



FROM THE CEO'S DESK

Dear Residents, families, and team members,

Happy New Year, and welcome to 2026! I hope you all enjoyed a relaxing festive season and are feeling refreshed for the year ahead. As we step into January, I'd like to take a moment to look back on the past year and share some of the exciting things happening across Finley Regional Care.

Reflecting on 2025

Last year brought its share of challenges and achievements. Thanks to the dedication of our staff and the ongoing support of residents and families, we continued to deliver high quality care to our community. We rolled out new wellness programs, strengthened safety measures, and made meaningful improvements across our facilities. I'm incredibly proud of how our team continues to embrace innovation and live our values of compassion and excellence.

Looking ahead – Goals for 2026

Here's a glimpse of what we're excited about this year:

Upgraded equipment: We're introducing new Propel Health and vital sign equipment to improve how we capture and record health information for residents.

Staff development: Professional development remains a key focus to ensure our team continues leading best practice in aged care.

Community engagement: We'll continue building strong relationships with local groups, schools, and businesses to strengthen community involvement.

Biralee Preschool Merger – February

In February, our merger with Biralee Preschool will take place. This partnership will support long term growth, sustainability, and strengthened governance for the preschool – while keeping what makes Biralee special firmly in place.

Biralee will continue to operate as a community based, not for profit service. Daily operations will still

be led by Ellen, Director and Nominated Supervisor, and Melissa, Business Administration Manager, who remain available to support families and staff

Places available across our services

We currently have places available in our Residential Home for those needing ongoing care. Our Complete Care service also has capacity for people needing support at home or elsewhere, and our medical centres are welcoming new patients. Please feel free to share this with anyone in the community who may benefit.

Celebrating our people

Our staff continue to be the heart of Finley Regional Care. I want to acknowledge their incredible commitment over the busy holiday season. A warm welcome also to our new team members starting this month – we're excited to have you with us!

Resident stories and family involvement

We love hearing from residents and families. Your stories and feedback help us grow and celebrate what makes our community unique.

Alumuna Expansion – starting in 2026

We are awaiting final approvals from Berrigan Shire to begin the next stage of Alumuna's expansion. This project includes seven new blocks and space for a future community centre – enhancing opportunities for connection and welcoming new residents into the community.

If you're interested in securing a home or learning more, please contact Zoe. With limited spaces available, now is a great time to get in touch.

Thank you

Thank you for your continued trust and support. Together, we look forward to making 2026 a year of growth, connection, and care.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy New Year.

Ben Levesque
CEO



CLINICAL COORDINATOR REPORT

Happy New Year to all our residents, families and staff! We hope that you all had a wonderful festive season with your loved ones as we welcome the year 2026!

2026 has exciting clinical developments in store for Finley Regional Care!

Let's start with the introduction of new vital signs monitoring equipment. Keep an eye out for our new trolleys complete with new blood pressure machines, pulse oximeters, blood sugar monitors, thermometers, iPads and more! This equipment works by storing the results instantly onto the system. It will stop the need to double handle information, save paperwork and prevent documentation errors. This innovation will free up time that can be better spent interacting with our residents!

We also have begun a trial of new pressure monitoring mattresses. Ten new mattresses are on site that contain fabric sensors to alert staff when there has been extended pressure on a particular part of the body. This technology monitors at risk areas on the body and aims to significantly reduce pressure sores. Watch this space; so far, the trial is going well!

We have engaged with an external dietitian, Jodie, who will visit monthly and is accessible by all residents within the facility. Some of you may have seen her around already. Jodie also works with Lisa in the kitchen to review the seasonal menu to ensure that we are providing delicious and nutritious food. She even performs taste tests, and her latest menu review was extremely positive! As always, we encourage any resident or family to provide feedback to ensure you are having the best dining experience.

Aeman, our visiting optometrist will continue monthly visits for 2026. Next visit date will be Monday 7th February. If any resident or staff wish to be seen, please let one of the registered nurses know and they will put you on the list.

