



**ACH
GROUP**

Good Lives for
Older People

**Annual Review
2023/24**

ABOUT ACH GROUP

Founded in 1952, ACH Group is a trusted South Australian not-for-profit organisation supporting older people to live good lives.

As one of the state's leading aged care providers, ACH Group supports thousands of older South Australians.

In addition to a wide variety of accommodation offerings, with more than 550 retirement living units and nine residential care homes located across metropolitan Adelaide and the Fleurieu Peninsula, ACH Group provides a wide range of help at home, health, wellbeing, respite, and social experiences.

BOARD MEMBERS

Imelda Lynch (Chair)

Julie Mitchell (Deputy Chair)

Mark Balnaves (Treasurer)

Craig Holden

Michael Luchich

Celine McInerney

Tracey Scott

Scott Long



FROM THE CHAIR

As we reflect on the year gone by, it is with great pride that I present the Chair's report for ACH Group.

The 2023-2024 financial year presented both challenges and opportunities, and we remained committed to providing the highest standard of care for the people we care for. We refreshed our Board with two new members, Ms Tracey Scott and Mr Scott Long. Tracey is a trusted senior executive with significant expertise in financial management, reporting and governance and Scott is an experienced legal practitioner with an accomplished background in regulation, corporate governance and commercial law.

We continued to invest and were very proud to open our newest \$40 million residential aged care home – named Healthia- in Elizabeth South. Healthia is the first residential care home in Australia to partner with the Green House Project (GHP) which combines 'small-scale' home design with a person-directed model of care, creating an environment that goes beyond "homelike" to being a "real home".

At Healthia, the individual choices of residents determine the rhythm of their day and the rhythm of the house. As I write, Healthia, has only been open for just over 12 months but the feedback from the model is very positive with residents reporting greater independence and staff being more engaged and empowered. ACH Group believes Healthia has the potential to transform the way aged care homes are designed and operated in Australia.

The Board set ACH Group's strategic agenda - ***Shaping Tomorrow, Together. Shaping Tomorrow, Together*** is a bold and progressive growth strategy to invest in our services, assets and our people, over the next 10 years. We will continue to review our asset portfolio to ensure we are able to meet the needs of older South Australians into the future.

Our focus has been on providing person centred care, and enhancing the services we offer in the ever- evolving aged care landscape. We have strengthened our approach by incorporating feedback from our customers, residents and families. Our dedicated teams work tirelessly to ensure we deliver on our purpose of 'good lives for older people'.

We continued to maintain our strong relationships with local communities, families and volunteers who have supported us throughout the year. Their involvement has contributed immensely to creating a vibrant, social atmosphere within our homes. Additionally, we continued to offer opportunities for our customers and residents to engage in social, cultural and recreational activities, enhancing their wellbeing and connection with their communities.

Whilst we have made significant strides in our operations and service delivery, we have also faced challenges, particularly in areas such as staff shortages and adapting to regulatory changes. We remained focused on addressing these challenges through careful planning and continued investment in both technology and training of our workforce. Our latest cultural survey results highlight a significantly engaged workforce who love what they do and where they work.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Board of Directors, our outgoing CEO Frank Weits and our incoming CEO Linda Feldt, executive team, staff and volunteers for their unwavering commitment and dedication. Your collective efforts have made this year's progress possible and I look forward to what we will achieve together in the year ahead. To our residents, customers and families thank you for choosing ACH Group to support you to live well.

Imelda Lynch
Chair



ACH Group CEO Linda Feldt with resident John Scragg and home manager Dan Gordon

FROM THE CEO

It is a privilege to be appointed by the ACH Group Board as the sixth Chief Executive Officer of such a proud organisation. I am delighted to lead ACH Group into the future.

Firstly, and most importantly, I want to thank our brilliant ACH Group workforce for the work they do every day to deliver on our purpose of good lives for older people. Their passion ensures residents and customers can continue to remain connected to their community, stay as healthy as they can be and age well.

Not a day goes by where I don't hear positive feedback from our workforce, stakeholders, or the community about the positive difference that ACH Group is making in people's lives.

