

Ageing population means boom time for home care businesses



Kylie Lambert says she co-founded Daughterly Care with equally passionate nursing friends 17 years ago without a vision or a plan – but "plenty of heartfelt mission". James Brickwood



While few people go through life without needing some help in the home, some outsource everything – whether it's to a cleaner, gardener or full-time carer. And although it is not only the elderly that need assistance, Australia's aging population is giving those businesses offering support to people in their home a definite lift.

According to the Productivity Commission, the number of Australians expected to use aged care services each year will more than triple to about 3.5 million by 2050, with around 80 per cent of services delivered in the community.

The workforce to deliver those services needs to grow from 300,000 to 800,000.

Experience counts for a lot in small business, and so it is not too surprising that three burgeoning businesses aimed at keeping people in their own home for as long as possible have been started by individuals who could see a way to do things better for their own family members.



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Better Caring's founder wasn't happy with the way he had to find care workers to support his elderly parents in their own home and Daughterly Care was "born of frustration and grown with loving care" by two nurses and an experienced businesswoman who knew there was a better way to care for people.

Bec French and husband Michael emulated Daughterly Care when they started the dementia care focused Caring Choice in South Australia in 2005. Bec's mother's diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease two years later gave them a very personal insight into the disease and even greater resolve to provide a range of support services for the elderly and disabled.

DEMENTIA ON THE RISE

Just as the number of elderly Australians is projected to almost triple by 2050, so is the number of people suffering from some form of dementia.

The demand for its care and respite services is such that Caring Choice expects to double its turnover by 2018.

Daughterly Care is one of the longest-running operators in a rapidly expanding industry specialising in home care with a focus on dementia.

Co-founder Kylie Lambert says she started the Sydney company with two equally passionate nursing friends 17 years ago without a vision or a plan – but "plenty of heartfelt mission".

"We didn't start Daughterly Care to make money. I know that's an impossibility for some people's thinking ... however it's the truth and it's not uncommon that great passion starts and drives a business more than money," Lambert says.

Lambert attributes the success of the company – which prides itself on caring for people in their own home the way a caring daughter would care for her parent – to hiring caregivers and nurses "born with special caring ways and uncommon common sense".

CHOICE OF CARE

"We knew older people wanted to stay in their own home and that sometimes they just needed a few hours of help and sometimes they needed a lot more – like our flat-fee live-in care service or 24-hour care," Lambert says.

Having started with just one private client, after almost two decades Daughterly Care has looked after more than 5600 people in their own homes through 207 caregivers and nurses. Last year 72 per cent of all new clients came by recommendation. It runs two Sydney offices and turnover has grown to more than \$8 million.

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