Broadway Smiles Dentist from Cobram performed a short visit at the end of last year. They plan to visit again to perform dental checks and minor works on site/ in room as required. We are currently awaiting a date but will inform all residents and obtain consent once we finalise a suitable date. If any resident wishes to be on the list, please inform the registered nurse. We will also be asking each resident individually if they would like to be seen prior to their visit, so no one misses the opportunity!

Other exciting news is that we now have a larger cohort of registered nurses on site! This means that two registered nurses will be on most daytime shifts, giving better coverage and care oversight. This is something we have been working on for quite some time, and we are so excited as we are always striving to deliver exceptional care. We welcome Michelle as our latest recruit who has settled in very well!

Stay tuned for more exciting things to come this year. Remember to stay hydrated and keep cool this summer period.

Amy Lankester
Director of Nursing



LEISURE AND LIFESTYLE

Happy new year to all!

We hit the ground running in January with lots of activities on for the residents! They tried out sandpainting and bookmark making in arts and craft. They also had lots of fun having a hit of golf on the green in the activities room.

Bingo was back after a two-week hiatus, and all residents attending are enjoying resident John reading out the bingo numbers.

The Amazing Race came to Finley where our residents were separated into teams and competed in a scavenger hunt around the facility. The Finley Fillies took home first place and a \$10 voucher for the facility shop.

The resident singing group has been such a joy that we have started holding it twice a month. We are now trying our hands with Frere Jacques and singing it in rounds – challenging but rewarding!

We are still in disbelief that January is coming to an end! We wrapped up the month with an Australia Day BBQ and a concert put on by Keith Haidle, both of which were very much enjoyed by all.

Meg Caspar
Leisure & Lifestyle Officer



ALUMUNA NEWS

Welcome to 2026!

We would like to wish all our Alumuna residents and their families a healthy and happy New Year and look forward to an exciting year at Alumuna – a year that holds growth for our community.

As I mentioned in my last newsletter article, we will be focussing on **Holistic Wellness** this year and I briefly touched on the 8 pillars of Wellness for “Wellness Done Well”. This month’s focus is on **Career** and although most residents at Alumuna have retired, a post-retirement career focused on wellness is a great way to maintain **a sense of purpose, social connection, and mental and physical activity**. Options range from flexible paid work to volunteering, leveraging your existing skills or learning new ones.

New wellness-focused careers

If you want a complete change of pace, consider roles that directly promote health and well-being in your community.

- **Gardening specialist:** Spend time outdoors creating and maintaining landscapes. This active role is great for physical and mental health and can be highly rewarding.
- **Tour guide or Museum staff:** Lead walking tours or assist with exhibits in local museums and galleries. This keeps you physically active and socially engaged with your community and its history.
- **Pet sitter or dog walker:** An excellent option for animal lovers, this keeps you active and outdoors, with flexible hours.

Volunteering and community engagement

Volunteering is a top retirement activity, providing a strong sense of purpose and social outlet without the pressures of a traditional job.

- **Nonprofit volunteering:** Assist with fundraising, event planning, or other needs for a cause you care about. Finley Regional Care welcomes volunteers for multiple roles in the organisation.
- **Community groups:** Join or start a community group, such as a book club, walking group, or art class, to foster social connections and lifelong learning.
- **Community support worker:** Roles like this within aged care or veteran support organisations offer a clear sense of purpose and contribution.

Tips for success

- **Plan beyond finances:** Successful retirement planning involves health, social connections, identity, and personal goals, not just money.
- **Start small:** Consider part-time, seasonal, or temporary work to test the waters and learn new skills with low commitment.
- **Prioritise health:** Ensure your new pursuit allows time for physical activity and healthy living, as this is crucial for long-term well-being.
- **Be open to new experiences:** Manage expectations and be open to roles you might not have considered during your primary career.

Stay cool during extreme heat

Tips for personal cooling and hydration

- **Drink water:** Sip water consistently, even before feeling thirsty; avoid sugary drinks, caffeine, and alcohol.
- **Cool down:** Take cool showers or baths, mist yourself with a spray bottle, or place cool cloths on pulse points (neck, wrists, ankles).
- **Dress smart:** Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothes made from natural, breathable fabrics like cotton or linen.
- **Protect yourself outdoors:** Use sunscreen and wear hats and sunglasses if you must be outside.

