



Priceline Pharmacy is a 'dementia-friendly' retailer

PRICELINE Pharmacy is in the process of becoming a certified 'dementia friendly' retailer. The banner group is training its pharmacists around the nation to make their pharmacies 'dementia-friendly' from September, in celebration of Dementia Awareness Month. September was also 'Dementia Friends Month' which saw the introduction of a 10-minute video for customers to watch online about dementia, assisting them to become a 'dementia friend'. (See www.dementiafriendly.org.au to learn more about the condition and find out how to help support people with dementia.) Priceline's Sisterhood Foundation recently raised more than \$1 million for its charities, one of which is Dementia Australia. Cowes Priceline Pharmacist Greg Kossena, who recently attended a training course at Dementia Australia headquarters in Hawthorn, said that the money will help Dementia Australia roll out programs. "The programs for dementia are costly and there is a huge caseload," he said. "There are more than 425,000 Australians living with dementia, and there are over 250 new cases diagnosed every day," he said. Dementia now accounts for the major cause of disease related death here in Australia amongst women and is number two for men, and likely to become number one in the next five years. Alzheimer's accounts for about 70 per cent of all cases in Australia. Dementia is not only distressing for those affected, but can also be extremely distressing for those living and caring for the loved one with Dementia. Priceline Pharmacy's initiative to become a 'dementia-friendly' destination will hopefully both make a positive difference as well as influence other retailers to improve the quality of life for both those with, and those caring for, people with dementia.

At Banfields, every week is Seniors Week

TWICE a week, a group of keen knitters and crocheters at Banfields Aged Care meet up and get to work. With needles and wool in hand, they've created an impressive assortment of squares, which the volunteers have stitched together into beautiful rugs. This is just one of the regular activities organised for the residents of Banfields, says Lifestyle team leader, Robyn Montague. "We have a regular schedule of activities and the knitting group is a lovely social activity that our residents really enjoy. "They get to reminisce about things as they knit, and sometimes members of our Memory Support Unit also join in," said Robyn. "With all the focus lately on domestic violence, it was decided to donate the rugs to children and babies experiencing domestic violence. The residents loved that idea." Residents of Banfields can get involved in a range of activities, including sports, craft and music activities. "We have a gentleman called Tony Norquay who comes once a month and holds 'Movement to music' sessions, and Carol Van Dyke comes and plays the grand piano for residents. "This week, we're taking a busload of residents out to the Dalyston Old Time Dance, which is very popular," Robyn said. "Even some residents in wheelchairs come along and we give them a spin on the dancefloor.



Volunteers Julie and Luana helped sew together and embellish the knitted and crocheted squares, creating blankets that will be donated to families that have suffered domestic violence.

Some residents get up and dance, others just enjoying watching." Some residents prefer to get active outdoors with the Banfields garden group. Bulbs planted by the group earlier this year are now blooming and the herbs and vegetables they cultivate are used in the Banfields kitchen. Flowers from the garden are also used in flower arranging classes. "We use our own flowers and get some brought in as well to make arrangements that go on the dining room tables," Robyn said. "We even have one gentleman who is blind who takes part. He used to be a gardener, so he likes to touch and smell the flowers. It's a sensory experience." Bingo, Brain Games and Bocce are also on offer and spark a healthy degree of competition amongst residents. "We have Bocce teams and the person who has the highest individual score wins a trophy and

gets to hold onto it for the week. It gets very competitive," laughed Robyn. "Our Brain Games are about stretching people's minds. We have questions about maths, science, geography and popular culture." Some weeks, such as the lead up to the AFL Grand Final, include special activities. "Last week, we had our Grand Final footy tipping party and that was wonderful. Collingwood were the firm favourites with our residents. "Every week, we try to make it special for them."

Volunteer and engage with residents

Another vital aspect of the weekly activities is the role of volunteers. "I'd really like to encourage people to think about becoming a volunteer at Banfields," said Robyn. "Our volunteers always say how much they get out of coming along and working with the residents. I think it gives them a reality check. These people have had incredible lives. "For example, one of our residents was an Olympic swimmer, another used to be a medical pathologist. "They're not just 'old people'. We can all learn so much from our elderly generation." Anyone interesting in finding out more about becoming a volunteer at Banfields Aged Care can contact Robyn on 5951 2500.

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