

# The Ultimate Guide to Modern Aged Care Design Considerations

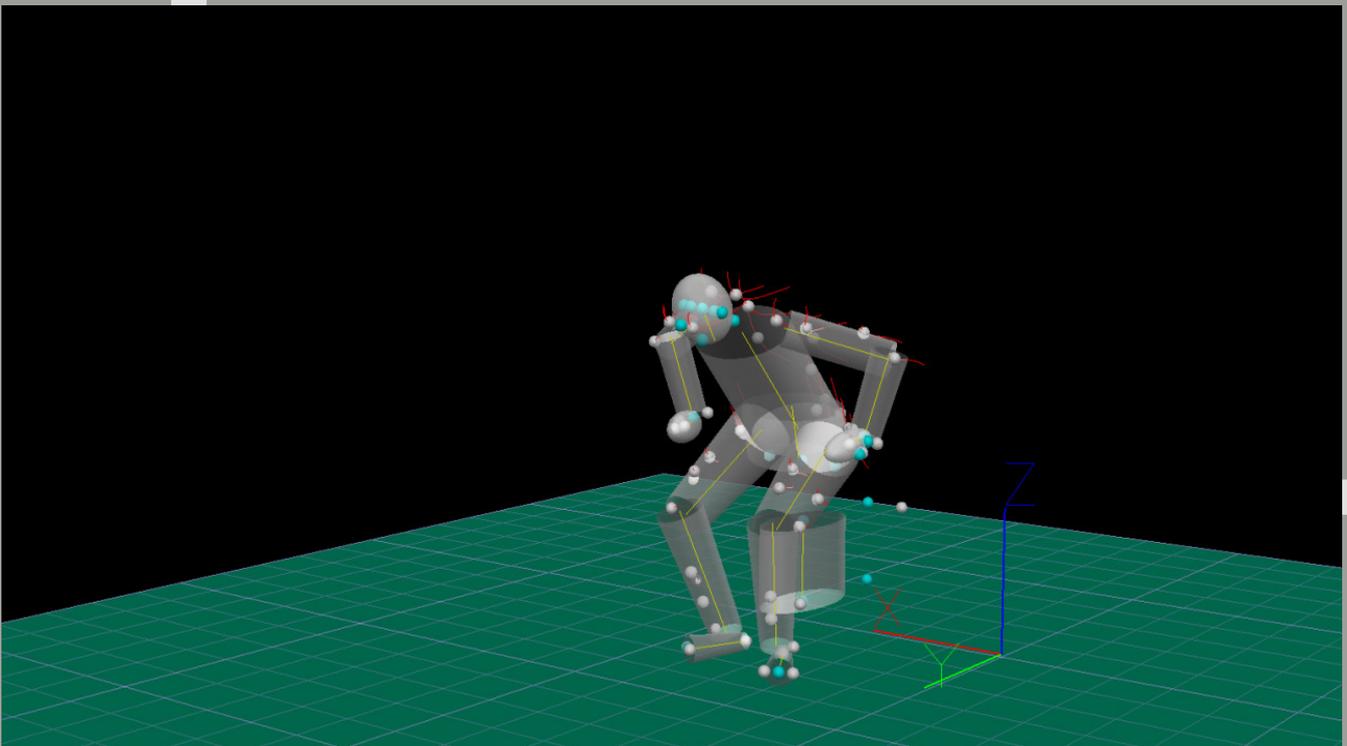
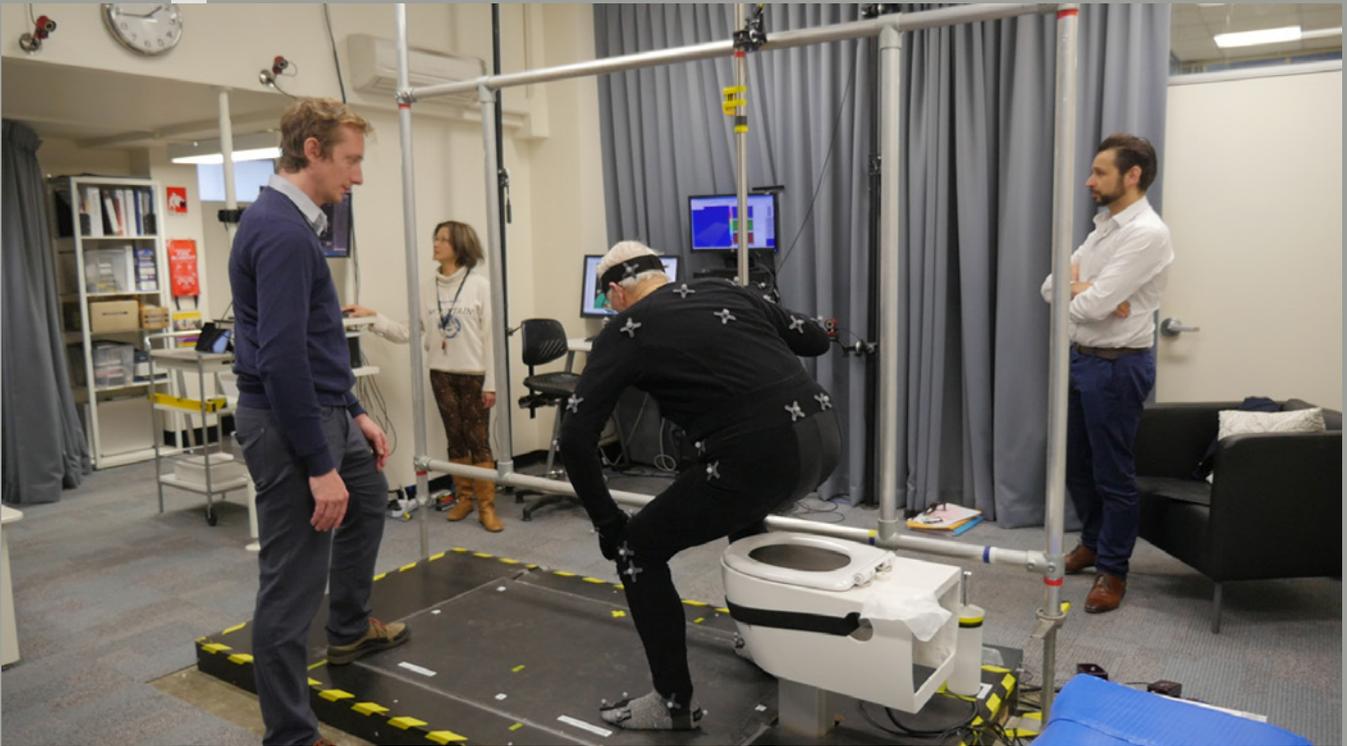
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# Contents

