



# Amber Aged Care

## Newsletter - October 2025



Welcome to our **October 2025** edition, filled with new updates, inspiring stories, and exciting plans for the month ahead.

Spring has brought a wonderful sense of renewal and energy to our community, and we are pleased to share some highlights happening across our home.

This month, we are delighted to announce the launch of our Spring wellbeing and activity programs designed to keep older people active, creative, and engaged; progress on our new café space offering a relaxing environment for older people and families to enjoy time together; updates on our vaccination and health initiatives to ensure the ongoing safety and wellbeing of our community; and memorable moments from recent resident celebrations and cultural events that have filled our home with warmth and joy.

Warm regards,

**The Amber Aged Care Team**

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# The Amber Café is open!

## Refreshments

Freshly brewed coffee, tea, and snacks

## Comfort

Comfortable seating for families and visitors

## Community

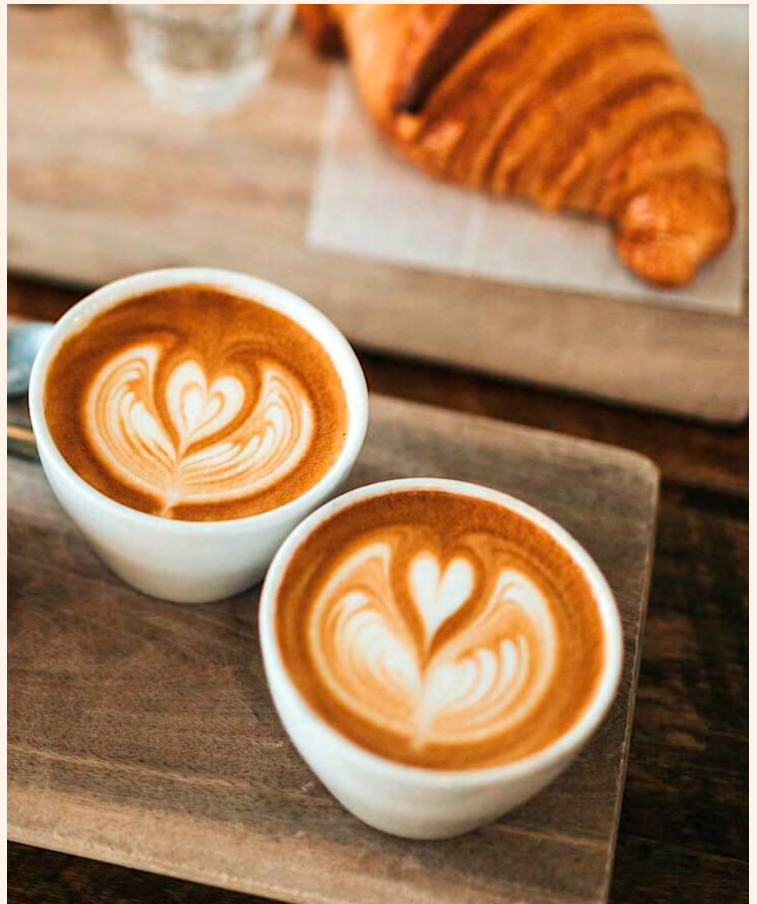
A new space for connection and community

## Coffee Shop Operating Hours

(Under Review):

Based on feedback from our older people and their family members, the proposed coffee shop hours are **Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 11:30am to 1:30pm.**

These times are currently under review to ensure they best meet the preferences and convenience of older person and families.



# Education and Training Updates

## At Amber Aged Care, continuous learning is at the heart of delivering high-quality, person-centred care.

This month, our staff focused on key areas of resident wellbeing and safety, including pain management, infection prevention, manual handling, person-centred care, and medication safety. Training sessions strengthened staff confidence in assessing and managing pain through both pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches such as gentle exercise, massage, relaxation, and environmental comfort. Refresher workshops also reinforced safe hygiene practices, correct lifting techniques, and compassionate communication.

Through ongoing education, our team continues to enhance resident comfort, dignity, and quality of life ensuring care that is both skilled and heartfelt.



# Change to Aged Care Quality Standards - November 2025

From 1 November 2025, under the new Aged Care Act, a new set of Strengthened Quality Standards will guide the delivery of aged care services across Australia. These updated standards have been developed to improve accountability, consistency, and the overall quality of care provided to older people.

The Strengthened Quality Standards clearly define what high-quality aged care should look like. They are clearer, more measurable, and focused on ensuring that older people receive safe, respectful, and person-centred care. The aim is not about ticking boxes it's about delivering genuine care that supports each person's dignity, choices, and wellbeing, while promoting continuous improvement within the aged care sector. The graphic displayed shows you which part of your care each standard relates to, or you can see the list and Standard descriptions below.



