

# Media Release

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**February 2016**



## **ACH Group's innovation recognised with national awards**

A commitment to delivering inclusive services for older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) individuals and communities has earned ACH Group a national award.

The Free to Be Project was one of two ACH Group programs presented an Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Better Practice at Mile End this month (Wednesday 10 February).

Under the three-year project, more than 730 of ACH Group's 1700 staff and 500 volunteers complete LGBTI awareness training internally developed and facilitated by the group.

Free to Be Project Officer Robyn Burton says the organisation began its journey towards becoming intentionally LGBTI inclusive in 2012.

"While our organisation prides itself on promoting good lives for all older people, we recognised that older people from LGBTI communities have specific physiological and psychological needs that have come as a result of historical and ongoing discrimination," she says.

An LGBTI Champions Program has been established and the Free To Be Project plans to apply for the Rainbow Tick at the end of this year, which endorses the fact that ACH Group meets the needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex consumers.

A second award was presented to ACH Group for its early intervention and recovery programs for residential customers.

The award recognised ACH Group's commitment to rehabilitation and early intervention by creating a partnership between residents and staff.

ACH Group Healthy Ageing Project Coordinator Samantha Manoel says interventions include tailored goals that are developed in consultation with the resident and incorporate individual choice and preferences.

“Interventions aim to promote physical activity and/or sensory stimulation while encouraging healthy life choices. Results from a review of residents on an early intervention pathway in the last 12 months indicate that 89 per cent are still walking.”

Presenting the awards, Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency SA branch representative Virginia Matthews praised ACH Group for its achievements.

She said from 247 applications, three of the 31 national winners were from South Australia and two of those were from ACH Group.

“We recognise that there are constraints and challenges in running an aged care organisation,” Ms Matthews said. “This award reflects your commitment to go beyond routine provision of care and achieve at a high level.

“This is acknowledgement that ACH Group is among the leaders in aged care in Australia.”

To qualify for a better practice award, programs had to demonstrate they were original, evidence-based, consumer-focused, linked to continuous improvement and subject to evaluation.

ACH Group has eight residential facilities that are home to over 680 older people.

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## **About ACH Group**

ACH Group is a not-for-profit aged care organisation that has been offering services to support good lives for older people in South Australia since 1952.

As well as a range of accommodation options across Adelaide, the Fleurieu Peninsula and East Melbourne, the group offers a range of health, wellbeing, respite and support services, help at home and social activities.

Our 1700 specialist staff and hundreds of volunteers share the belief that older people should be valued and respected, connected to their communities and in control of their lives.

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