- 6** **Hygiene & Infection Control:** Design Considerations for Aged Care Environments
- 8** **Quality Considerations:** Conformance & Compliance in Building Projects
- 10** **Understanding The Needs Of An Aging Population For Better Bathroom Design Outcomes**
- 12** **A New Standard of Care:** What is the future of design for aged care environments?
- 14** **Steve Cummings:** The importance of designing for dignity in aged care, with sustainability in mind
- 16** **Keep it clean:** Talking infection control at aged care facilities with associate professor Philip Russo
- 18** **Professor Catherine Bridge on designing better for disability**
- 20** **Where technology meets design:** Better buildings for aged care
- 22** **Focus on wellbeing, not disease:** Designing for dementia with Karen Cmiel from Dementia Australia.
- 23** **Case Study:** Golden Grove
- 24** **Case Study:** The Regent
- 25** **Case Study:** Holy Spirit, Casula
- 26** **Case Study:** Dural House - Aged Care Home
- 27** **Case Study:** Specialist Disability Accommodation, Bayview Rd, McCrae



“ Caroma has partnered with University of New South Wales (UNSW) Built Environment department to better understand the needs of Australians towards bathrooms to support them as they age. ”

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*“ Whether it be in large buildings or small-scale bathroom renovations, the use of non-conforming building products can contribute to building compliance failure and poor operational performance. ”*

# Introduction

**D**emographic forecasts predict that Australia’s demand for aged care services will soon outstrip supply. Living longer lives means we have more years being active, but it also means more complex health requirements as we age.