- |                          |                       |                              |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. The individual        | 4. The environment    | 7. The residential community |
| 2. The organisation      | 5. Clinical care      |                              |
| 3. The care and services | 6. Food and nutrition |                              |

## Standard 1

I am valued and have choice over the life I lead

## Standard 2

I have confidence in my service provider

## Standard 3

My care is based around who I am and what's important to me

## Standard 4

I feel safe and supported where I live

## Standard 5

I get the right clinical care for me

## Standard 6

I enjoy tasty and nutritious food every day

## Standard 7

I contribute to the community I live in



# COVID-19 Vaccination Program

We are pleased to announce that COVID-19 vaccinations will soon be offered on-site at Amber Aged Care this December for our older persons.

## Why this matters:

Older adults are more vulnerable to COVID-19 and its potential complications, including severe illness, hospitalisation, and long recovery periods. Vaccination plays a vital role in protecting our older people, staff, and community from the ongoing risks of COVID-19, particularly during the colder and high-risk seasons.

## What the vaccine offers:

- Strong protection against severe COVID-19 illness and hospitalisation.
- Reduced risk of complications and long-term health impacts.
- Greater safety and confidence for older people, families, and staff.
- A healthier, more resilient community environment.

## Convenience and peace of mind:

By providing the vaccine on-site, older people can be protected in a comfortable and familiar setting, without the need to travel to external clinics. Families can feel reassured knowing their loved ones have easy access to this important preventative measure.

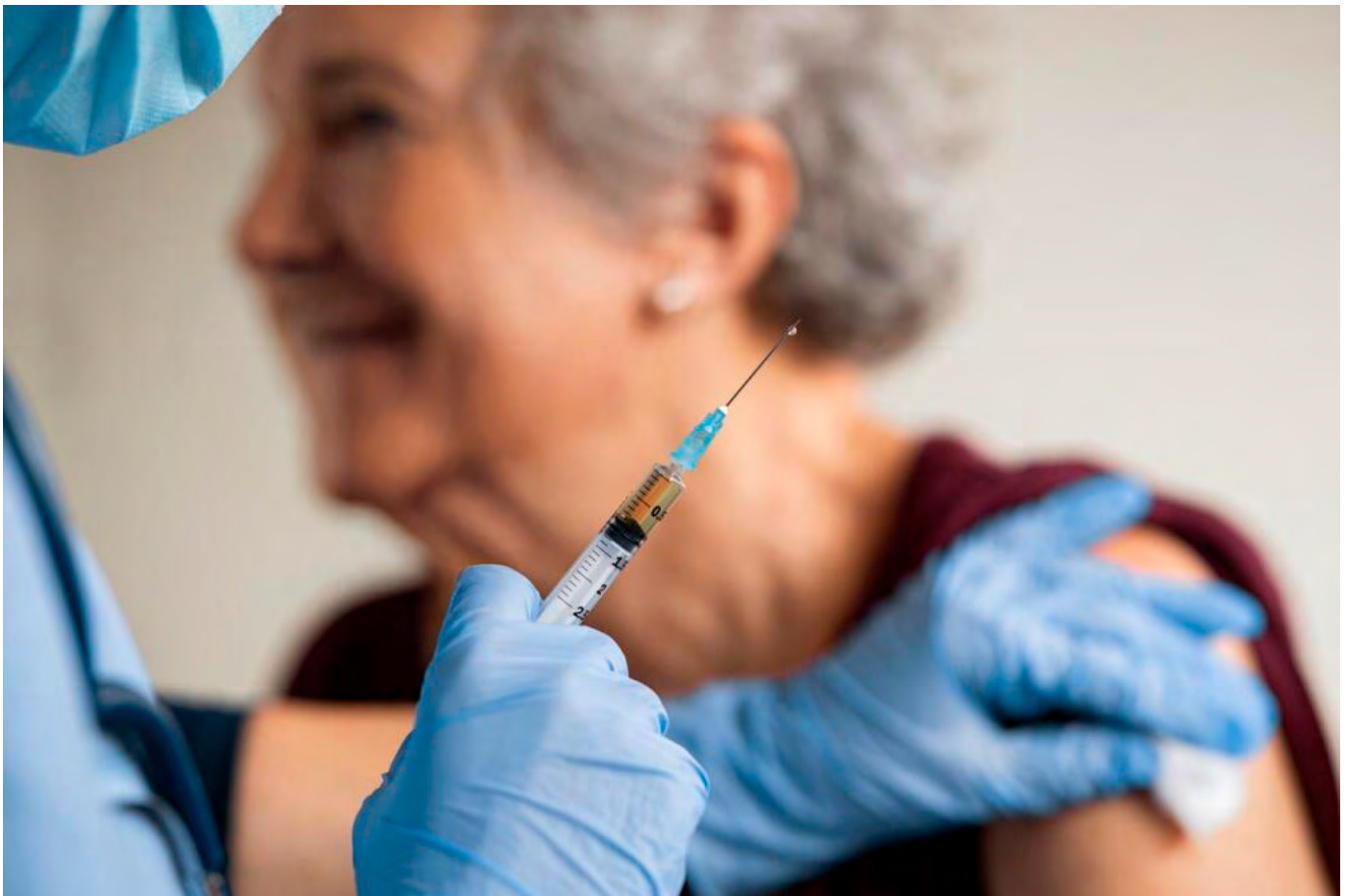
## Next steps:

Our nursing team will:

- Seek consent from older people and/or representatives for vaccination.
- Finalise and share dates for on-site COVID-19 vaccination clinics in December.

## Who is eligible:

Our clinical team will provide details on eligibility and scheduling. COVID-19 vaccination will be prioritised for older people and those most at risk, in line with current health recommendations.



# Higher Everyday Living Fee (HELF) Summary - Amber Aged Care

## HELF Package (Fee per day):

- **Higher Everyday Living Fee:**  
\$23.00 per day

## HELF Item(s) - Fee:

- **Means resident:**  
\$8.00 per day
- **Respite resident:**  
\$8.00 per day

## Total Daily Value (before discount):

- **Combined HELF Package and Item(s):**  
\$34.50 per day

## Daily Value Discount:

- **The difference between the HELF Package(s) Daily Value and the HELF Package Fee:**  
\$11.50 per day

## Net Amount Payable (after discount):

- \$23.00 per day



# HELF Transition Period & Quick Facts

## Transition period

- Additional Service Fee agreements can start after **1 November 2025**.
- Existing agreements can continue until **31 October 2026** if you already have one in place.
- Providers will speak with each person (individually) on these older agreements before the October 2026 cut-off.

At Amber Aged Care, our priority is to make sure any higher everyday living services are **transparent, fair, and tailored to your preferences**.

If you have questions about these changes, please speak with our team – we're here to help.

## Quick Facts: Higher Everyday Living Fee (HELF)

- **Starts:** 1 November 2025
- **Replaces:** Extra Service Fees & Additional Service Fees
- **Optional:** for higher-quality everyday services (e.g., premium meals, lifestyle extras)
- **Flexible:** services can be purchased individually or bundled - you will not be worse off than paying only for what you use

## Protections:

- Separate agreement
- Clear pricing & standards
- 28-day cooling-off period
- Annual reviews

**Transition:** old Extra/Additional Fee agreements finish by **31 October 2026**

# Amber Aged Care - October 2025 Continuous Improvement Highlights

## Financial Governance Enhancement

Amber Aged Care has updated its financial and liquidity governance policies to align with the new **Aged Care Act 2024** and **Prudential Standards 2025**. These changes ensure stronger compliance, transparency, and financial sustainability. A new **Prudential Management Framework** has been introduced, supported by quarterly audits, board oversight, and dedicated staff training. These improvements safeguard older people's financial interests and enhance confidence in the organisation's governance standards.

## Food and Nutrition Upgrade

Our **Food and Nutrition team** has implemented High Energy High Protein (HEHP) guidelines to boost the nutritional value of resident meals. Soups, salads, and vegetarian options have been redesigned to include more protein and essential nutrients, while desserts now contribute valuable calcium intake. This initiative promotes health, strength, and enjoyment for older people, ensuring that every meal served at Amber Aged Care is both delicious and beneficial to wellbeing.



## Digital Care System Integration

To enhance care coordination and efficiency, Amber Aged Care is transitioning to a **modern, unified electronic care system**. This integration will replace multiple existing platforms, allowing staff to record, access, and share information in real time. The new system supports improved compliance, reduces administrative workload, and strengthens data accuracy—ultimately ensuring safer, more personalised, and responsive care for every resident.

## Reflection Garden Enhancement

Our older people and staff have collaborated on plans to create a **new Reflection Garden feature** designed to foster relaxation, sensory engagement, and emotional wellbeing. The project includes resident input in selecting the design and location, ensuring the space reflects the community's shared vision. Once completed, the enhanced garden will offer a peaceful environment for reflection, connection, and outdoor enjoyment.

## Hairdressing Salon Upgrade

Our hairdressing salon has been upgraded to ensure the grooming experience is comfortable and dignified.

- Improvements include enhanced lighting, décor, and accessibility features.
- Provides older people with a salon-quality experience without needing to leave the facility.
- Contributes to personal dignity, self-confidence, and overall wellbeing.

