

# There are many fine stories to be told on aged care

*Brenda Will*

Aged care is not a “bucket list” experience or life goal for any of us. I get that. However, aged care can become a necessity if we are lucky enough to live long enough to require it.

As an aged-care financial adviser one of my biggest challenges (and I have many) is to convince families that if and when the time comes, aged care does not have to be a fate worse than death.

As an aged-care financial adviser, one of my biggest joys is showing people that what they fear can turn out to be surprisingly the best thing for them and for their quality of life . . . if done right.

It's hard to read a newspaper or

watch the TV without hearing another aged-care horror story. It is true that terrible things can happen in aged care. Our vulnerable elderly can be abused and neglected by carers, family, friends, neighbours and people we don't expect.

However, if you got to stand in my shoes for just one day, you would see there are so many great stories in aged care as well.

Let me paint you a picture.

Leslie is a widow and lived alone. She was frail with dementia and was increasingly afraid to go outside or do anything other than remain alone in her house every day. Leslie sometimes forgot to prepare proper meals and ate snacks instead.

We were never sure if she was

taking her medication correctly or regularly. Leslie called her son many times every day because she was alone and fearful.

The strain and worry on him was enormous. Leslie was terrified of going into care but she was not coping with living alone either.

We looked at options for Leslie and visited, toured and researched potential aged-care facilities that were affordable before finding the “right one”.

Leslie was very scared on the day she moved in but the staff were quick to befriend her (aged-care staff can be wonderful at this) and they soon discovered she was previously a musician.

They persuaded her to join their music group and soon Leslie was a

star performer and crucial member of the group. Leslie now eats three proper meals a day and she is always medicated correctly.

It is no surprise that Leslie soon felt like a much happier, healthier person. Instead of spending her days alone and fearful, Leslie now spends her days playing music and taking part in activities with new companions.

As her aged-care advisers, we ensured that this arrangement was financially sustainable for as long as Leslie wished to remain there.

She is still there today.

So each time you hear a bad aged-care story, think of Leslie.

*Brenda Will is an adviser with Boutique Advisers*

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