

# Media Release

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 2018**



## Denis brings dance to Kapara

He's known for wearing fluorescent orange shorts and he's bringing joy to residents of ACH Group's residential care home Kapara.

The home's personal trainer Denis Pick's music-based exercise class is not just a hit with residents living with dementia – he has staff and volunteers up and dancing, too.

Every Friday Denis brings hula hoops, balls and stretch bands and a CD loaded with music that crosses cultures and eras.

This week he's playing Jimmy Barnes, Justin Timberlake, Arabic and Irish traditional music, along with Ed Sheeran's 'Perfect' and Elvis Presley's 'All Shook Up'.

The group sits in a circle and clap, tap feet and sing along if they choose, get up and dance, join a conga line or stand up and move to the music.

"We notice how much it animates people and brings joy; in the presence of Denis and his music we can see real changes – it is amazing," says ACH Group Dementia Co-Design Consultant Jodie Roberts. "I argued with him about his choice of music at first but he was right, it really does work. People are left with beautiful positive feelings that can last for the rest of the day if not the next day, too."

Denis was first introduced to ACH Group when his mother Ruth came to live at Kapara in 2009. He started volunteering; helping out in the on-site gym and with classes, and was offered a permanent role which he does alongside his other PT contract work.

He started the class about five years ago and finds it brings him great personal rewards.

"I love it – it's very close to my favourite part of the week," Denis says. "The whole room lights up and even when people can't remember that I have been here, the happiness lives on."

"For me, I felt my mum could not have had better care here, and I'm really glad to be able to give something back."

Denis says the class evolved 'gradually'. "I thought it would be logistically more sensible for me to come here and try to get more people involved in exercise," he says. "We started using music as a way to energise and animate people. I find that when I play music from the 1940s, it elicits an emotional response, whereas if you play ACDC or Cold Chisel, you'll get a physical response – people will move their feet and clap and respond to the rhythm."

Jodie says for people living with dementia, finding ways to remain active can be a challenge.

"By simply meeting customers in their own unit and doing a group session that is fun and light-hearted, it is just so successful. It really shows how important movement and music are for people living with dementia. It is just one of so many great initiatives, from our resident choirs (HenPower program) to our interactive mural, that really encourage people to remain connected and engaged."

ACH Group is a leader in specialist dementia services including its Tailor Made Project, established in 2015 as a new respite model for people living with younger onset dementia. Kapara, like all of ACH Group's eight residential homes, adopts a 'Healthy Ageing' approach, encouraging people to remain as active and independent for as long as possible.

**\*End Media Release\***

**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 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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