

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

From: Alex Berriman, Porter Novelli on behalf of Mercy Health

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Interactive robot wins over hearts at Melbourne aged care home

PARO, an advanced interactive therapeutic robot seal, has won over hearts after spending the month of July at Mercy Place Abbotsford.

The fluffy new resident facilitates the positive effects of animal therapy. PARO can detect touch, sound, light, temperature and even posture; and learns to behave in a way that is desirable for each resident's interaction.

Aged Care Lifestyle and Volunteer Manager, Karren Gooding, said the therapeutic robot seal was well received by all residents and staff, but particularly by those living with dementia.

"PARO is an incredible piece of technology, in many ways the robot behaves as any seal pup would, it blinks, responds to touch, makes eye contact with residents and is receptive to emotions," Ms Gooding said.

"This kind of connection has a significant impact on the behaviour and temperament of those living with dementia. Many of whom experience frustration, confusion and agitation.

"Since meeting PARO, many of our residents have felt calmer and happier, and had more positive interactions with staff and residents.

"Mercy Health is committed to incorporating innovative practices to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for residents, and this is just one example of how technology and animal therapy working together can have a positive impact within our homes."

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For interviews and photo opportunities, please contact:

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