A Warm Goodbye

We would like to thank you for your involvement in LEAP. We have enjoyed meeting 164 clients and their families, and training 199 care workers. Of these 199 care workers, 36 attended one training session; 39 attended two; 48 attended three; and 76 attended all four sessions.

Six months after we began LEAP at Baptist Community Services Liverpool and Karing, the Australian Nursing Home Foundation, Multicultural Community Care Services and The Whiddon Group Glenfield, we examined care plans of participating clients to see if the program had made a difference. We found that 61.4% of clients had a social or recreational activity in their care plans, and 38.6% of clients had a specific social or recreational goal.

Some of these goals were:

- Resume landscape painting
- Sort through old family photos
- Join a local exercise class
- Go to the library weekly to read and borrow books
- Listen to favourite music
- Paint nails
- Read the newspaper
- Go for a walk
- Go to the library weekly to read and borrow books

Some of the activity ideas were:
Lian Rong Gao’s husband passed away last year. It was a very upsetting time for Mrs Gao, and her family were worried about her health. Together ANHF care staff, Liang Rong Gao and her family came up with a plan for Mrs Gao to cook once a week. The care worker prepares a recipe; the family prepares the ingredients; and Mrs Gao and her care worker have a lovely time together making (and eating!) dumplings, Chinese buns, dim sum and other traditional meals. Mrs Gao describes it as a very special time with her care workers, where she gets to reminisce about life, her husband and when she was young, and her family have noticed how much happier she is.

Duong Ngoc Tiem finds it difficult to go out, so she wanted to learn to use the internet as a way to keep connected with the world. ANHF care workers have been helping her learn this skill. She especially loves reading articles on healthy living, and browsing the internet for new recipes. Her next goal is to learn how to send emails, so that she can better keep in touch with her sister in Hong Kong.

At 93 years of age, Dr Elisabeth Kirkby is the oldest person in Australia’s history to earn a PhD. Dr Kirkby graduated from the University of Sydney last April. Her thesis looked at the impact of the Great Depression in Australia. She quotes Mark Twain as her inspiration, “Anyone who stops learning is old, whether 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning is young. The greatest thing you can do is keep your mind young.” When talking about retirement, Dr Kirkby said that the most important thing is to “find something interesting to do, something you’ve always wanted to do and maybe never have the opportunity because too many other things happened in your life.”

Keep learning to keep your mind young....

Associate Professor Lee-Fay Low, Dr Jess Baker and the LEAP team wish you all well in continuing to incorporate meaningful activities into your life and work