Outcome: **Greater comfort and dignity during grooming services.**

## Coffee Shop Development

We are excited to have co-designed a new café-style social hub with input from our older people and families.

- The café will provide fresh coffee, tea, light snacks, and a welcoming environment.
- Designed as a space for families and visitors to gather with their loved ones.
- Encourages social interaction, reducing isolation and enhancing community spirit.

Outcome: **Promotes inclusion, social connection, and community engagement.**

# Learning & Staff Compliance - Ongoing Training

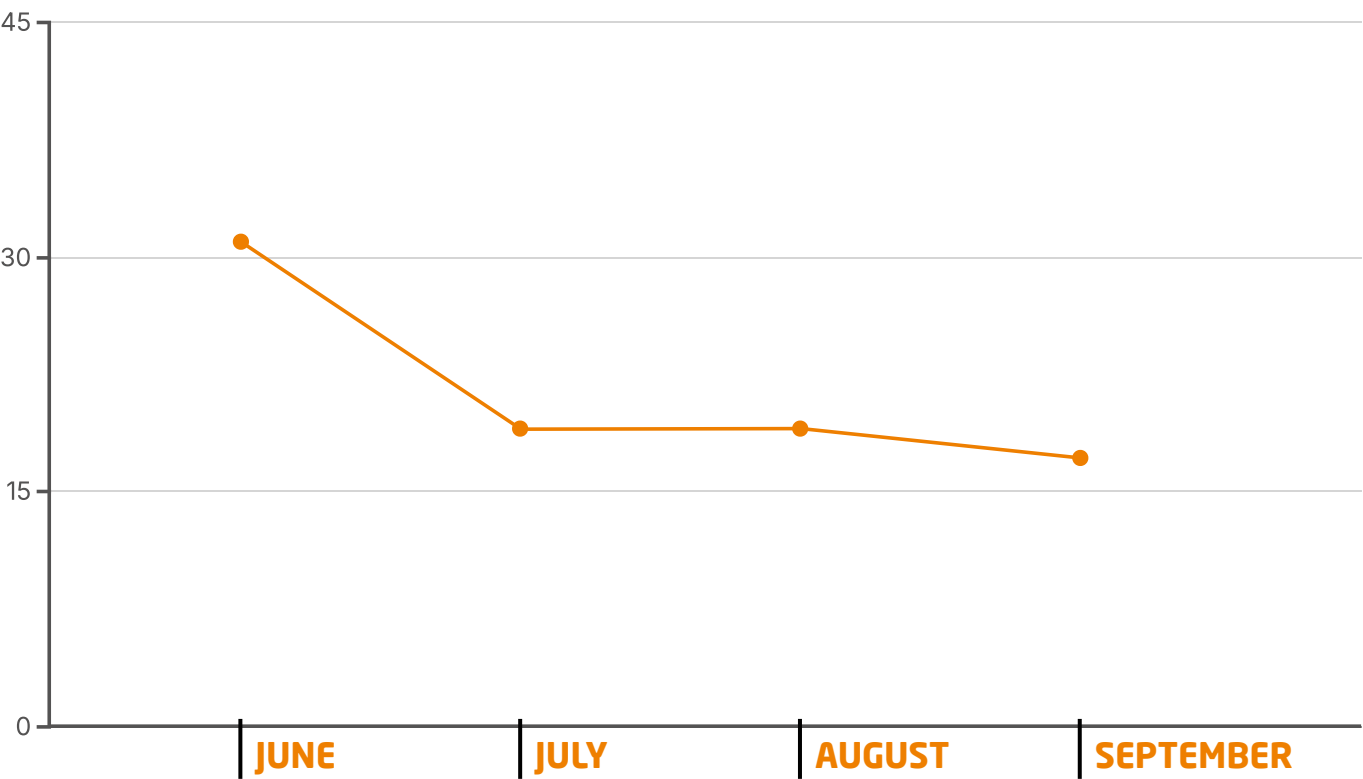
Our staff continue to work hard in their training to ensure they provide the highest level of care to older people.