Consumer expectations have changed, with a growing demand for a higher standard of living. At the same time, the aged care sector is under high levels of scrutiny, with the 2019 Royal Commission Report casting a spotlight on an industry that needs significant reform.

Leading aged care providers are responding by replacing outdated, institutional models of care with modern, home-like environments that place an emphasis on person-centered care. The modern aged care facility is built around the resident’s wellbeing, personal needs and overall dignity, while supporting carers in providing high levels of care safely and efficiently. The application of holistic design methods marries aesthetic comfort and technology while promoting the safety and wellbeing of residents, families and staff, including residents with co-morbidities, dementia and other health challenges.

The 2019 Royal Commission Report and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were wake-up calls for the industry, but also present an opportunity to create a better future. Aged care providers are architecturally evolving their operating models to ensure service improvement and business sustainability. Against this backdrop, the role that design and technology play in creating safe and comfortable environments has the potential to transform the industry.

In this collection of whitepapers, podcasts and case studies, we look at new opportunities, design solutions and technology that will enable architects, designers and specifiers to deliver real positive change to the overall experience and wellbeing of aged care residents.



# Hygiene & Infection Control

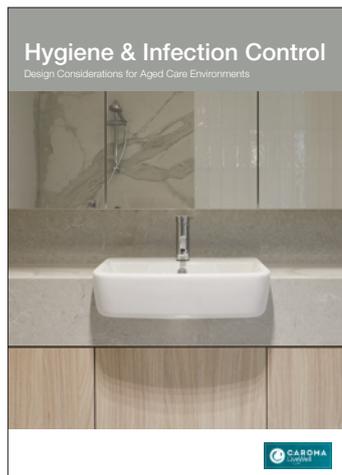
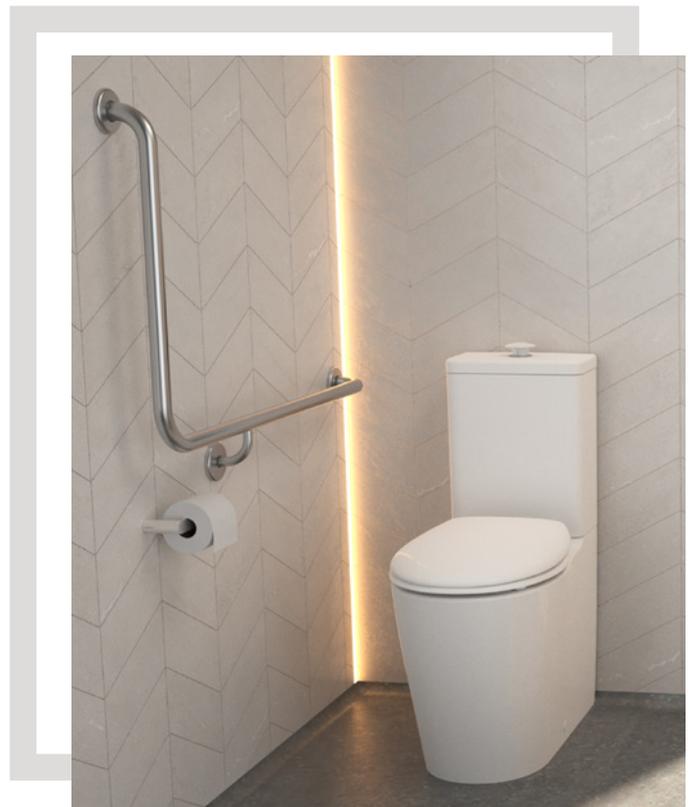
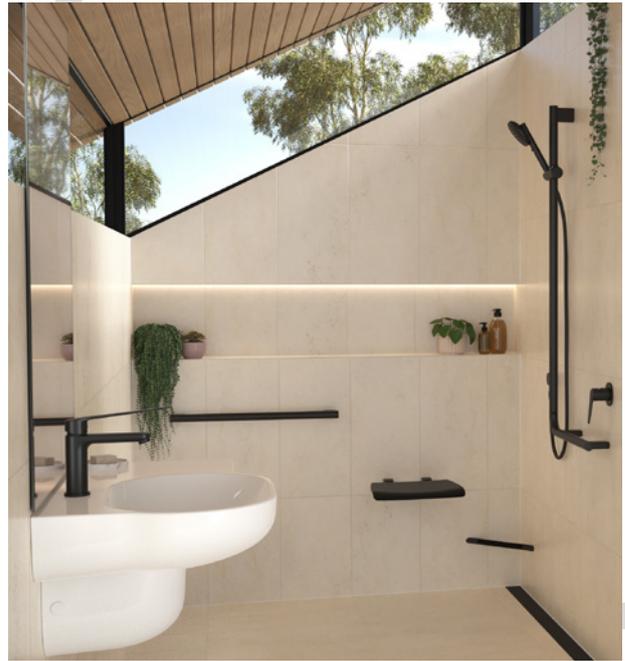
## Design Considerations for Aged Care Environments