Home and environment

- **Block the sun:** Close curtains, blinds, or shutters during the day to keep heat out.
- **Ventilate:** Open windows in the early morning and late evening to let cooler air in.
- **Use fans:** Improve airflow with fans; place a bowl of ice in front of a fan for extra cooling.

Activity and planning

- **Adjust schedule:** Reschedule outdoor activities or exercise for cooler parts of the day.
- **Eat light:** Opt for smaller, cold meals like salads instead of heavy, hot foods.
- **Check on others:** Make sure elderly family, neighbours, and pets are staying cool and hydrated.
- **Be prepared:** Know the signs of heat stroke and have a plan for potential power outages.



ALUMUNA NEWS (CONT.)

Gym usage and FRC Activity Calendar

Just a reminder that Alumuna residents are welcome to use the Finley Regional Care gym plus attend any activities free of charge. I will forward the monthly activity calendar with each copy of the newsletter. Monica, our physiotherapist, is onsite at FRC on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. You can make an appointment to learn more about the equipment onsite. Group exercise groups are held on Monday and Wednesday mornings at 10am.

Changes to maintenance manager hours

Dave has reduced his working days and will be onsite or available on the phone on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays only and outside of business hours for emergencies only.

Alternatively, you can call my mobile on 0409 726 984 or Finley Regional Care on 5883 9600.

We are currently interviewing candidates for a new maintenance team member. I will keep you informed of any developments.

I have had reports of increased spider activity at Alumuna. The insect spraying will be occurring again in February and Dave is looking at options for a stronger repellent. Residents do have the option of paying for additional spraying inside their properties. I will send out notification and options/pricing soon.

Alternatively, consider using a household surface spray. These are sold at supermarkets and can be quite useful in reducing the incidence of insects.

Community Garden

Just a reminder to keep an eye out at the community garden for what is on offer. All residents are welcome to plant and potter in the garden as well as enjoying the beautiful produce available. I am told the tiny tomatoes are delicious at the moment. I cannot wait to try them for myself.

Zoe Stringer

Alumuna Community Manager

NEW YEAR, TIMELESS WISDOM: RESOLUTIONS FOR HEALTHY AGEING THAT WORK WHETHER YOU'RE 30 OR 80+

As the fireworks settle and the smell of leftover pavlova lingers, many of us are thinking: what's a good resolution this year? If you're looking beyond giving up chocolate or finally getting to that gym membership, how about setting some focused resolutions for **healthy ageing**?

Whether you're a younger person thinking ahead or someone in a residential care setting wanting to thrive, the following science-backed ideas can

help you age well – and enjoy the journey while you're at it:

[READ MORE](#)



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Open Lasagne with Spring Greens and Burrata

INGREDIENTS

- 160 gm unsalted butter
- 12 zucchini flowers, halved lengthways, flowers and stems separated
- 2 bunches asparagus, woody ends trimmed, cut into 5cm lengths on an angle
- 150 gm sugar snap peas, trimmed, strings removed and halved lengthways
- 35 gm (¼ cup) pine nuts
- 1 tbsp lemon juice, plus finely grated zest of 1 lemon to serve
- Olive oil, for greasing
- 2 burrata, torn
- 40 gm finely grated pecorino
- Baby basil, to serve

Basil Oil

- 3 cups (loosely packed) basil
- 200 ml extra-virgin olive oil

Pasta Dough

- 350 gm plain flour
- 40 gm semolina, plus extra for dusting
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten

METHOD

1. For basil oil, blanch basil in a saucepan of salted boiling water until just bright green (15 seconds). Refresh in iced water, drain and squeeze out excess water. Transfer to a high-speed blender with oil, and blend until bright green (1 minute). Set aside for 5 minutes to infuse, then strain through a fine sieve lined with muslin (2 hours or preferably overnight; do not press on solids as oil will become cloudy). Discard solids. Store oil in a sealable jar in the refrigerator for 1 week. Bring to room temperature before serving.
2. For pasta dough, combine flour, semolina and 1 tsp fine salt in an electric mixer with the dough hook attached. Mix on low speed to combine, then gradually add egg until a shaggy dough forms. Increase speed to medium; knead until smooth and elastic (6 minutes; add 1-2 tsp cold water if dough is too dry). Transfer dough to a clean work surface. Wrap in plastic wrap and stand to rest (30 minutes).
3. To roll pasta, divide dough into 4, then working with one piece at a time, lightly dust in semolina and feed dough through a pasta machine starting with rollers at the widest setting. Fold dough in half lengthways, feed through rollers again, repeating until smooth. Continue to feed dough through, reducing notch by notch, feeding and rolling until third-last setting. Lightly dust with extra semolina, lay out on trays, and cover. Repeat with remaining dough. Cut pasta sheets into 15cm lengths, transfer to a tray lightly dusted with semolina. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and set aside.
4. Bring a large saucepan of salted water to boil for the pasta. Meanwhile, cook butter in a large frying pan over medium heat until foaming (1-2 minutes). Add zucchini stems, asparagus, sugar snap peas and sauté until tender (1-2 minutes). Add zucchini flowers and sauté until just tender (30 seconds). Using a slotted spoon, transfer vegetables to a plate, cover with aluminium foil and keep warm. Add pine nuts to pan and cook, swirling pan, until butter is nut brown (2-3 minutes). Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice (be careful as hot butter will spit). Keep warm.
5. Cook pasta sheets, in batches, in pan of boiling water until al dente (15-20 seconds). Transfer to a warm tray lightly greased with olive oil and cover with a hot damp tea towel.
6. To assemble, place an end of one pasta sheet in the base of a serving bowl, top with one-quarter each of vegetables, torn burrata, burnt butter sauce and pecorino, then fold over pasta to enclose. Repeat layering, finishing with a layer of pasta. Top with extra burrata and pecorino. Drizzle with basil oil. Scatter with lemon zest and baby basil to serve.



UNDERSTANDING THE NEW AGED CARE PAYMENT SYSTEM – WHAT WILL YOU HAVE TO PAY NOW?

As Australia's aged care landscape shifts, many families and residents face a critical question: "Who pays what?" The new Aged Care Act, which introduces sweeping financial reforms starting in **late 2025**, is reshaping how costs are shared – between the individual and government. At **Finley Regional Care**, we believe in transparency and helping you make sense of these changes so you can make informed decisions.

Below, we break down the key payment components under the new regime:

[READ MORE](#)

TRIVIA OF THE MONTH

Which place in Australia gets more snow than the Swiss Alps?

A: The Australian Alps (NSW)

D: The Blue Mountains (NSW)

G: Mount Buffalo (VIC)

B: Cradle Mountain (TAS)

E: Mount Wellington (TAS)

H: Mount Mawson (TAS)

C: The Brindabella Ranges (ACT)

F: Falls Creek Alpine Resort (VIC)

Answer to last month's trivia question:

The largest cattle station in the world, Anna Creek Ranch (located in South Australia), is larger than which country?

The answer is **a): Israel**



LIFE ADVICE FROM A RESIDENT

"You'll only have one birthday; the rest are a celebration of your life"

Lesley Wilson

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age."

Sophia Loren

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

Interested in volunteering?

Every thought of volunteering? Have a special skill or talent that you would like to share? Finley Regional Care is always on the lookout for enthusiastic volunteers to enhance and assist with the program of activities. There are many options for our volunteers, including craft, reading, activities and taking residents for walks. If you can spare an hour or so a week to come and help out, please contact our Leisure & Lifestyle team. Our residents are always happy to see a friendly face, and our volunteers will all tell you that their lives are richer for the time they spend here!



Finley Regional Care

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Sign up for email notifications

Would you like to receive email notifications of upcoming activities, relevant messages and newsletters? Sign up by sending your email address to

reception@finleyregionalcare.com.au

Comments & suggestions

Finley Regional Care welcomes comments and suggestions about any aspect of our service; including direct care, catering, cleaning and gardens. You can access the form used for this purpose in various places throughout our facility or contact Administration on ☎ **03 5883 9600** during business hours.

Lost and found

All valuables found in the facility are kept safe until collected by their owner. If you (or your family member) are missing any items, please call reception with a description of the item and hopefully we can help you find it.