



CMA Newsletter



December 2004

The Festive Season is upon us and the staff of Care Managers Australia wishes you a very safe, happy and special Christmas and let's not forget a successful new year. *Andrew Schloss (Editor) & John Dangerfield (CEO)*

Continued

The response we received in our first edition was great. The newsletter sat on people's desks for weeks, with highlighter marks through them and copies forwarded throughout services. So a big thanks for your encouragement!

This edition we bring you some more useful information and a request for you to tell us what you want to know about and we will try to include your needs in future editions.

Survey at what cost

Everywhere I go I find organisations using surveys as the tool of choice in trying to find out what people think of their service and to demonstrate compliance to their applicable accreditation scheme.

Regardless what accreditation scheme you fall under, the need to provide objective evidence of compliance will be required..

Organisations approach this issue differently with varying degrees of success, and cost. If you are going to survey then it is important to know the limitations of surveys and what they cost you both in real and hidden terms.

Popular surveys include industry benchmarking survey tools, outsourced surveys and internal surveys.

In real terms the cost is related to how you gather the information verses the benefit it provides. Time, resources, distribution and even consultants fees.

Hidden costs really only come out if your survey process is poor and you're seen to be only providing lip service to the process. The end result might be an erosion of morale of residents and staff, and even your credibility.

I recently read a study that suggested 20 % of people will answer untruthfully on surveys.

When asked, people in our care will not always tell us what they want or think because they may not wish to cause inconvenience, or perhaps they are afraid of repercussions if they are seen to complain or perhaps they don't like your question.

SECURITY AUDITS

No matter whether you're operating under the RVA accreditation scheme, Residential Aged Care or HCHS you will have a

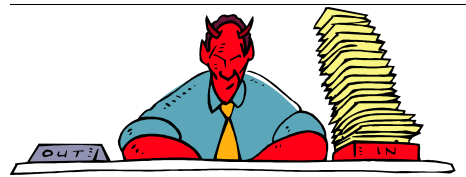
So if you cannot necessarily rely on the quality of information you gather and it has been expensive to produce why do you do it and how do you satisfy those auditors?

Well you still have to ask your staff and residents what they think, and surveys are probably still one of the best tool to use, but it boils down to what and how you ask your survey questions.

So what makes good survey and how do you get a strong response?

- Inform the survey recipients of why you're surveying them and how it will benefit them.
- Make the survey relevant and don't ask for information that you really don't need.
- Make the questions simple, clear and brief.
- Avoid complex ratings of questions.
- Don't make the survey a Tolstoy novel.
- Offer an incentive for completing the survey.
- Provide feedback and show that you are responding to the outcomes of the survey.

Do these things and your survey will provide you greater value.



The 300 page questionnaire about cutting back on bureaucracy

Moving to Residential Aged Care

Aged care literature is full of articles concerning the financial difficulties facing the industry in the short and medium term. Residential Aged Care viability and the quality of care have a high dependency on funding and fees charged set by government. Whilst additional government funding will assist services, longer term viability will be secured by developing

The lighter side of life

There is no ideal Christmas; only the one

alternate income streams to offset the dependency on government funding and controlling costs. This requires organisations to examine their services and future resident needs and expectations in order to ensure that providers maintain relevance in the market place.

An example of this is the provision of aged care facilities on an existing retirement village site. As village residents age and become frail there is a demand to remain in a familiar environment especially where spouses reside in the village and one requires high care.

From an organisations point of view this will require strategic planning from a care and finance perspective. Examples of this include project costing, operational budgets, finance and human resource management.

In order to achieve the outcomes required operational guidelines need to be developed encompassing target resident mix i.e. high, low and or concessional care which have significantly different financial implications upon establishing or expanding an existing facility. Currently high care attracts accommodation charge, currently \$16.25 per day whereas low care can be charged lump sum accommodation bonds up to \$118,000 before government funding is affected. Concessional residents attract neither however the government does pay a daily supplement of \$16.25 in recognition of this.

Market research to determine the financial status of potential residents can provide information on age, potential bond levels and demand for places. The interaction of government set fees and high operating costs makes it essential that proposed facilities produce a business plan which addresses the key drivers of viability.



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Retirement Village Manual

The Retirement Village Manual mentioned in the last issue has generated, strong interest. A number of purchasing options are now available. Call us or Aged Care

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