**B**etween April 2020 and April 2021, people in residential aged care facilities made up 75% of COVID-19 deaths in Australia, despite making up only 7% of total cases. This overrepresentation served to highlight the major deficiencies in infection prevention and control practices in the aged care sector. The built environment of aged care facilities, wherein potentially immunocompromised people live in close proximity, can make outbreaks difficult to control. Tailored design strategies and new architectural solutions are required to address the unique health challenges faced by this sector.

*Hygiene & Infection Control: Design Considerations for Aged Care Environments* examines the challenges faced by aged care homes in infection prevention and control, and how architects, designers and specifiers can utilise a range of design solutions to make it easier for care providers to create a safe environment for residents. We look at the pivotal role that the built environment plays in infection control, and the key challenges in aged care design, specifically balancing the requirements of health and hygiene with residents' social and emotional needs. We also discuss some opportunities to improve infection control, including new models of care, smart technology, handwashing stations, increased ventilation and easy-to-clean surfaces.

Caroma LiveWell specialises in providing beautiful bathroom fixtures that enhance the wellbeing of all Australians. Working closely with health and aged care specialists, Caroma delivers innovative solutions that surpass current industry standards, with features that can help control the spread of infection.



“ A key challenge is balancing the requirements of health and hygiene with residents social and emotional needs such as space for interaction, visitor access and opportunities for activities outside the facility. ”

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# Understanding The Needs Of An Aging Population For Better Bathroom Design Outcomes



**It is crucial that businesses and organisations involved in providing products and services for older Australians ensure that the foundations to life quality are prioritised no matter what the dwelling. Designing bathroom environments that suit the needs of older people can help reduce barriers to functioning and allow more people to age-in-place for longer periods. This can only be achieved through active collaboration with older users.**

Understanding The Needs Of An Aging Population For Better Bathroom Design Outcomes examines the importance of a dialogue between architects, designers and older users in achieving better design outcomes. We consider recent research that highlights the relationship between care and design, particularly The Livable Bathrooms for Older People Project, a large multidisciplinary, multimethod project developed to collect, analyse and synthesise older people's physical dimensions and abilities in the context of their domestic bathrooms. We look at the work of the participatory co-design group, which revealed a dissatisfaction with conventional bathroom design and an enthusiasm for more usable, safer and enjoyable bathrooms. We also consider the importance of aesthetics in reducing the perceived stigmatising effects of supportive products.