Learning	September 2025 Complete	September 2025 Overdue	Compliance	Total staff to complete
Competency Training Day <i>ACTION: Session to be booked October to capture all new staff</i>	60	12	83%	72
Strengthened Aged Care quality standards 1-3	71	1	99%	72
Strengthened Aged Care quality standards 4-8	71	1	99%	72
Basic life support	46	5	90%	51
The basics of infection control	51	24	68%	75
Hazardous Manual task new employees	9	0	100%	9
Fire safety online training (only assigned to new employees)	10	0	100%	10
Fire safety practical (Bob May) <i>ACTION: Training day booked for October 2025</i>	64	7	90%	71
Hand hygiene	52	18	73%	71
Risk Management	13	0	100%	13
Trauma Informed Care	48	0	100%	48
Manual handling practical	64	5	93%	69
Medication calculations	18	0	100%	18
Work Effectively with Culturally Diverse Clients and Co-workers	69	3	96%	72
Dominant chemical training	70	3	96%	73
First aid practical	68	4	94%	72
HLTFSE001 Follow basic food safety practices (Kitchen and food services staff) <i>ACTION: Newly employed and to be signed up to course</i>	7	5	58%	12
Organisational clinical governance/open disclosure	11	5	69%	16
APRHA	18	0	100%	18
Police Check (Board)	5	1	83%	6
Police check	73	0	99%	74
Safe Food Handling Mod 1: Food Handling and Food Safety	57	0	100%	57
Safe Food Handling Mod 2: Personal Hygiene, Cleaning and Sanitising	57	0	100%	57
Safe Food Handling Mod 3: Food contamination and allergens	57	0	100%	57
Safe food handling mod 4: Food delivery, storage and display	57	0	100%	57
12 month Appraisals 2025	72	2	97%	74
Covid Vaccination 1-3	67	0		
Covid Vaccination 4 +	14			
Influenza <i>ACTION: To be offered to both staff and older people</i>	41			

This training ensures our team is well-prepared to provide the best care for you. Advocates, you can feel confident that our team is staying up to date with the latest best practices in aged care.

# Safety & Incident Update

At Amber Aged Care, the safety and wellbeing of our older persons is always our top priority. Each month, we carefully track and review all incidents, such as falls, skin injuries, and other care-related events. This helps us identify areas for improvement and take action quickly.



**Our commitment remains clear:** learning from every incident and continuously improving safety measures so that older persons live well, confidently, and with dignity at Amber Aged Care.

Type of Incident	TOTALS			
	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
Falls	7	3	6	7
Fall with major injury	0	0	0	0
Blister	1	1	0	2
Skin Tear	1	2	0	1
Scratch	0	0	0	0
Bruise	4	3	8	2
Pressure Injury	2	0	0	1
Medication	1	1	0	0
Aggression (physical)	0	0	0	0

Type of Incident	TOTALS			
	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
Aggression (verbal)	0	0	0	0
Wandering	0	0	0	0
Infection	9	5	5	2
Clinical Deterioration	5	1	0	0
Choking	0	0	0	0
Excoriation	1	3	0	1
Incotinent Associated Dermatitis	0	0	0	1
Bed Days	1,200	1,240	1,240	1,194



# Lifestyle

October was a month filled with laughter, creativity, and cultural celebration at Amber Aged Care. Our older people came together to enjoy a variety of enriching experiences that nurtured connection, learning, and joy. From artistic crafts and delicious homemade shortbread to lively musical performances and a vibrant Indian-themed celebration, the month was bursting with colour, flavour, and fun memories shared by all.

## October Highlights at Amber Aged Care

October brought with it a vibrant blend of creativity, music, and cultural exploration at Amber Aged Care. Our older people enjoyed a variety of engaging activities that inspired connection, learning, and fun. Here's a look back at the highlights from this lively month:

### Halloween Craft

Our craft sessions this month featured wooden stencils decorated with colourful wool. This creative and hands-on activity encouraged our older people to explore different textures and patterns, resulting in beautiful, unique pieces of art. The session sparked joy and conversation as our older people admired one another's vibrant creations.

### Cooking Class - Shortbread

Our older people rolled up their sleeves for a hands-on cooking class focused on making delicious shortbread. From mixing to baking, everyone enjoyed the process – and especially the sweet treats that followed!



### Live Performance

#### Musical Duo Reg and Wayne

The talented duo Reg and Wayne lit up our facility with their charming performance. Their mix of classic tunes and friendly banter had our older people singing along, tapping their feet, and soaking in the cheerful atmosphere.

### Cultural Food Event

#### Indian Fiesta

This month's cultural spotlight was on India! Our older people were treated to a delightful tasting event featuring traditional Indian dishes. The rich aromas, vibrant flavours, and fascinating stories behind each dish transported everyone on a culinary journey through the heart of India.



### Indian-Themed Bingo

To keep the cultural fun going, our bingo game this month took on an Indian theme. Instead of numbers, the bingo cards featured iconic Indian foods, national symbols, and famous landmarks. The game sparked lively conversations and curiosity, offering our older people a fun and engaging way to learn more about Indian culture.

# Feedback, Complaints, Suggestions, and Compliments Summary - Amber Aged Care

Amber Aged Care continues to welcome and act upon feedback from our older people, families, and staff to ensure the highest quality of care and service. The following feedback items were received and addressed through our continuous improvement process.

