

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

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## Pet Therapy popular at Sea Lake

Our Sea Lake Aged Care residents love the visits of Dasha the Dog - and Dasha has been lapping up the love!

Lifestyle & Leisure worker Pam Hannig, brings Dasha in at least once per week.

Pet therapy, or animal-assisted therapy, involves guided animal interactions to improve someone's physical, mental or social health.

At MTHCS it's an informal program, with staff bringing in their own pets, or visits by the "bird man" - but there's no doubting the psychological and physical benefits.

Most of our residents have had pets during their lifetime so it's a pleasant experience for them to enjoy the interaction without the hard work of pet ownership.

Animals are a great way to reach residents with dementia. They are able to relate to Dasha because their long term memory still identifies with animals and pets.

*TOP LEFT: Myra Daniels enjoying some lap cuddles with Dasha. BELOW Jim Prater gets ready to play a game of fetch with Dasha.*



## Getting it right with a RAT

When you're using a Rapid Antigen Test, accurate results depend on you following the steps in the instructions provided with the test you use.

Do not eat, drink, smoke, brush your teeth or chew gum for 10–30 minutes (depending on the test kit you use) before collecting your sample. All tests are for single use only which means you can only use each test ONCE on one person and then it must be thrown away.

Wash your hands after completing the test and disposing of the test kit contents.

You can find more information online at the TGA website. Type in "TGA rapid antigen test fact sheet" to your search engine.

## Employment opportunities

### Mental Health Clinician

**(Salary to be negotiated)**

The Mental Health Clinician will work across the catchment and within the Ouyen, Murrayville and Manangatang P12 colleges. The Mental Health Clinician will also provide community mental health support.

The successful applicant requires a tertiary qualification (accredited in mental health) in either Psychology, Social Work, Nursing or Occupational Therapy or relevant discipline.

This position has been created through the partnership between DET and MTHCS and the Clinician will work within the Department of Education (DET) Mental Health Practitioners Initiative Guidelines.

MTHCS is an equal opportunity employer. Visit [www.mthcs.vic.gov.au/employment](http://www.mthcs.vic.gov.au/employment) for more information and other positions.

**To apply:** provide your resume with cover letter to [payroll@mthcs.vic.gov.au](mailto:payroll@mthcs.vic.gov.au) or People & Culture, PO Box 130, Ouyen 3490.

## COVID vaccination and booster shots

If you have an appointment with us for your COVID-19 shot or booster, and you get your vaccination somewhere else, please remember to cancel your appointment with the MTHCS Clinic.

Your appointment can then be offered to someone else so we can vaccination to as many people as possible as soon as possible.

Vaccination against COVID-19 is safe, effective and one of the best things you can do to protect yourself and your loved ones.

## From the kitchen

Our MTHCS kitchen teams in Ouyen and Sea Lake have been busy introducing a new approach that will give residents on special dietary requirement a better food experience.

Food moulds (pictured below) are the latest in many improvements we've put in place over the past two years after a dietary review of our menus.

As well as meeting nutritional needs, it's a priority to also provide an enjoyable food experience, but this can be a challenge when residents are limited to pureed food.

The moulds (pictured below) are designed so food looks like what it is - instead of spooned on the plate. Carrots are pureed, then shaped to look like carrot, and sausages are in a sausage shape.

Ouyen began using the moulds at the start of the year and Sea Lake will begin in the next few weeks. The special moulds are part of the Montessori in Aged Care principles we are implementing.

Montessori principles involve creating a planned environment where residents feel they are valued, contributing members of their community. Staff training will start in June.

