

MEDIA RELEASE

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Mt Lofty Heights Nursing Home opens its doors and heart to new resident

MT LOFTY Heights Nursing Home has a new resident who is winning over hearts with his kind nature, generous spirit and wagging tail.

Sammy the greyhound has been officially adopted by the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service facility, much to the delight of residents, staff and visitors.

Sammy came to the facility just before Christmas on a trial basis, with the formal adoption being progressed in early 2016.

“To my knowledge, it was the first time a DDHHS aged care home has had a permanent dog on site,” Mt Lofty Heights Nursing Home Director of Nursing Cindy Pitt said.

“Like many other aged care homes, we had always allowed the residents’ families to bring in their dogs for visits, and we have had chickens and guineas pigs in the past. But we wanted a pet that the residents could touch and grow a relationship with.”

Ms Pitt undertook a number of steps to ensure that Sammy was the perfect fit for Mt Lofty residential aged care home, and worked closely with the Lockyer Valley-based group, the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP).

A plan was put in place for Sammy’s daily and weekly care which included feeding, walking and washing.

It was also determined that Sammy was to wear something bright to make him more visible to sight-impaired residents. Some staff were quick to this task, fashioning greyhound-sized high-visibility vests and donating brightly coloured neck ties.

“Greyhounds are known for their quiet temperament, low maintenance and because they are so tall, the residents don’t have to bend down for their daily pats,” Ms Pitt said.

“Sammy’s presence has had such a remarkable effect on everyone including the staff, the residents and their families.”

Sammy has now settled into Mt Lofty after a successful racing career, and it was his owner who proactively sought out a new home for his retirement. Most days, Sammy can be seen quietly padding about the corridors, taking pats when they are offered.

“Our families and staff say how nice it is to be greeted at the door by Sammy in the morning,” Ms Pitt said.

“He brings everyone together. I couldn’t be more proud of Sammy and the effect he has had.”

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Caption: Mt Lofty Heights Nursing Home Director of Nursing Cindy Pitt with resident Lenny McHugh enjoys the company of the facility's resident pet, Sammy the greyhound.

MEDIA: Contact Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service Media Team 4699 8052, 0417 795 568 or DDHHS_media@health.qld.gov.au