

Maharlika Lodge™ Australia's First Filipino Dementia Respite Home



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ABOUT US

Australian-Filipino Community Services

Not-for-profit and registered charity providing services and support to the Filipino community for 35 years and counting!

We provide:

- Aged care services
- Dementia specific support and respite care
- Carer support programs
- Access and Support work
- Cultural celebration activities
- Health and service information sessions to the community
- Crisis accommodation and case work

Awarded Community Group of the Year 2026 for the City of Casey, Victoria's largest city with over 400,000 residents
CEO Corina Dutlow awarded Casey Citizen of the Year 2026
Both awards recognised the innovation and impact of our work in developing Maharlika Lodge™



The Gaps. The Need. The Impact.

SERVICE GAPS & ACCESS BARRIERS

1. **Dementia stigma** is reducing service uptake
2. Carers have limited **service literacy** and **hesitations** to access carer support services
3. Lack of **culturally safe** and approachable dementia support/services
4. Lack of **understanding** and **negative perceptions** about respite
5. Many carers in our community are living with chronic illnesses or are seniors, and need to care for themselves too



The Gaps. The Need. The Impact.

NEGATIVE COMMUNITY IMPACT

- People are left **undiagnosed** and not supported with a dementia-specific lens.
- Carers are **burnt out** and feeling helpless, distressed, and **alone** on their caring journey.
- Families and carers have **less care options**, as their situation changes and the care recipient's needs increase.
- **Low uptake** of available services that would benefit both care recipient and carer.
- Safety and consistent care needs leave families/carers with **no option** but to move the care recipient into residential care. This has in some instances resulted in **care recipients fighting for their right** to live at home, and **family conflict**.

MAHARLIKA LODGE™ RESPITE HOME

Maharlika means noble or royal, reflecting dignity, honour, and cultural pride

- 1 of 14 organisations funded in the country
- Funded to deliver an innovative respite model
- *Improving Respite Care for People with Dementia and their Carers grant 2023-26*, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Maharlika is the first of its kind in Australia to support Filipinos living with Dementia



Meaningful Memories at Maharlika Lodge™ Film Project

In November 2024

Capturing the support and impact of respite services at the Lodge

- Main Feature [\[click here\]](#)
- Carers' Reflections [\[click here\]](#)

OUR INNOVATIVE MODEL IN MOTION

Outcomes were based on:

- Zarit Carer Burden Interview (ZBI)
- Dementia Quality of Life (DEMQOL) questionnaire
- Client satisfaction and feedback surveys
- Program attendance



Addressing the Needs

SERVICE GAPS & ACCESS BARRIERS

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POSITIVE COMMUNITY IMPACT

- An increase in dementia diagnoses
- Families and carers informed and accessing dementia-specific services
- Increased understanding of care options and how to navigate support
- Reduced stigma and increased confidence to seek help
- Improved access to culturally safe and trusted dementia support
- Carers better supported to sustain their caring roles and prioritise their own wellbeing



Our innovative model at Maharlika Lodge™
is actively **improving access** for the Filipino community to
receive culturally safe, reablement-focused dementia support
that **truly meets their needs**, feels familiar,
and is respectful and **reflective of their identity**

Living well with dementia

CONTACT

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