

Wednesday February 7, 2018

## BUNDALEER'S WILD DAY OUT

When you think of a trip to the zoo, the first thought that springs to mind is children of all ages, crowding around the various animals in awe over the interesting creatures they will come in contact with.

However research shows that our elderly enjoy a trip to the zoo just as much as our kids.

This is something that Bundaleer's Manager of Community Healthcare Pathways, Linda Martin is very passionate about.

Together with her dedicated team of carers, Linda has teamed up with volunteers from ANZ and will take 13 Bundaleer Home Care clients and residents of both the Cameron St and Johnstone St Facilities to Billabong Zoo on Wednesday February 14.

"Not only is this excursion another way that our clients and residents enjoy 'my life with Bundaleer', this zoo visit will also offer several significant health benefits including:

- **Improved health.** Research shows that a visit to the zoo has been linked to lower blood pressure, a mood boost, and a more relaxed body. These health benefits have also been found in caregivers.
- **Stimulates the mind.** A new experience or new information can do wonders for the brain. A zoo visit will stimulate the mind by stimulating the neural activity in the brain.
- **Triggering childhood memories.** Elders with Alzheimer's or other forms of disease may also benefit by going to the zoo, since the environment may trigger happy childhood memories.
- **Fresh air.** Especially if your elder is homebound or confined to bed, it may be difficult for them to be out in the great outdoors, breathing in fresh, clean air. If your elder is living by themselves, a trip to the zoo may also assist them to connect with other people.
- **Excellent source of exercise.** Even for those elders with mobility issues, moving from one animal exhibit to another can provide beneficial daily exercise. (you may need to check with the doctor to ensure that walking throughout the zoo will be safe for them).

ANZ encourages staff to find a volunteering opportunity each year and take one day off during the year to meet this commitment.

On Wednesday ANZ volunteers will each be specially paired with one Bundaleer client for the day taking into account their mutual interests. The volunteers will receive an initial briefing on WHS and communicating with the elderly.

Bundaleer carer staff will oversee the activities throughout the day to ensure that the experience is a lasting one for our guests.

Billabong Zoo tour guides will facilitate viewing, feeding, talks and presentations across the site including monkeys, meerkats, dingoes, snow leopards, crocodile, koalas, red pandas cheetahs lions and more.

**Media Call – 12.30pm lunch with the Bundaleer residents at the Billabong Zoo Gazebo. Animal handlers will be on hand for the residents to get up close and personal with the reptiles. Also present will be Bundaleer’s Linda Martin and CEO Gareth Norman along with ANZ Head of Small Business and Banking Regional NSW & ACT, Andrew de Lautour and Kate Loveday, ANZ Area Manager, Small Business NSW North Coast.**

**Billabong Zoo – 61 Billabong Drive, Port Macquarie**

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