

Newsletter August 2025

Welcome to our August 2025 newsletter, keeping you updated on all the latest developments, services, and events at Amber Aged Care. This month features exciting announcements about our new café, vaccination programs, and important information about upcoming changes to service fees.



Official Opening of the Amber Café

We are excited to announce the official opening of the Amber Café on Friday, 29 August 2025 at 1000.

Refreshments

Freshly brewed coffee, tea, and snacks

Comfort

Comfortable seating for families and visitors

Community

A new space for connection and community

Please join us for the opening celebration – all families and residents are welcome!



Shingles Vaccination Program

We are pleased to announce that shingles (herpes zoster) vaccinations will soon be offered on-site at Amber Aged Care for our older persons.

Why this matters:

Shingles is caused by the reactivation of the chickenpox virus and can lead to painful rashes, nerve damage, and long-term complications such as post-herpetic neuralgia (persistent nerve pain). The risk of developing shingles increases with age, making vaccination an important step in protecting the health and wellbeing of older people.

What the vaccine offers:

- Strong protection against shingles and its complications.
- Reduced risk of severe pain, long-term nerve issues, and hospitalisation.
- A safer, more comfortable ageing experience with fewer preventable health risks.

Convenience and peace of mind:

By offering the vaccine on-site, we ensure that residents can be protected without the need to attend external clinics. Families can feel reassured knowing their loved ones have easy access to this important preventative care measure.

Next steps:

Our nursing team will:

- Seek consent for the vaccination to be attended
- Scheduled dates and times for on-site clinics.



Who is eligible:

Our clinical team will be providing details on eligibility criteria and timelines for vaccination clinics. Generally, shingles vaccination is recommended for older adults, and priority will be given to those who are most at risk.

Current Additional Services Package

Premium Accommodation

- Hotel-quality linen and premium toiletries
- Personal flat screen TV, Wi-Fi, and connection available to streaming services

Dining & Entertainment

- Chef-prepared meals, hot breakfasts twice weekly, and fortnightly BBQs
- 1 x glass Wine and soft drink served with lunch and dinner
- Monthly external entertainment
- Netflix in common areas

Personal Services

- In-house hairdressing every 4–6 weeks
- Support with coles ordering

| Service | Cost |
|--|---|
| Additional Services Package (standard) | \$23.00 per day |
| Additional Services Package (Government supported residents) | \$7.00 per day |
| Carer escort services (Monday to Friday) | AM \$56.00 per hour PM \$61.00 per hour ND \$62.00 per hour |
| Carer escort services (Saturday and Sunday) | Saturday \$77.00 per hour Sunday \$87.00 per hour |
| Carer Escort Public Holiday | \$118.00 |
| Guest dining options for families | \$15.00 per person |

Changes to Service Fees – Introducing the Higher Everyday Living Fee

From 1 November 2025, the Government is replacing Extra Service Fees and Additional Service Fees with a new system called the **Higher Everyday Living Fee (HELFL)**.

The HELFL is an optional fee for people who would like access to higher quality everyday living services on top of the standard services that aged care providers must deliver. Examples may include premium meal options, upgraded lifestyle activities, or other enhanced day-to-day services.

What's different?

More choice & flexibility – services can be purchased individually or as part of a package. Importantly, if services are bundled, you will not be worse off than if you only paid for the services you use.

Fairness – you won't pay for services you cannot or do not use.

Consumer protections – the HELFL agreement must be separate from your care and accommodation agreements, clearly list costs, and outline the standards and frequency of each service.

Cooling-off period – you have 28 days to change your mind after signing a HELFL agreement without any penalty.

Annual review – HELFL agreements are reviewed each year to make sure they still suit your needs.

Fee changes – once agreed, fees can only increase in line with indexation.

Transition Period & Quick Facts

Transition period

- No new Extra or 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



Continuous Improvement (CI) Projects

At Amber Aged Care, we are dedicated to continuous improvement, ensuring our programs, environment, and services evolve to meet community needs. Over the past six months, several initiatives have been successfully implemented to enhance quality of life, safety, and wellbeing.

BlazePod Active Ageing Program

Introduced the BlazePod Active Ageing Program, an innovative physical and cognitive stimulation program using interactive light pods.

- Enhances mobility, reflexes, and balance to reduce fall risk.
- Boosts cognitive function through physical-mental tasks.
- Increases resident confidence and engagement in group exercise.

Reflection Garden Enhancement

Our Reflection Garden has been enhanced to provide a more inclusive and peaceful space for relaxation and spiritual connection.

- Designed for quiet reflection, prayer, or enjoying nature.
- Incorporates shaded seating, improved pathways, and accessible features.
- Used for spiritual, cultural, and social gatherings, fostering inclusivity.

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Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS)

Partnered with the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS) to expand one-on-one companionship and social connection for residents.

- Fosters meaningful friendships and reduces isolation.
- Offers regular social engagement and personalized interaction.
- Beneficial for residents with limited family visits.

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More Continuous Improvement Projects



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 residents 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 residents and families.

