



Staff Profile

Wendy, Diversional Therapist in High Care at Domain Kirra Beach on the Gold Coast in Queensland.

'My mission is to make sure that just because residents are in high care they are not going to miss out on enjoying themselves. We run a lot of activities throughout the day such as exercises in the morning, quizzes, bingo, painting, happy hour, sing-alongs, quoits, birthday celebrations, lunch out once a fortnight, senior citizens concerts once a month, ice cream afternoons and lots more.

'I know the activities are working when for example we play modified bingo. They all know that if they get 'BINGO' the prize is a chocolate or chips so they try really hard to play correctly so they can win.

'We also involve family members in our diversional activities – it gives everyone a better sense of connectivity, particularly when communication is a bit more difficult. My goal is to make all family members feel welcome and part of our residential family and the response from them all is wonderful. I have many family members who help run activities, bring in goodies for the residents, talk to those who are around them as well as their own family.'

Wendy is passionate about the positive effects of diversional therapy and became a diversional

therapist initially for personal reasons.

'I became interested in being a diversional therapist initially because my father ended up through many little strokes not knowing where he was even though he had lived at the same address for twenty years. When I asked him who I was one day he said "you're my little daughter that fell out of a tree". At the time it made me so sad because my mother and I knew nothing about dementia. It was very hard on my mum because he didn't know her anymore.

I then volunteered at Kirrahaven nursing home to find out what happened to my dad. I was put into the dementia section and worked alongside the diversional therapist. Little by little I started to understand dementia and what my father would have gone through and that lead onto work and I am still working in this field twenty years later.

For me, when I look into the faces of my residents I see a little bit of Dad and I get pleasure in this ... hence I love my job because I loved my dad.'



Wendy