## Feedback - Menu (Food Options, Choices)

**Details:** Resident provided feedback about the food menu, expressing a desire for more options and flexibility with meal choices.

**Action Taken:** Follow-up with the resident to review preferences and discuss adding more meal variety.

## Suggestion - Additional Rubbish Bin (Recycling)

**Details:** Family member suggested installing an additional rubbish bin in the older person's room to allow her to recycle newspapers.

**Action Taken:** Follow-up completed; installation of a recycling bin arranged through maintenance.

## Compliment - Staff Practice (Carer Jitika)

**Details:** Older person gave a compliment to carer Jitika for her gentle care and kindness during showers, describing her as "beautiful and caring."

**Action Taken:** Compliment shared with the care team and noted in Jitikas performance record.

## Complaint - Living Environment (Broken Blind & Remote)

**Details:** Family member reported that her mother's blind was broken again and requested its removal. She also noted that her mother's remote control was missing.

**Action Taken:** Blind repaired, remote replaced, and communication sent to the family confirming the resolution. Staff reminded to report maintenance issues promptly.

## Complaint - Care (Continence Aids)

**Details:** Older person reported that extra incontinence aids stored in his room were taken by a staff member without permission.

**Action Taken:** Apology provided by Care Manager; staff reminded to respect older people's belongings and communicate before removing items.

## Complaint - Higher Everyday Living Fee

**Details:** Older person raised concerns about new Higher Everyday Living Fee (HELFF) and co-contribution charges, expressing dis-satisfaction with the changes.

**Action Taken:** Issue discussed and explained to resident. Feedback recorded and referred for review under the HELFF communication and education plan.

At Amber Aged Care, we view all feedback whether positive or negative as an opportunity to learn, grow, and deliver a consistently higher standard of care. Each suggestion, complaint, and compliment contributes to ongoing improvement across our service areas, from hospitality and environment to clinical care and communication.

Through timely response, open dialogue, and collaboration with our older people and families, we continue to build a culture where everyone feels heard, respected, and valued.

Our approach ensures that:

- Our older people's voices directly shape the services we provide.
- Families remain confident that concerns are taken seriously and addressed quickly.
- Staff are recognised and supported to deliver compassionate, person-centred care.

Amber Aged Care remains committed to strengthening quality outcomes, transparency, and trust through continuous reflection and improvement. Every piece of feedback plays a vital role in maintaining a welcoming, safe, and dignified home for all who live and work here.

# New Staff Selection – Amber Aged Care

At Amber Aged Care, we know that the heart of exceptional care lies in the people who provide it. That's why our team takes great pride in selecting passionate, dedicated, and compassionate professionals who share our values of respect, kindness, and excellence.

Our staff selection process focuses on more than just qualifications we look for people who bring warmth, empathy, and a genuine commitment to improving the lives of older Australians. Each new staff member undergoes a comprehensive selection process that includes interviews, background checks, and reference verification to ensure the highest standards of care.

Once selected, new staff participate in a detailed orientation and induction program, helping them understand our person-centred care philosophy, workplace safety, infection control practices, and resident wellbeing standards. This ensures that every team member feels supported, confident, and ready to make a positive difference from day one.

**We are proud to welcome our newest team members to the Amber Aged Care family. Their fresh ideas, diverse experience, and enthusiasm will continue to strengthen our caring community and enhance the daily lives of our older people.**

**At Amber Aged Care, every new beginning brings an opportunity to grow, connect, and provide even better care together.**

**Congratulations, Rojan!**

**Your exceptional service is deeply appreciated by all.**

## August & September Employee of the Month

### Congratulations to Mandeep – Employee of the Month for August!

Mandeep has been recognised for her dedication, reliability, and consistent support to both our older people and team members. Her positive attitude and commitment to providing high-quality care reflect the values we uphold at Amber Aged Care. Thank you, Mandeep, for your hard work and for always going the extra mile to make a difference.

### September

This month's nominees are:

- **Sachi** – for providing support and guidance, always happy to help
- **Suman** – for delivering a high level of care with kindness and compassion
- **Sally** (Kitchen Staff) – for consistently providing a high standard of care and service and for her patience and politeness
- **Megan** (Hospitality) – for being kind, courteous, and doing an awesome job in the café
- **Jitika** – for her kind and courteous approach to everyone
- **Manpreet** – for going above and beyond as a dedicated staff member
- **Tania** – for providing support and guidance to the team
- **Diana** – for going above and beyond and always motivating others
- **Teddy** – for consistently going above and beyond, providing support and guidance, being kind and courteous, and delivering a high level of care

After reviewing all nominations, it's clear that one name stood out time and time again.

