

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **NEW VILLAGE STORES TO HELP AGED CARE RESIDENTS LIVING WITH DEMENTIA** *Coles Group and HammondCare partner to provide world-class accessible shopping experiences*

Coles Group and innovative health, aged and dementia care provider HammondCare are working together to improve the quality of life for older Australians, particularly people living with dementia in aged care homes, by providing accessible shopping experiences.

People living with dementia strongly report shopping as their favourite activity,<sup>1</sup> providing them with dignity, autonomy and a sense of meaning and purpose, according to international research.

To keep the experience of shopping real for people with dementia living in aged care, Coles will design and develop dementia friendly Village Stores, in consultation with HammondCare.

These stores will become a feature of HammondCare's dementia-specific villages in NSW, Victoria and soon South Australia that are internationally recognised for the cottage model of small-scale household design that promotes independence and self-esteem.

Shopping for groceries will be enhanced for residents by creating a dementia-friendly experience, including specially designed check-outs, counters and shelving. Residents will use Village Stores for their daily food supplies at no cost to them while being available to family of residents, staff and the local community for retail sales.

The stores will be refreshed for seasonal events like Christmas and Easter, helping to trigger feelings and memories for residents as they prepare for special occasions with family and loved ones.

Throughout the partnership, HammondCare will contribute its research and knowledge on best practice for aged and dementia care to help Coles to create accessible shopping environments and supportive experiences for older people and those living with dementia.

HammondCare CEO, Mike Baird, said the organisation was pleased to partner with Coles Group to create dementia-friendly shopping experiences and applauded their commitment to support people with living dementia.

"This initiative will help to improve quality of life for some of the country's most vulnerable people," Mr Baird said.

"We recognise that the simple act of shopping offers all people, particularly those living with dementia, meaningful engagement, independence and helps keep memories alive," he said.

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<sup>1</sup> Alzheimer's Society. 2017. Becoming a dementia-friendly retailer: A practical guide. Available [here](#).

Coles Group CEO, Steven Cain, said Coles is delighted to work together with experts in dementia care to help make life easier for older Australians.

"We're committed to lead the way in accessible shopping and this partnership is aligned with our purpose to help Australians live healthier and happier lives," Mr Cain said.

Coles Chief Executive of Emerging Businesses, George Saoud, said he was proud to be leading the partnership with HammondCare to create a world-class dementia friendly shopping experience for HammondCare residents.

"We were proud to be the first major supermarket in Australia to introduce Quiet Hour in 2017, a low sensory shopping experience now available in 420 of our supermarkets nationwide. "

"We know that many of our older customers who find it challenging to shop in heightened sensory environments enjoy shopping in our stores during a special hour once a week when the lights are dimmed, the radio is turned down and distractions are reduced. We look forward to learning about how we can continue to enhance shopping experiences for older Australians who have special needs."

HammondCare's Executive Director for Research and Dementia Design, Associate Professor Colm Cunningham, said HammondCare was committed to evaluating the benefits of a supportive shopping experience for people with dementia and older people.

"The research already available highlights the importance of older people staying in control of their own food shopping for feelings of independence, community belonging and exercise," A/Prof Cunningham said. "This is a great opportunity to explore how to create an authentic experience in an Australian residential care context."

The first stage of the partnership will be the refurbishment of current on-site stores for HammondCare aged care residents in NSW and Victoria, with the first to be in HammondCare's Caulfield Village.

Using the learnings of these redeveloped Village Stores, a brand-new custom-built Village Store, encompassing leading dementia-friendly principles will be built at the cottage style dementia care village due to open in at the Repat Health Precinct at Daw Park, Adelaide in early 2023.

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