

EMPHN Virtual Aged Care Community of Practice

29 July 2026 | East Region

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EASTERN MELBOURNE

An Australian Government Initiative



Eastern Melbourne PHN is primarily funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.



Acknowledgement of Country

Eastern Melbourne PHN acknowledges the Wurundjeri people and other peoples of the Kulin Nation on whose unceded lands our work in the community takes place. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present. EMPHN is committed to the healing of Country, working towards equity in health outcomes, and the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

Recognition of lived experience

We recognise and value the knowledge and wisdom of people with lived experience, their supporters and the practitioners who work with them and celebrate their strength and resilience in facing the challenges associated with recovery. We acknowledge the important contribution that they make to the development and delivery of health and community services in our catchment.



Kim Poyner

Founder and Director of **MediCoach** and a nationally recognised leader in primary care. With more than 35 years of experience spanning nursing, coaching, innovation and system redesign, Kim has shaped workforce development and quality improvement across Australia and internationally.

Kim is known for her work in change management, chronic disease care and team-based practice transformation.



Agenda

Welcome and Acknowledgment	10.00 - 10.05am	EMPHN and Kim Poyner
Case Study BPSD, Restrictive Practices and Specialist Dementia Care Program	10.05 - 10.15am	Elise Gowans DON Martin Luther Homes
Facilitated break out room discussion	10.15 - 10.30am	EMPHN and Kim Poyner
Share discussion themes for each room	10.30 - 10.40am	Each room
Q&A	10.40-10.50am	Kim Poyner and Elise Gowans
Evaluation, Resources & Close	10.50 - 11.00am	Kim Poyner

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10 Minute Case Study
Elise Gowans
Martin Luther Homes

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Specialist Dementia Care Program

Presented by Elise Gowans, Director of Nursing

Martin Luther Homes, Specialist Dementia Care Program

Understand the need

- Severe Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD) cannot always be safely supported in mainstream aged care
- The Specialist Dementia Care Program (SDCP) provides temporary, specialised stabilisation before returning to standard care
- Environments that minimise the need for chemical restraint

Supporting Severe BPSD

- Behaviour is communication: Expressions of unmet needs, pain, fear, or overstimulation
- Environment is therapy: Calm, predictable, low stimulus spaces reduce escalation
- Restrictive practices: Non-pharmacological care first; medication only when necessary

From Referral to Return

- Simple national referral pathway via Dementia Support Australia
- Collaboration ensures continuity, stability, and dignity
- Staff capability supports safe transitions and sustained progress

Key Takeaways

- Recognise early signs of escalating behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia , use simple person-centred strategies, adjust the environment, and document behaviours clearly
- Contact Dementia Support Australia when behaviours become severe or unsafe, and have Behaviour Support Plans, clinical information, and family input ready.
- What would it look like for you and your facility to feel fully prepared to care for a resident living with behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia when restrictive practices have been reduced or removed, and behaviours need to be supported solely through non-pharmacological strategies?

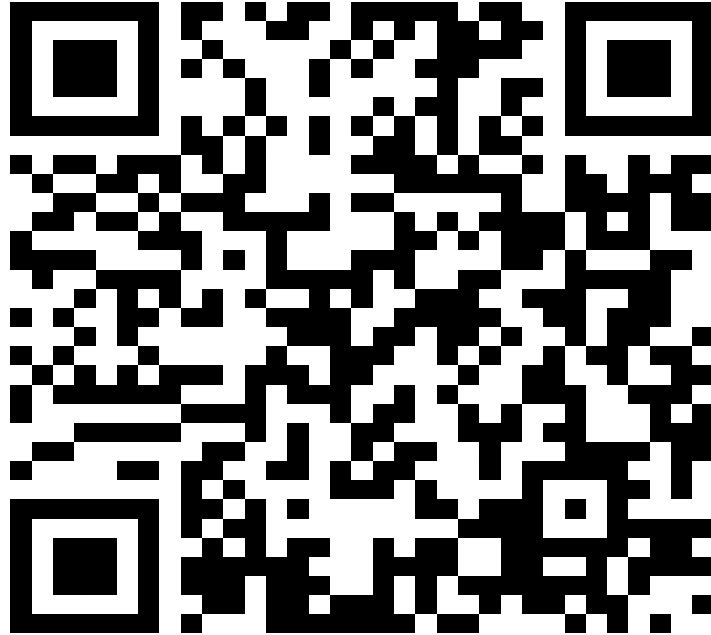
Breakout Room Discussion

If your facility was fully prepared to support BPSD using non-pharmacological approaches:

- What would residents experience?
- What needs to be available before staff feel safe and supported to rely on non-pharmacological approaches?
- What would staff knowledge, skills and behaviours look like?
- What organisational supports would enable this?

Breakout Room Feedback

Feedback



What's next

28 October Case study:
Palliative Care / End of life Care
and difficult conversations
Guest presenter:
Donwood Community Aged Care

Resources

Visit the EMPHN Event Resource Hub, your central destination for staying informed and connected. You will find key insights from the session and can access post event materials including resources and presentation slides.



Contact

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