ACH Group has grown its workforce by 200 in the past year, with a focus on attracting and retaining talent in a competitive environment. Our people are our biggest asset and our refreshed reward and recognition program ensures their hard work and achievements are appreciated and recognised. Almost 80 per cent of our workforce participated in ACH Group's annual culture survey. With engagement at record levels, the views and suggestions of our people will see us become an even better place to work, learn, develop and grow careers.

We continue to see progress on the major infrastructure projects that will further expand our service offerings for older South Australians. I am grateful to all those involved in the building and opening of our newest residential home, Healthia; it is so rewarding to see residents enjoying their new home.

ACH Group's commitment to delivering the best possible support and services to older South Australians continues to see us consistently perform well during regulatory and quality assurance assessment visits. ACH Group has achieved re-accreditation and full compliance to the Aged Care Standards across all of our residential homes and services.

ACH Group continues to make positive progression in terms of sustainability, finishing this financial year in a position of strength and reporting a statutory net profit of \$14.8 million, up from \$6.6 million in the 2022-2023 financial year. This positive budget performance will provide important funds to be invested in our people, services and assets.

Significant progress in the development and transformation of our digital systems was also made this year which will ensure we continue to exceed customer service expectations. I am happy to share that our customers will see some major changes very soon that will further enhance their experience with us.

ACH Group remains well placed and committed to supporting older South Australians to live good lives now and into the future.

Linda Feldt
CEO

OUR STORIES

Di Tyson, 78, never thought her almost three-year search to find a house to call home would end after being referred to ACH Group.

Di was referred to the ACH Group Short-Term Restorative Care team in July, just after she had returned to Adelaide from Queensland and had started living in a friend's rumpus room. The program provides a range of supports for people who may be starting to struggle with everyday tasks and face an increased risk of hospitalisation.

It was during her time receiving support from this program Di met ACH Group Social Worker Fiona Panizzon. Fiona said the great strength of ACH Group being a full-service aged care provider meant she could advocate within the organisation to support Di with her pressing housing needs.

"When I met Di, I immediately checked she was on the public, community and over 55s affordable housing lists but getting a house that way can take a long time," she said.

"The stars really aligned though, and the answer was much closer to home within ACH Group.

"I became aware that an ACH Group rental unit was available, and I was able to advocate for Di directly with our housing team. Di inspected the house, was offered the lease, and moved in within three weeks."

Di said upon moving in she had already made friends in the new house and everyone in the neighboring units had been extremely welcoming.

"I think I'm going to be happy here," she said.

Di Tyson with the keys to her new retirement living home



Year in Review

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Connected Communities is a key component of the *Shaping Tomorrow, Together* strategy that acknowledges that more can be achieved when we partner and build relationships.

Through Connected Communities we are committed to collaborate with communities, education and health sectors to improve well-being and foster social connections.

Connected Communities promotes a sense of belonging where people accessing different services from ACH Group can interact and get to know each other.

Emphasising social connections, this approach fosters wellbeing and healthy living for older people, ensuring they receive the necessary support they need to live a good life.

In northern Adelaide, residential care home features unique partnerships with the University of South Australia and the Northern Adelaide Local Health Network. Co-located at Healthia is a student-led GP and allied health clinic that provides students with exposure to a career in aged care and provides a formal pathway to develop and grow the aged care workforce.

From September 2023 to June 2024, more than 150 people were admitted through this program at Healthia. A rehabilitation model in partnership with Northern Adelaide Local Health Network is supporting people from Adelaide's northern suburbs to receive clinical care in a home setting.

Customers taking part in an exercise class at Health Studio Christie Downs



CLINICAL GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY

In the 2023-2024 financial year, ACH Group embedded its new operating model within both home care and our residential care homes. This has led to notable improvements in the National Quality Indicator Program measures, feedback and complaint management, clinical risk management and continuous improvement programs.

All ACH Group residential care homes successfully retained their accreditation, showcasing our robust clinical governance structure and service delivery, to align with industry and aged care standards.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) has acknowledged and praised the dedication and efforts of our workforce throughout this process. All ACH Group residential care homes maintained the industry standard rating of at least 3-stars during the 2023-2024 financial year.

ACH Group welcomes and values feedback from customers, families, and representatives, as it helps the organisation to better understand the experiences of customers and representatives when receiving care and services.

