A note from Sally

Hello, everyone

This is a quick note to introduce myself as the ‘newest’ face at Eden in Oz & Nz in Australia. I must say, it’s been a rollercoaster time since the September ACSA conference ... I can’t believe how quickly these first months have gone.

My first week in this new role saw me join Board members Cathy Meyer, Rhonda Peploe and Annie Macbeth, as well as former General Manager Chris McMahon, at the ACSA conference in Perth. It was a pleasure to meet a number of current Eden Associates and Board members, especially those in Western Australia, as well as others around Australia.

For the first time, EiON had its own stand as an exhibitor within a larger trade display, which was a fantastic opportunity to showcase who we are and what we are all about. There was lots of interest and three of our Associates presented papers at the conference. They were rewarded with positive feedback we received at our booth. We also launched our new DVD, Transforming aged care. This EiON-specific resource is great value at $50 + GST and is available from our office.

Since that first week, there have been lots of meetings with new faces and places and completing the Eden Associate training at Geebung in Queensland in early October. A quick trip to New Zealand saw another 21 people in the North Island, especially those from Resthaven and Rangiura, complete their Eden Associate training. We have also completed Eden Associate training with Wesley Mission in Brisbane and Peninsula Village in Umina, who are making a significant investment in their staff and commitment to the Eden philosophy within their homes.

In an industry which is struggling with funding, quality outcomes, accreditation standards and an ageing population, it is refreshing and heartening to find fabulous women and men who are aiming to make a difference in residents’ lives. This is a great thing and their respective journeys will be fantastic to watch and support. Our Eden trainers are exceptional, passionate and committed people and are a great asset to supporting EiON, our Associates and registered homes.
We are looking forward to a number of exciting developments in the New Year, including an updated website. I would encourage all Eden Associates to share openly with the rest of the EiON community their challenges and successes—we all benefit by sharing our stories. If you would like to share your journey more openly, please send your information to admin@edeninoznz.com.au.

To become a registered home, remember to start collecting your evidence for each of the principles. A photo album or scrapbook of your joyful events and successes is an easy way to start the process. Involve your staff, residents and families…it doesn’t have to be you on your own trying to make a difference.

One thought that I’d like to share with you, regarding the lessons learned in the training, was how we need to reclaim the language that puts respect and reverence into how we speak about and talk to our elders. We should respect our elders…are you and your staff respectful as well?

In 2010, we’re looking to develop additional support services for our Homes and any homes contemplating the implementation of the Eden philosophy into their organisation.

If you have any suggestions as to the additional services that you’d like access to, please don’t hesitate to contact us. Equally, if you know that a home wants to start the Eden journey, but doesn’t know who to contact, please provide our email address for all enquiries (admin@edeninoznz.com.au).

Have a great Christmas and a safe New Year. We look forward to catching up with you in 2010.

’Bye for now

Sally Hopkins
Business Development Manager, EiON

Share your stories

We want to hear from you! Please let us know how your Eden journey is going. We welcome your comments, suggestions and feedback on all things Eden.

In particular, we’d like to receive your stories and photos of how you are making a difference in people’s lives. Let us know how the elders in your homes are going, share your success stories and suggestions for improvements.

Please send your contributions to ‘admin@edeninoznz.com.au’.

Food for thought

It is important to have a reverence for life where we find it. A person’s spirit and soul has no colour. We need to know and love ourselves, we need to have courage, patience, determination and forethought for the future.

Dame Phyllis Frost
Ageism and the three plagues

The plagues of loneliness, helplessness and boredom exist in part due to societal perceptions of aging and disability.

Elders bombarded by negative messages around ageing may become prejudiced against themselves and may pull back from social engagement. This, coupled with our culture’s tendency to overlook the gifts our elders have to offer us, may leave them convinced that what they have to give has no value. So elders who are isolated and uncertain of how they can give of themselves are at real risk of boredom.

Convening learning circles in your care partner teams, no matter where you work or live, lets you explore how each of you has been affected by ageism and negative cultural perceptions of aging.

By understanding your own fears or perceptions of ageing, you will be able to give better support to elders, colleagues and families.

Source: Eden Alternative, at www.edenalt.org

Ho, ho, ho

We wish you all a happy, safe and relaxing slide into 2010. Enjoy your festivities, whatever form they may take. And all the very best for the New Year—may 2010 bring only good things your way.
Elderhood’s sanctuary—Making human habitats bloom

To live together intentionally, we must understand the sources and power of human warmth, how it is created and how it can be damaged or destroyed. To do this, we must identify the tools best suited to making our sanctuaries healthy and safe, and nurture the living environment which sustains us.