Active collaboration between older people, researchers and the Caroma design team helps the company deliver attractive solutions that offer multiple benefits over the long term. This approach indicates a shift towards a more informed and personalised approach that considers both the functional and aesthetic desires of potential residents.



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# Quality Considerations: Conformance & Compliance in Building Projects

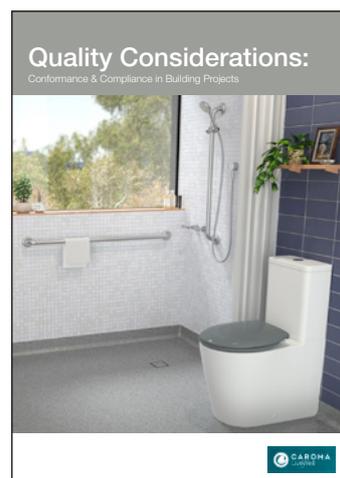




**In recent years, the use of non-conforming building products has become a nationwide issue. Reports suggest that this problem has only worsened by the construction industry's dependence on cheap, imported building products that fail to meet Australian quality standards. Whether it be in large building projects or small-scale bathroom renovations, the use of non-conforming building products comes with a range of risks for designers, installers and builders – from financial losses and longlasting reputational damage to regulatory investigations and potential litigation. It can also put Australian lives and property at risk.**

*Quality Considerations: Conformance & Compliance in Building Projects* discusses how Australian architects and designers can take a leading role in a coordinated approach to product conformance across all stages of construction. We look at the Australian construction landscape and the factors that contribute to ongoing issues with product conformance and compliance within the industry. We then examine in detail the role of design professionals in addressing the use of inferior or substitute products in building projects, focusing on quality and the user experience, the designer's duty of care, and several methods to determine whether a product is genuine and does what it claims it will do.

Caroma products are specially designed for Australian plumbing installation and construction practices. The range of products are rigorously tested over and above minimum requirements for compliance. Regular batch testing ensures compliance in changing market conditions, with Caroma representatives onsite at the factories to ensure strict supervision of production processes and ongoing quality assurance.



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## A New Standard of Care

What is the future of design for aged care environments?