Feedback supports the organisation to continually improve and enhance the quality services provided. The volume of feedback from residential care residents increased by 20 per cent from the previous financial year (925 items in 2022-23 to 1117 items in 2023-2024).

ACH Group moved to further elevate the voice of our customers with the establishment of a Consumer Advisory Body for Home Care and Community, to complement the Resident Committees at each of our residential care homes. These Consumer Advisory Bodies will ensure that customer feedback continues to be supported and provides valuable insights for continuous improvement of our care and services.

The Clinical Governance Committee is the standing governing and advisory body for all issues relating to clinical care delivery. This governing body, along with managers, clinicians and staff share the responsibility and accountability to ensure quality of care; continuously improving, minimising risks and fostering an environment of excellence in care. ACH Group has benefitted from the inclusion of key external experts in Professor Sue Gordon and leading aged care and nursing expert Robina Bradley.

Food quality spot audits also returned favourable results at Colton Court, Perry Park, and West Park residential care homes. ACH Group has introduced significant improvements for resident's mealtime experience informed by customer feedback.

This has included:

- Additional training in food service (including agency workforce) to ensure a higher-quality dining experience for residents,
- A range of new and exciting menu options on our seasonal menus, designed in collaboration by our chefs and expert dietitians,
- Provided additional training and education to our workforce to ensure residents are informed of the alternative meal options available at every mealtime,
- Invested in new Combi Ovens with the latest technology to improve the meal time experience for residents.
- Creation of new menu picture guides for residents to select meals from, and to ensure greater consistency in presentation and plating,
- A greater variety of nutritionally balanced and high protein mid-meal snacks designed by our chefs and expert dietitians from Central Kitchen.

WORKFORCE

ACH Group is committed to attracting and retaining a talented workforce. Our workforce has grown to almost 2000, with more than 200 unique roles.

Recruitment and attraction

Our people are our greatest asset.

ACH Group continues to develop our employee value proposition that will ensure we can attract future talent and be seen as a highly regarded employer of choice.

This year we streamlined our onboarding process with the development of a new digital platform. This has enabled many more new workers to commence more quickly and seamlessly with us than ever before.

ACH Group is also an active participant in job fairs and events that enable us to showcase the opportunities that exist within the organisation. In addition, recruitment occurs frequently and across multiple locations to ensure our potential candidates can access their future job opportunity with us easily.

Since the beginning of 2024, ACH Group has hired 661 new employees with an overall headcount increase of 204. Residential services had the largest intake of new starters with 439, this intake was primarily driven by the opening of ACH Group's new residential care home, Healthia. Of the 439 new employees, 245 were personal care workers, 72 registered nurses and 54 catering assistants.

Health and Community Services welcomed 167 new starters with community north (36) and community south (35) having the largest intakes.

Volunteers

Volunteer numbers continue to rebound following a huge reduction during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In total, ACH Groups 158 volunteers contributed 36,285 hours of support to our residents and customers. About 17 per cent of new volunteers' transition to paid employment with ACH Group or other organisations.

The impact ACH Group volunteers make to our customers and residents goes beyond data, providing invaluable companionship and support to older South Australians.

Culture

ACH Group is committed to creating a safe and inclusive workplace where people can be their best self, grow in their profession and feel valued and listened to. We believe our people are often the best source of ideas for improvement and we are committed to proactively listening to their views. One of the major platforms we have for engaging with our employees is through our annual culture survey.

ACH Group achieved a 79 per cent participation rate in the 2024 Annual Culture Survey. This is the highest participation rate achieved since launching the survey in 2022, with 1442 of our people sharing their views.

The ACH Group workforce indicated through an engagement index score of 82 per cent that they experience a sense of belonging, are motivated, their work fills them with a feeling of accomplishment, and they would recommend ACH Group to others as a great place to work. This engagement score exceeds the national benchmark and is an 8-point increase on the prior year, which is a truly great reflection of the strong workforce culture that exists at ACH Group.

LEADERSHIP, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

In 2024, we successfully delivered our GREEN Leadership Program to 85 leaders, strengthening leadership capabilities across the organisation. We also launched a state-of-the-art digital learning platform, integrating best-practice e-learning modules from our learning partners Ausmed and GO1. This initiative ensures our workforce has access to high-quality, up-to-date learning opportunities, supporting our commitment to continuous improvement.