### Congratulations to Teddy – our Employee of the Month for September!

Teddy received 25 nominations from peers, with comments highlighting their exceptional care, teamwork, reliability, and positive attitude. Teddy's consistent commitment to both our older people and colleagues sets a strong example of our values in action.



# Consumer Advisory Body - Have Your Say

At Amber Aged Care, we believe that the voices of our older persons, families, and advocates are essential in shaping the services we provide. That's why we have a **Consumer Advisory Body (CAB)**, which meets **every six months** to discuss important topics such as care planning, activities, dining, safety, and overall wellbeing.

The CAB provides a platform where older people and families can:

- Share ideas and feedback directly with management.
- Help co-design improvements in care and lifestyle services.
- Stay informed about changes, new projects, and initiatives.
- Contribute to building a stronger, more inclusive community at Amber Aged Care.

**We warmly encourage more families and older people to get involved.** By joining the CAB, you can help ensure that decisions reflect the needs, preferences, and values of our community.

If you're interested in becoming a member or attending the next meeting, please contact reception or speak with a member of our care team. Your voice matters, and together we can continue to make Amber Aged Care the best place to live and thrive.

**The next meeting date 13/11/2025 at 10:00am**





## Chapter 6, The Garden's Call

The garden pulsed with a life of its own that night. Eliza stood at its heart, the final stone warm in her hand, and felt an energy coursing through her, binding her to every leaf, every blade of grass, every blossom. The air shimmered with a faint, golden light, and shadows danced along the garden paths as if acknowledging her newfound role.

The wind whispered again, softer this time, but with a sense of urgency. "Eliza... the awakening has begun, but balance must be maintained. There are forces that do not welcome this power. You must be vigilant."

Eliza's pulse quickened. She had sensed the garden's benevolence, its life-giving magic—but now, the voice spoke of danger. The realization settled heavily in her chest: the awakening was not just a blessing; it was a test.

As she wandered the winding paths, she noticed subtle changes she had not before. The flowers she had planted swayed in perfect harmony, even though the wind had been still. The koi in the pond glimmered unnaturally, their scales reflecting not just light, but hints of color that seemed almost alive, pulsing with the rhythm of the garden itself. The plants leaned toward her as she passed, as though acknowledging her presence, their leaves brushing gently against her arms.

Then, as she approached the farthest edge of the garden, a shadow flickered. Eliza froze. It was humanoid in shape, yet it moved with an unnatural grace, slipping between the trees and vanishing before she could focus on it. Her heart thudded, but her determination surged. Whoever—or whatever—was in the garden, she would not let it disrupt the balance she had been entrusted to protect.

The next morning, Eliza returned to the house, her mind racing. She pored over the folktales again, seeking guidance, but the manuscripts offered only fragments—hints of the garden's power and warnings of those who had tried to claim it for themselves. Each tale spoke of a Keeper's burden: the responsibility to protect, to nurture, and to fight when the natural order was threatened.

By afternoon, the garden seemed to sense her unease. Tiny sparks of light shimmered among the plants, almost like fireflies, guiding her to a secluded alcove she had never explored. There, she discovered a small, ancient chest half-buried under a tangle of roots. Its surface was etched with the same symbols as the tablet, glowing faintly as her fingers traced the carvings.

Eliza's breath caught. Could this be the next piece of the puzzle? She carefully lifted the lid. Inside, nestled in velvet, lay a small vial containing a luminous liquid, shimmering with a golden glow. A folded note rested beside it, inscribed in handwriting that seemed impossibly old.

"Eliza, Keeper of the Garden," it read. "This is the Elixir of the Roots. Use it wisely, for it amplifies the garden's connection to the earth. With it, the garden will flourish beyond what you have known—but with power comes responsibility, and with knowledge comes danger. Protect the balance, or all will be lost."

The wind swirled around her, carrying the faint scent of blooming jasmine and the voice that had guided her from the beginning. "The awakening is only the beginning. Your trials are not over, Eliza. Darkness stirs beyond these walls. Be ready."

Eliza clutched the vial to her chest, a mixture of fear and resolve filling her. The garden had chosen her, entrusted her with its secrets, and now, she understood that her journey was far from over. Whatever challenges awaited, she would face them—because she was not just a caretaker anymore. She was the Keeper, and the garden's fate rested in her hands.

And somewhere, in the whispering wind, she could feel that her unseen adversary watched, waiting for the moment to test her.

## Chapter 7, The Awakening of Shadows

The morning light filtered through the garden like a soft golden veil, but the peace that usually comforted Eliza felt... fragile. The night before had left her restless. The whispers in the wind had warned her—something dark had stirred. Now, as she stood among the dew-kissed blooms, she could sense a strange

heaviness in the air, as though the garden was holding its breath.