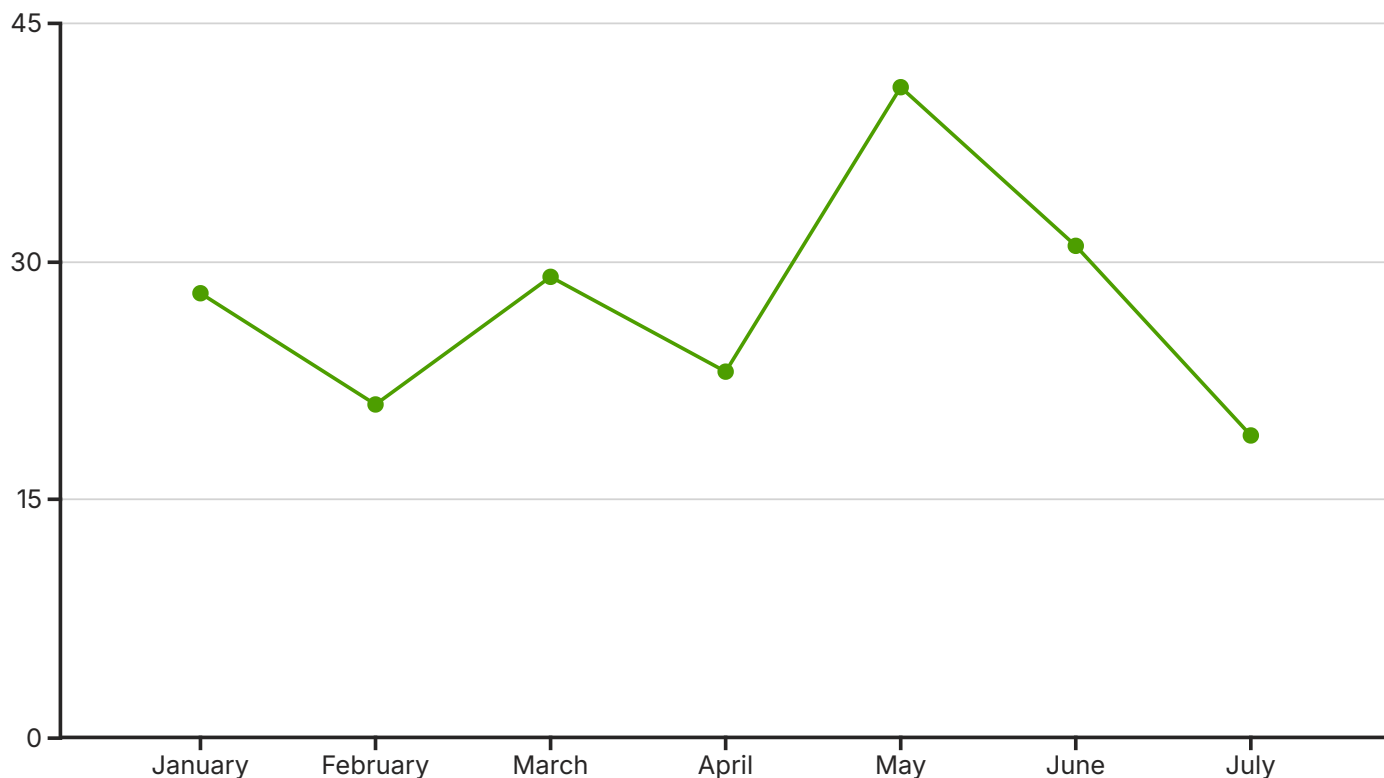
- The café will provide fresh coffee, tea, light snacks, and a welcoming environment.
- Designed as a space for families and visitors to gather with their loved ones.
- Encourages social interaction, reducing isolation and enhancing community spirit.

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



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.



Overall, incidents decreased from May to July, showing progress in several areas.



We are pleased to report fewer incidents in areas such as falls.



Some areas showed higher rates of incidents in June, including medication-related errors and a small rise in new incident categories. These are being closely reviewed through our Continuous Improvement Program to ensure risks are reduced going forward.



Every incident is thoroughly investigated, and outcomes are shared with staff through training and education to prevent reoccurrence.

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.

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 residents 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 residents 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 Garden Calls

Chapter: 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.

The Elixir of the Roots

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.

Newsletter Word Find

Find the words hidden in the puzzle below!

VBNMKLOQWERTYUIOPLK
SDFGTHNUJMKIELIZAAB
ACCINEABCDEFGHIJKLM
DRCVBHYJKLOPQWERTYU
GARDENGHFTYNMJUIKOL
WPXZQVAIMPROVEMENTN
ELIZAABSRCDEFGHIJKL
LGIADVISORYUTSRQPON
LDESGNISSERDRIAHKLM
BTZFLGYTINUMMOCTYUI
EECFELOPQWERTYUIOPL
INOASTHYGFREDCVFRTG
NULANHGFDSARFELIZAV
GTYHNUJMKIOPQWERTYU
SAFETYEIMPROVEMENTR
XORAIMPROVEMENTRDFG
SCMEZPRQWSXCDERFVBGT
DRCAFEZAQWSXCDERFVB
JGVNMTOPLKJHGFD SARF
KJBONLAREETNULOVEFL

Word List:

- AMBER
- CAFE
- GARDEN
- ELIZA
- SHINGLES
- VACCINE
- SAFETY
- BLAZEPOD
- VOLUNTEER
- REFLECTION
- HAIRDRESSING
- COMMUNITY
- WELLBEING
- IMPROVEMENT
- ADVISORY