ACH Group has implemented a formal change management process, including a range of tools, resources and education for leaders set to embark on organisational change.

These resources will provide the tools and support our leaders need to manage change more effectively for our workforce.

A suite of leadership development programs has also been provided to leaders to help them develop. This has included:

- A professional development project for senior leaders
- Monthly Management Essentials Program
- Leaders Forum
- Tailored leadership offerings and coaching as requested or where identified.

The ongoing support provided to senior leaders is essential as ACH Group continues to cultivate an inspirational and accountable workplace where leaders are well-equipped to deliver on organisational strategy.

ACH GROUP WORKFORCE

17.81%

of workforce have worked for ACH Group for more than 10 years

36,285

hours contributed by

164 volunteers

1,992 employees

OUR STORIES

Eunice Kiarie landed the job of her dreams in 2024 after working with ACH Group as a volunteer. In November, Eunice began volunteering with ACH Group at Kapara to fulfill her passion for caring for older people.

After two months' volunteering, she had formed strong connections with residents and loved the workforce culture. "I was welcomed with open arms and immediately connected with the residents and the other workers," she said.

"It didn't take long for me to think 'my goodness, I would love to work here'. I didn't go into volunteering thinking it would transform into a career I love – but it has."

By early 2024, Eunice's work with residents had been noticed by leaders at Kapara and she was encouraged to apply for a job as a Care Worker.

In February, Eunice landed the job of her dreams. Eunice said volunteering can be an excellent way into a profession that gives you a unique insight into the work and the organisation prior to beginning.

"For me volunteering was the best place to start," she said. "As a volunteer I realised that I really liked the place, I really liked the work, and I really liked the people. It meant that when I got the job, I knew that I was coming into an environment that I knew I was going to be happy."

ACH Group Volunteer Manager Cate Balfour-Ogilvy said volunteers form an integral part of the support ACH Group provides for older South Australians.

"The impact our volunteers have on the quality of lives of our residents and customers is huge," she said.

"Volunteering is such a beautiful and selfless thing to do, and I'd like to thank all the volunteers across South Australia for the contribution they make.

"It can also be a great entry point into the workforce with about 20 per cent of our volunteers going on to get paid employment."

Eunice Kiarie,
ACH Group Care Worker



GROWTH

ACH Group recorded strong growth in 2023-2024 across its portfolios building on its commitment to providing great quality care and support for older people.

We provided services to more than 7800 home care and community customers and continued to deliver robust growth in home care packages.

Retirement living remains an attractive housing option with 39 new residents welcomed.

Our residential care homes again held strong occupancy rates above 95 per cent, affirming our dedication to creating nurturing environments that meet the needs and prioritise the wellbeing of residents.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

ACH Group's exciting journey of digital re-invention and transformation continued in 2023-2024. The work is critical to future proof our data management and business intelligence systems to ensure they are fit for purpose as the sector moves towards a digital future.

In 2023-2024, ACH Group improved digital infrastructure at several residential homes in preparation for the rollout of our state-of-the-art Nursecall system. Healthia and Perry Park went live during this period with upgrades made to existing installations.

The Service Transformation program continued to build and test an end-to-end digital solution for home care in preparation for go live. The new solution is one of the most advanced digital home care platforms available in Australia and positions ACH Group well to meet the evolving needs of aged care reform.

The Healthlink Messaging System was implemented to securely exchange electronic information between GPs and laboratories, radiologists, specialists, allied health providers and hospitals.

PROPERTY

Healthia

ACH Group's \$40 million aged care, health, and education hub that reimagines aged care and will improve the health outcomes of the local community officially opened on 20 September 2023.

Healthia, featuring a state-of-the-art residential care home and GP, nursing, and allied health clinic, sits within the Playford Health and Wellbeing Precinct in Adelaide's northern suburbs.

The hub developed by ACH Group brings together the University of South Australia, Northern Adelaide Local Health Network (NALHN), and City of Playford.

ACH Group's 96-place residential care home has adopted an innovative small household-built form comprising eight purpose-built single-storey homes in a village setting. The homes feature 12 self-contained resident

rooms with ensuites; a large open plan living, kitchen and dining area; and features commonly found in traditional houses so residents can participate in the daily house activities if they wish.