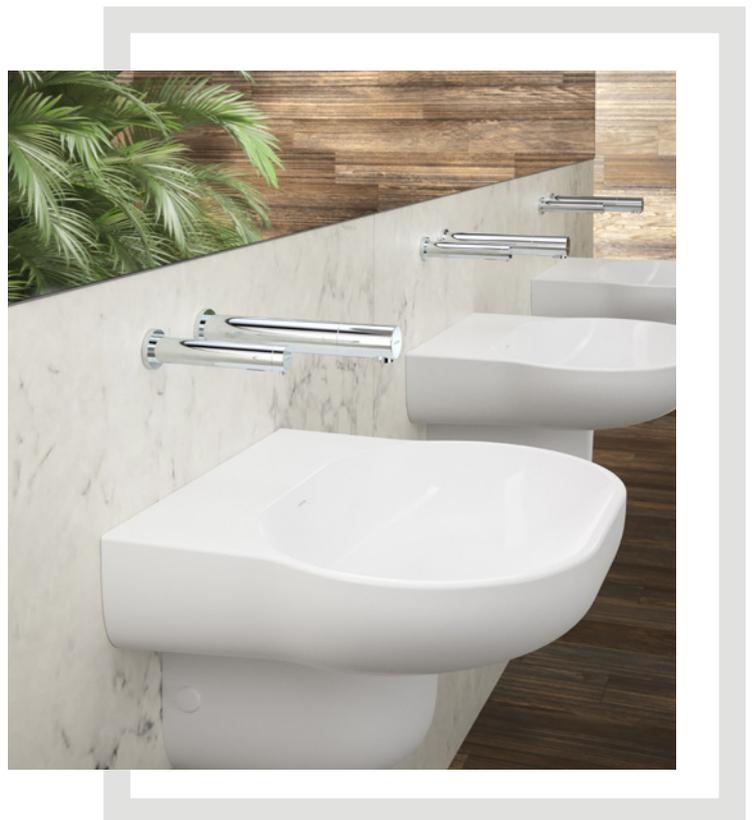
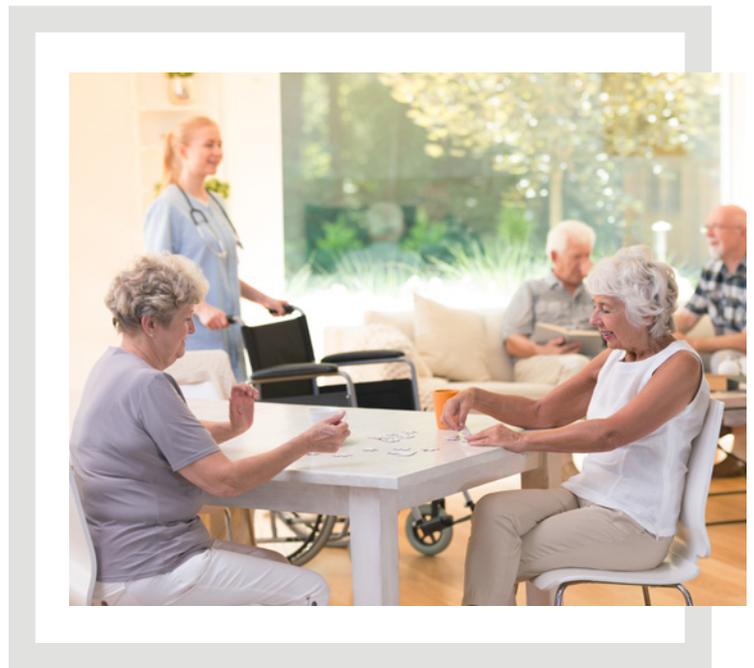


“ ‘Small household’ environments consist of around 8 to 12 residents living in a home-like environment with a separate kitchen, intimate dining, and small-scale living spaces, enabling person-centred care. ”

**B**y 2056, the proportion of Australia's population aged 65 and over is expected to grow to 22%. The country's rapidly growing older population creates both pressures and opportunities for Australia's aged care sector. In response, design and construction professionals are looking towards innovative configurations and operator models to create environments that enable high levels of care while providing an enriching living space for residents.

*A New Standard of Care: What is the future of design for aged care environments?* takes a closer look at the changing landscape of aged care design, some emerging design trends in the sector, and how these factors will impact your next project. First, we consider current market shifts and client preferences in the industry. We then deep dive into the key factors driving change in the design of aged care facilities: the findings of the recent Royal Commission, the impact of COVID-19, the emergence of new technologies, sustainability, rising construction costs and the shift away from institution-like settings. Finally, we apply some of these learnings to one of the most critical spaces in an aged care environment: the bathroom.

A leading Australian designer and distributor of bathroom products, Caroma LiveWell has worked closely with health and aged-care specialists to deliver innovative solutions that surpass current industry standards. LiveWell includes a versatile range of solutions that enable you to create a unique space that both complements and elevates your client's lifestyle.



**“ Good architecture and interior design that successfully balances resident wellbeing, inclusion and happiness while enabling aged care providers to deliver care effectively and efficiently, will achieve better residential outcomes in the long-term. ”**

 [Download Whitepaper](#)



# The importance of designing for dignity in aged care, with sustainability in mind

**F**or almost 80 years, the name Caroma has been synonymous with innovative bathroom design. With a number of firsts to their name (including the first plastic cistern and the first dual flush mechanism), Caroma's designs have always been future-focused, bringing to life a vision of creating sustainable luxury, while never compromising on sleek aesthetics.

