



**Learn how Blue Care used The FISH! Philosophy to deliver highly personalized care that improves the quality of life of its clients and staff.**

## Blue Care

Blue Care—named for the blue uniforms its first nurses wore—was founded in 1953 to deliver home care to seniors, people with disabilities and others in need throughout Queensland, Australia, an area 2.5 times the size of Texas.

Today Blue Care is one of Australia's leading not-for-profit providers of community care, senior residential care and retirement living.

### Situation

Blue Care created an innovative care model that tailors its services to the unique needs of each individual. Because this approach requires high levels of understanding, engagement and flexibility, Blue Care turned to The FISH! Philosophy as a guide to how to treat clients, families and colleagues.

### Objectives

1. Deliver *Tailor Made* care that focuses on the patient's quality of life and maximum independence.
2. Meet clients' psychological and emotional needs, not just physical.
3. Engage and empower staff, building a sense of personal commitment to the *Tailor Made* approach.
4. Increase collaboration and innovation

# FISH! Approach

- Held FISH! Camps to introduce the philosophy. Employees were invited, not required, to attend (which actually led to high turnout). Leaders participated with employees. Discussions explored questions such as: “How do we transform what has been seen as a task or job as an opportunity to make the client’s day?”
- Selected several FISH! Agents—people respected for their energy and influence—in each area of Blue Care to guide the infusion of FISH!.
- Designated local “champions”, called Starfish, to keep momentum alive by planning fun projects/events and celebrate people for making a positive difference.
- Created special badges for people who had attended FISH! Camps or had been observed living FISH! practices. These Blue Swimmers wore their “attitudes” on their badges. The badges invited questions from staff and clients, leading to genuine conversations about the power of truly “choosing” your attitude.
- Six months after introducing the philosophy, FISH! Agents created follow-up Master Classes to share lessons about what was working and develop new ideas.
- Practiced Be There by getting to know clients and their backgrounds. This helped staff find creative ways to deliver care. For example, a resident was increasingly agitated and difficult to care for. Staff knew he had been a plumber, so they allowed him to help the maintenance staff (his tools and “tinkering” were safe and supervised). He became calmer, happier and easier to help.
- Used Play to deal with the challenge of caring for people with dementia. Performers from a group called *Play Up* regularly visited Blue Care facilities. With a variety of props and musical instruments, the actors engaged residents with gentle and playful energy. Residents who had been unresponsive moments before often joined in by singing or dancing. An analysis of “mood charts” showed they were happier after the visits. Residents had fewer falls. At one of Blue Care’s largest sites, the use of anti-psychotic medication dropped 52% in the 5 months after the program compared to the 5 months before.
- Leaders spent more time with employees at all levels, making rounds with them to experience their work, understand their challenges and listen closely to their perspectives.

**“FISH! teaches us that the power is in our hands; that by choosing a positive attitude, having fun, and being truly attentive to our customers, we can not only radically change the way we view our jobs, we can vastly improve customer service.”**

*-Robyn Batten, Executive Director, and Cathy Thomas, Director Services South East*



## Results

- 90% of clients said Blue Care’s services exceeded their expectations. 75% gave Blue Care the highest ratings and would enthusiastically promote it to others—a number far better than industry peers.
- Blue Care’s residential EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) tripled over three years.
- Surveys ranked Blue Care higher in employee engagement than all other benchmarking partners. 60% of its employees said Blue Care was a “truly great place” to work, a number consistent with industry leaders.
- In employee surveys after FISH!, Blue Care made solid gains in living its values of Compassion, Respect, Justice, Working Together and Leading Through Learning.
- Employees said after FISH!, leadership was more approachable, caring, fair, understanding and better listeners.

## Questions?

**Ready to experience your own FISH! success?**

Visit our website at [fishphilosophy.com](http://fishphilosophy.com),  
or call 800.695.4534 to speak to a FISH! representative.