Eliza retrieved the vial—the Elixir of the Roots—from her satchel. Its golden liquid shimmered with an otherworldly glow, as if sunlight had been captured within. The message that accompanied it echoed in her mind: “Amplify the connection, but protect the balance.”

She approached the great oak at the garden’s center—the heart of its power. Kneeling, she uncorked the vial. A faint hum filled the air, deep and melodic, resonating through the ground beneath her knees. Carefully, she poured a single drop into the soil. Instantly, the earth rippled outward like water disturbed by a pebble, and tendrils of golden light spread through the roots and pathways of the garden.

For a moment, everything was radiant. Flowers glowed brighter, vines shimmered, and the faint scent of jasmine and honey filled the air. But then—the light shifted. It darkened, flickering like a flame fighting a sudden wind. Eliza’s eyes widened. The garden trembled violently, and she heard a sound like a thousand whispers turning into a single, anguished cry.

“Eliza!” the voice of the wind shouted, stronger than ever before. “The balance—restore the balance!”

Before she could respond, the air grew cold. The colors around her dulled, and shadows slithered between the trees, pooling near the base of the oak. They twisted and writhed until a shape began to form—a tall, indistinct figure cloaked in smoke and darkness. Its voice was a low growl that echoed in her chest rather than her ears.

“So... the Keeper has awakened the garden once more,” it sneered. “How long has it been since one of your kind meddled with what they could not control?”

Eliza froze, her heart pounding. “Who are you?” she demanded, her voice trembling.

“I am what remains of those who sought the garden’s power before you,” the shadow hissed. “Tobias tried to resist me, but his will

faltered. You cannot keep what was never meant to be controlled.”

Eliza stepped back, gripping the pendant she wore—a charm her grandmother had given her, said to protect those who walked with nature’s spirit. “The garden is not meant for destruction,” she said firmly. “It thrives through harmony, not greed.”

The shadow laughed, a sound like cracking ice. “Harmony is weakness. Power demands dominance. You’ll learn that soon enough, Keeper.”

As it advanced, the garden itself seemed to fight back—vines sprang to life, wrapping around the shadow’s limbs, pulling it toward the ground. The air thrummed with energy, the oak’s roots glowing once more in defiance. The shadow shrieked, dissolving into wisps of smoke that vanished into the soil.

When the stillness finally returned, Eliza collapsed to her knees, breathless. The golden light of the garden dimmed, leaving only the faintest shimmer beneath the surface. She realized with dawning understanding that the Elixir had done more than awaken the garden—it had drawn forth both its power and its darkness.

The voice returned, gentle now, almost sorrowful.

“The garden’s balance depends on you, Eliza. The darkness you saw was not destroyed—it has only been contained. You must learn the ways of the Keepers before you... or the shadows will rise again.”

Eliza stood slowly, determination settling in her heart like stone. “Then teach me,” she whispered. “Show me what I must do.”

The wind stirred the leaves in reply, forming a faint trail of petals that led toward the old stone path. Eliza followed, clutching the vial and her grandmother’s pendant. Her journey was no longer about discovery—it was about protection, mastery, and the delicate dance between light and shadow.

The Keeper’s burden had become clear: to guard not only the garden’s beauty, but its soul.

## WORD FINDER

Spring  
is here

The words in this word search are hidden across, down,  
and diagonally, **with none backwards**.

N	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	W	G	M	Q	I	U	N
Y	B	B	K	C	R	P	I	C	N	I	C	X	I	K
W	Y	R	I	C	E	M	D	B	K	T	J	X	L	J
T	M	E	T	H	L	S	U	N	S	H	I	N	E	F
B	F	E	E	E	A	C	H	I	R	P	I	N	G	X
B	R	Z	S	A	X	N	S	R	F	R	E	S	H	D
J	A	E	U	V	I	F	B	E	Y	G	C	W	J	V
R	G	L	G	E	N	J	O	N	G	R	O	Q	N	E
B	R	R	K	N	G	R	U	E	R	O	L	G	B	S
L	A	Y	Z	L	N	U	Q	W	A	W	O	R	F	U
O	N	A	Q	Y	E	N	U	I	S	I	R	E	G	N
O	T	P	F	F	T	G	E	N	S	N	F	E	H	N
M	R	A	I	N	Y	O	T	G	Y	G	U	N	C	Y
S	K	N	E	W	B	O	R	N	P	S	L	L	W	Z
N	R	U	I	M	H	J	B	B	H	O	S	A	T	E

KITE

GRASSY

BLOOMS

CHIRPING

HEAVENLY

FLOWERS

GROWING

COLORFUL

FRAGRANT

PICNIC

BREEZE

FRESH

SUNNY

NEWBORN

RAINY

RENEWING

RELAXING

SUNSHINE

GREEN

BOUQUET