Their Opal range brings this two-tiered design and future focus to independent living bathrooms, providing an easy-to-operate set of fixtures specifically designed to enhance the wellbeing of those requiring a little extra assistance, while creating a sleek aesthetic that can work just as well in a commercial bathroom as in a home.

"Designing for the dignity of someone using a toilet is important," says Dr. Steve Cummings, Director of innovation at Caroma. "If you can provide them with the dignity of not needing assistance when using the toilet, that's one of our aims. We're constantly working to make our products better for people that use these sorts of products and try to move away from being institutional to looking like normal products. There are a lot of areas for innovation in this space to make lives better. And that's what we're trying to do."

Caroma's Smart Command system is the beginning of the company's forays into the world of analytics-led bathrooms. "I see Smart Command having a big impact on bathroom usage for access. We're able to provide touch-free control of the toilet, the tap is touch free, we've got a shower system that is quite unique. It's all electronic - that can make their lives better." Smart Command is able to submit data about facility usage back to a central hub, allowing building managers - or carers - to track usage. But Dr Cummings is already looking towards the next development, "We're looking at AI that gets to know the person using it, and can make decisions for that person - this is a great help, particularly for care."

While maintaining a powerful drive towards creating innovative products that support the lives of our ageing and ability-restricted populations, Caroma has never lost sight of its



Dr. Steve Cummings | Director Innovation at GWA Group

imperative to improve product sustainability at every turn. "We're saving 70% of the water we would use to flush back in back in the 80s," says Dr Cummings. "That's 70 percent saving without any impact on the actual performance of the products. But the future is in hybrid technologies that we use to get better savings in water usage - from bathroom products particularly.

"Water reuse is a big thing. We've developed a system that diverts water away from the shower while it's warming up. So you can set your temperature, and it'll divert that water away into a tank, rather than just going down into the drainage. And that's fresh water by the time it gets into the tank. So that can save around 6 litres of water per shower."

The Opal collection is a stunning and versatile collection of independent living products which provide considered discrete design features such as raised height toilet pans and integrated shelf space on basins to reduce challenges and promote independence in the home for longer. The newest addition to the Opal collection is the Opal Tapware and Opal Support grab rail range. All are designed with beautiful aesthetics, ergonomics and support. Available in a variety of colours and quality finishes, these contemporary rails look beautiful, while providing the trusted luxury experience during everyday routines that the Opal collection is renowned for.

Caroma continues to refine the Opal collection - as well as its other accessible and aged care ranges - and push towards the greater integration of technology, functionality, and design to benefit our ageing population.



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# Keep it clean: Talking infection control at aged care facilities with associate professor Philip Russo

**Infection control is undoubtedly one of the most important facets of providing a diligent level of care within aged care facilities. There are many ways to reduce the spread of infection - among them ensuring that environments are clean, wearing correct Personal Protective Equipment, properly ventilating spaces, and keeping residents at safe distances from each other during times of heightened risk. The onset of COVID-19 has turned a sharp focus onto the standards that are maintained at aged care facilities, with the findings not always being positive. So what are the factors that contribute to creating a safer environment for aged care residents, and how can the built environment help?**

“There are a number of factors that contribute to infection risk in these facilities,” says Philip Russo, Director of Nursing Research, Cabrini Health and Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, at Monash University. “We’re talking generally about older people, which means their immune systems are likely not working as well as they used to, so they can’t fight off infections. They may also have other medical conditions which make them more susceptible. In addition, a lot of infection control research and interventions and guidelines are specific to healthcare services and, in particular, hospitals. And we know a lot about those areas, but aged care facilities aren’t typically classified as health care facilities.”

