

Media statement

For immediate release

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Mercy Place residents treated to hair of the dog

When residents at Mercy Health's aged care homes Mercy Place Lathlain and Mercy Place Mont Clare in Perth (WA) sit down for their in-house hairdressing appointment each week, they are often treated to an extra side helping of 'hair of the dog', so to speak.

That's because the homes' in-house hairdresser, Irish-born Grainne Collins who has been coiffuring the locks of seniors at both homes for close to a decade, brings her four-legged assistant to appointments with her every Wednesday – Maisie, a one-year-old Maltese/shih tzu/poodle.

"Maisie has been coming to appointments with me since the day I adopted her," explains Grainne, who has carved out a niche as a hairdresser in aged care dating back 35 years.

"The residents absolutely love her and she loves them, and if she's not in the salon on someone's lap while I'm cutting or colouring, she will have wandered over to the lounge area or into her favourite resident's room to lap up some attention or find a treat or two."

Mercy Place Mont Clare Service Manager, Dorothy Wijangco, says the aged care home had welcomed Maisie since she was a tiny puppy, and that she and Grainne were always a huge hit every week.

"Our seniors obviously love to have their hair cut, styled or permed so Grainne has always been a welcome visitor to our home over many years, but when she adopted Maisie and started to bring her along each week, the pair became incredibly popular.

"Not only do our residents enjoy having their hair done, but they also get the opportunity to spend time with Maisie, who brings so much joy to so many of our residents; they just love to pat her and spend time with her when she's curled up on their laps.

"Although she's not officially a therapy dog, Maisie aids relaxation amongst residents, as well as increasing interactivity and happiness, and her wagging tail is loved by everyone and offers a talking point for residents to reminisce about the pets they've owned in their younger years.

"Grainne and Maisie have to be two of our most popular visitors, hands down."

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