We partner with NALHN in one small home to help transition older people from hospital to their home or more suitable accommodation.

The co-located UniSA Health Clinic, an integrated GP, nursing, and allied health clinic, also provides services to residents and the surrounding local community with a combination of professional and lower-cost student-assisted services.

PROPERTY STATISTICS

New retirement living residents welcomed	39
Enquiries	430
Number of unit inspections conducted	535
Requests actioned by ACH Group maintenance team	7,719
Residential care rooms refurbished	74



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Social

ACH Group continued to build upon its industry leading social program in 2023-2024.

In an Australian-first, ACH Group partnered with Uber Assist to provide transport for people attending social programs in the community. The partnership included the development of a more rigorous notification system for customers to be alerted when their vehicle arrived as well as greater safeguards to ensure that customers can get to and from events safely.

ACH Group's Social Experiences Guide continues to be a beloved publication providing a pathway into a range of activities to keep older South Australians connected. More than 1200 customers connected with ACH Group's social program through long lunches, bus tours and getaways highlighted in the Social Experiences Guide

ACH Group participated in the hugely popular South Australian Living Artists (SALA) Festival providing community, residential and retirement living customers an opportunity to showcase their creative side by showcasing their artwork as part of the festival.

Residential Care

ACH Group's beloved Sing for Joy choirs are now offered in all nine residential care homes. Sing for Joy Choirs are led by an experienced choir director and provide an opportunity for residents to celebrate the joy of singing by coming together in a fun and relaxed way.

Residents were given the opportunity to participate in the Masters Games across all residential care homes, with opening and closing ceremonies and three weeks of games to participate in.

ACH Group also continued to support the availability of a fantastic lineup of entertainers visiting aged care homes from Moovin Melvin, Will Metzer (Jazz Duo), juggler Michael Conner, Adelaide String Duo and Libby O'Donovan. For the first time in 2023-2024, ACH Group held an inaugural Winter Wonderland to deliver a Christmas in July lunch for residents.

ACH Group also piloted virtual reality headsets at Milpara, allowing residents a chance to visit famous locations from across the world.

Retirement Living

ACH Group piloted The Australian Centre for Social Innovation and Think Human's *Mindset for Life* transition program for retirement living customers. *Mindset for Life* is a group-based personal development program for people nearing or at retirement age to help identify their skills and strengths and aspirations for retirement. The workshops are designed to support older people to develop a positive plan for their retirement.

For the first time, an art instructor from ACH Group and the community extended SALA art classes to retirement living customers to take part in the festival.

Christmas events were held at each retirement living hub as well as a series of social events at each retirement living hub throughout the year.

OUR STORIES

Virtual reality has reopened a world of travel Bessie Dickins feared had closed to her.

Bessie has been involved in a trial of Neuron VR headsets at Milpara Residential Care Home at Rostrevor.

The technology is loaded with hundreds of programs that allows users to visit hundreds of travel destinations.

Bessie, an avid traveller, said her biggest joy in life had been exploring every inch of Australia in her trusty campervan.

"I've always had the travel bug and I've explored Australia and the world extensively but you can't see it all," she said.

"I've got to revisit places I've been before from a different perspective but more importantly I've got to visit places I've never been before."

"I think it is marvelous technology and I just can't wait to put the headsets on again and again."

During the trial, Bessie strolled underneath the blooming Jacarandas in Toowoomba, soared over the Katherine Gorge in a helicopter and reclining on the banks of the Nepean River watching fishermen.

Community Connector Lead at Milpara Taylor Digance said the trial had also allowed our workforce greater scope to get to know residents.

"We do the sessions with the residents together, so we get to see what they see and feel what they feel," she said.

"As they recall moments through the VR, we get to know them better as people."

Bessie Dickins,
resident of Milpara



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND RESEARCH

Establishing and expanding strategic partnerships and ensuring our decisions are guided by best-practice research remained a key strategic focus for ACH Group in 2023-2024.