In *What are old people for?*, Bill Thomas explains how those of us who have been working to make human habitats bloom in the most unlikely places should share our knowledge to support those who seek a sanctuary for elderhood. The principles for elderhood’s sanctuary are:

- **Warm**
  The ability to create and maintain human warmth is an essential attribute of any group that aspires to create a sanctuary for elderhood, and depends on several factors.
  - **Small**—All things being equal, and with the full understanding that small size does not guarantee warmth, we can say that when it comes to creating a sanctuary in which elders and elderhood can develop, small is better.
  - **Flat**—Bureaucratic hierarchy obstructs the work of caring. Human caring is founded on a knowing, empathic, resourceful response to the needs of others.

- **Smart**
  Smart technology may be high or low, but it must always serve to foster the wellbeing of elders and those who live and work with them. Technology that restricts, confines or diminishes elders for the convenience of others, or damages their wellbeing, must be abandoned.

- **Green**
  Every sanctuary for elderhood should be a healing environment that makes it easy for elders to partake of the gifts that regular meaningful contact with the living world has to offer. Sanctuaries should be designed and constructed so that they ‘rest lightly upon the earth’ and honour elderhood’s ancient commitment to stewardship.

  We can all help to make this dream come true for elders.


Ageing ... look at it this way

- Your knowledge becomes wisdom
- You realise that some decrease in abilities does not dim the might of the mind or the power of your purpose
- You know what you can change and have accepted the things you cannot change
- You realise that most of the things you worried about never happened
- You have a good understanding of the tides of change
- You know that the younger generation will mature and contribute, just as you did
- You know that the simple pleasures in life are the best

William D Hersey, *Looking Forward* newsletter
The Fifth Eden Alternative International Conference
*The art of creating caring communities: Meeting the challenges*

13-15 June 2010, Denver, Colorado, USA

The Eden Alternative has trained over 17,000 Eden Associates and now claims over 300 registered homes, in the US, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Each of these regions has an Eden Alternative Regional Coordinator (EARC). The EiON Business Development Manager, Sally Hopkins, is the EARC for Australia and New Zealand.

So far, our group attending the conference in Denver includes:

- Cathy Meyer, Chair of the EiON Board and co-presenter of a paper
- Joanne Hope Murray, EiON Board member and co-presenter of a paper
- Sally Hopkins, EiON Business Development Manager and EARC

If you are attending this conference in June 2010, please let us know so that we can make contact and arrange to meet up.

The deadline for abstracts was 12 October 2009 and the draft conference schedule is now available online and explains the full-day sessions, concurrent intensive sessions and milestone track sessions. For more information, please go to www.edenalt.org.

We submitted the following abstract for this conference. The title refers to the theme of the conference.

**Our abstract**

*Eden in Oz & NZ are managing challenges that are ASPIRATIONAL, are a REALITY and as a result have TRANSFORMED(ART) the organisation. The foundation members of Eden in Oz (Australia) in 2002 established a pathway for future growth, which is now defined by significant growth, new territory and a strategic direction.*

**Past challenges (How did we do it?)**

*Have been overcome or are in the process of being resolved.*

**Current challenges (What’s in it for them?)**

*Unexpected interest from other care sectors include community care and retirement villages, services needing to apply the Eden Alternative principles to their care services. The costing and delivery model, range, quality and relevance of training activities are being explored. The place and role of Registered Training Organisations’ and Eden training delivery is being piloted and under assessment. Reaching the hearts and minds of the decision makers in an apathetic and over-regulated aged care sector is frustrating.*

**Future challenges (Why should we bother?)**

*As we consider cost effective training, redesigning the processes that support Eden registration and re-registration. New emerging stakeholders, protecting the brand from imposters, reinforcing the magic of Eden, not supporting the organisations that cherry-pick the principles are raising the need for more effective and innovative solutions.*
Go online for more Eden news

We regularly add new information to our website, at www.edeninoznz.com.au. Here, you will find information to support your Eden journey, as well as local, national and international news. Some of the latest information on our site includes:

Eden in action
These pages contain information and photos from training courses and conferences, as well as contributions from Associates.

News and events
We were pleased to be part of the ACSA 2009 National Conference held in Perth from 13 to 16 September. With the theme of ‘Get up! Stand up!’, the conference was all about rallying, connecting, challenging and asserting - it was about aged care pride and that we can’t transform aged care without you.

Eden in the media
This web page contains a link to a few great articles published recently, including one on the benefits of pets in homes and another on elders interacting with children. There’s also article from New Zealand showing how ‘Eden puts life back into rest homes’.

Training information
Our website contains information on Associate training, including links to registration forms for scheduled training. Please contact us for any training enquiries.

Farewell to Annimac
It is with great gratitude that we farewell Annimac from our Board. We thank her for sharing her expertise, wisdom, time, experience and values to our growing organisation.

In the words of Cathy Meyer, Chair of the Board, ‘One of your legacies to us as a Board will be for us to remember to walk the Eden talk in our discussions and decisions as we work together to expand and grow EiON.’

Annimac will remain active in Western Australia, walking the talk with various community groups.

We wish Annimac all the best and thank her sincerely for her contribution to EiON.

Key contacts
Please note our new telephone number and postal address

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Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

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