families and friends who are separated, but there has also been a spike in letter writing. People are [catching up through windows](#), becoming [intergenerational pen pals](#) with Residents at a facility; or becoming [pen pals with their elderly neighbour](#). A granddaughter & her grandfather, who usually spent a lot of time with each other as they live in the same street, are undertaking [socially distanced dance-offs](#). No matter the means, people are doing incredible things to make sure they connect.

KINDNESS

Acts of kindness throughout this period have been everywhere, particularly where people are in positions of vulnerability or complete isolation. Food parcels have [packed and delivered across the UK by volunteers](#) to the vulnerable, and chefs are cooking additional meals for the children of teachers and essential workers. In Australia, Australia Post is helping with a Pharmacy Guild of Australia initiative to [provide free delivery from chemists for prescriptions](#); and meal delivery programs such as Meals on Wheels will be expanded. Back to the UK and [8 carers moved from their homes into the facilities](#) they worked in for the lockdown period, to help minimise risk. An extremely selfless act considering the sacrifice of not seeing their own families throughout this time.

Perhaps one of the most shared and celebrated acts has been the 99 year old WWII veteran Captain Tom Moore who [pledged to walk 100 laps of his backyard](#), in order to raise £1,000 for the UK's National Health Service (NHS). Instead of £1,000, the figure he has raised currently stands at over £27,000,000 (over \$53M AUD), with donations coming in from [all over the world](#). Captain Tom Moore plans to complete his 100 laps by his 100th birthday, on 30 April 2020. You can view or [donate to his cause here](#).

It seems fitting that with the amazing industry that we belong to that even more kindness comes from it. The founder of [Celebrate Ageing](#), Dr Catherine Barrett, has founded The Kindness Pandemic (#TheKindnessPandemic) a group to support people whose lives

have been impacted by COVID-19 (which is most people), via connection and volunteering. [#TheKindnessPandemic](#) opens avenues for and gives ideas for support to various people in this time, such as health workers and supermarket workers, and partners with PlayGroup Australia (the team behind the intergenerational study 'Old people's home for 4 year olds') to [help support older people](#) with connection during this time.

Whilst these are incredibly difficult circumstances to live through, especially for our industry, it is wonderful to see that joy and kindness is still evident.

We'll leave you with some [fantastic advice](#) on staying safe and protecting yourselves and others throughout this time from an Italian grandmother.

There are many excellent resources out there and we highly recommend keeping up to date with all the Aged Care peak bodies, who continue to provide a great deal of support and information in this time; the Ageing Agenda, Talking Aged Care, the Weekly Source & the Donaldson Sisters for timely Aged Care news; and the Department of Health updates.

For key facts of the big changes for Aged Care during COVID-19, we've put together a quick [article that you can find here](#).



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