As the first provider in Australia to partner with the Green House Project (GHP) at Healthia, ACH Group partnered with builder Sarah Constructions and architect Brown Falconer to fund a comprehensive evaluation. ACH Group engaged the Rosemary Bryant AO Research Centre to conduct a 2-year research project into the implementation of GHP at Healthia.

The report will analyse resident, workforce, and stakeholder feedback into the implementation of the new model of care at Healthia. The aim of the research is to evaluate the implementation, effectiveness, and suitability of the model of care that has been developed in partnership with the GHP.

ACH Group partnered with students from the University of South Australia's Bachelor of Design course to do a visual overhaul of residential aged care menus. The menus have been graphically treated to include a photo of the meal, as well as easy to understand icons highlighting the main ingredients in meals. The menus will allow residents to see what their meal will look like ahead of time and will be designed to a professional level unlike any other menus in the sector.

In partnership with Aged Care Research and Industry Innovation Australia (ARIIA), Dementia Training Australia and Flinders University, ACH Group has embedded sustainable training for frontline workers to support them to engage effectively with residents living with dementia. The 'Engagement Matters' Implementation Guide aims to equip residential aged care providers with the knowledge and tools to implement a dementia education and coaching model to inform frontline workers in engagement and approaches to care. The aim of the model is to provide education and coaching to build capability in recognising triggers to changed behaviour and promote effective engagement, communication and person-centred care practice."



OUR STORIES

“Engagement with purpose is driving a remarkable improvement in the quality of life for people living with dementia at ACH Group’s Milpara Residential Care Home.

Residents at Milpara’s Memory Support Unit are experiencing a dramatic increase in engagement and quality of life and a major reduction in falls since the introduction of the Rhythm of the Day program in 2023.

The program has embedded a sustainable model of care to support residents with advanced dementia to re-engage in everyday life through expanded social engagement, physical activity, and cognitive stimulation.

Spearheading the program is a new full time Engagement Lead Rita Grexa.

“What this program has done is encouraged people to retake control of their own lives,” she said. “The results have been staggering and we’ve seen a substantial increase in almost every quality of life and quality of care metric since we’ve started the program.”

Learning and Development Business Partner Teresa Moran said a recent review of the program had highlighted its success.

“So many of our fundamental indicators of our residents living a good life haven’t just improved they’ve improved out of sight,” she said.

“Our residents are reporting an increase in feeling happy, more independence, more to do and more support to make their own decisions.”

“By embedding engagement so centrally into an advanced dementia environment we now have empirical proof of the positive benefit it can have for our residents.”

In addition to the work of Rita, the program has also come with significant environmental modifications with new wall art, room name signs, and seating creating a more home-like environment for residents.”



Rita Grexa, ACH Group's Engagement Lead

THE ACH GROUP COMMUNITY IN NUMBERS

Retirement Living

568 total Units 667 total Residents

	Units	Residents
Rental Units	75	75
Resident Funded Units	223	265
Independent Living Units	270	327

Health Services

4,000 total customers

Short Term Restorative Care
 Community Transitional Care
 Private Customers
 Commonwealth Home Support Program

Home Support

+7,000 total customers

Programs

Private Service (customer funded)
 Commonwealth Home Support Program
 Home Care Packages Levels 1 – 4

Services

Domestic Assistance	Personal Care
Social Support	Allied Health
Food Services	Respite
Home Maintenance	Transport

Residential Care, Transitional Care, and Respite

	Places
Colton Court	37
Highercombe	126
Healthia	84
Healthia - Transitional Care	12
Kapara	137
Milpara	93
Perry Park	117
West Park	60
Yankalilla Centre	63
ViTA	60
ViTA - Bangka Straight	20

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

ACH Group recorded a strong profit for purpose result of \$14.86 million in the 2023-2024 financial year as a result of further improvements in operating profit and the revaluation of assets. Net Assets improved by \$19.71 million.

This positive financial performance will provide important funds to be reinvested across ACH Group's operating portfolio.

Full audited financial statements are available on ACH Group's website.

Total Assets
\$462.3m

Total Liabilities
\$259.2m

Total Income
\$194.9m

Total Expenses
\$180.0m



Good Lives for
Older People

ACH Group is a not-for-profit community organisation promoting opportunities and services to support good lives for older people since 1952.

Let's talk **1300 22 44 77** Visit achgroup.org.au