The fact that aged care facilities are classified as residential rather than health care facilities has significant implications for the spread of infection - notably, a lack of trained nurses and the knowledge they bring with them. “Over the past couple of decades, there’s been a number of changes in the workforce. We’re seeing qualified registered nurses in these areas being replaced by a less expensive labour source, I guess,” explains Philip. “And that has consequences, which I think have really been brought to light within the past 14 months with COVID.”

Philip Russo | Director of Nursing Research at Cabrini Health | Associate Professor at Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Monash University.



What we’ve found is that infection control practices were poor, and education wasn’t fantastic.”

The revelations around dubious care levels at our aged care facilities recently sparked a Royal Commission, which returned a recommendation around infection control. “The recommendation was that each aged care facility needs to have a registered nurse employed as an infection control lead. Now that has never been required before, which sounds unbelievable, but that’s the truth,” says Philip. “Many nurses who work in other facilities, infection control is something that they have to do, and practice every day. So we’re hoping that knowledge and experience will translate into these aged care facilities.”

Apart from mandated registered nurses, and a general increase in the level of education and training around infection control for staff, there are other practical ways to ensure our aged care residents are given safe environments. “Things like no shared rooms,” says Philip. “So every resident or every patient has their own single room. That’s a big start. The second one would be that the actual environment and the surfaces need to be able to be cleaned easily and thoroughly. There’s a lot of carpet in aged care facilities, there’s a lot of materials, there’s lounges, there’s cushions, there’s furniture that you don’t see in a hospital. They make the environment more homely, but they’re actually really hard to clean and keep clean.”

This need for easily cleanable, yet functional and stylish fixtures is something Caroma has been designing for, for many years. Their Opal collection offers a range of toilets, basins, and shower fixtures that are designed with the elderly in mind. The Opal mixer taps also have an antibacterial aerator which reduces mold and mildew buildup within the spout. Nonporous enamel and rimless pan designs make the Opal collection easy to clean, enhancing antimicrobial properties and contributing towards infection control.

Specifying Caroma’s Opal collection is one step towards improving the safety of our aged care facilities, and the safety of our elderly residents.



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# Professor Catherine Bridge on designing better for disability

**I**t is, in many ways, quizzical that when it comes to architecture and design we don't give more thought to designing for disability or aged care - considering that many of us are likely to encounter disability in our lives, and we will all grow old. Emeritus Professor Catherine Bridge is one of Australia's eminent experts on housing solutions for older people, whose housing research portfolio includes research on housing and care; housing and health; older people and sustainability; accessibility of the built environment and extensive research on home modification interventions.

"Disability in Australia can be hard to quantify because it's a relational concept, and a social construct," says Catherine. "So when we're talking about the national census, we're talking about 4.4 million Australians, or one in five, who self-identified as disabled. But if we're talking about the National Disability Insurance Scheme, we're only talking about people with a profound or severe disability - a good deal fewer people."

Australia has recently had a difficult conversation with itself over how we provide for the more vulnerable members of our society - with results that were, at times, confronting. "As we've seen with the Royal Commission, there are a number of shortcomings in our current approaches, and I guess one of the problems is discrimination has been evident in our built infrastructure and in services. And that's been compounded, by people with disabilities experiencing not just problems with access in the built environment, but also poverty as a result of being unable to be employed or access facilities like health facilities and doctors appropriately."

There is currently a move towards the creation of more accessible spaces, but progress is slow. And while architects and designers are receptive to making more accessible designs the norm, the reality is still a way off.

"Architects currently think about accessibility mostly in regard to compliance with minimum standards, as set out by the Building Code of Australia, or the Australian Access and Inclusion standards. But you know, those standards are part of about 7200 standards, which makes it a very complex activity. So unless the client wants a really bespoke design, then it requires, you know, a very committed designer to want to deliver something that goes above and beyond," says Catherine.

"But I think the biggest misconception is that compliance with the minimum standards accommodates people with disabilities. People are usually horrified when I tell them that we haven't



Catherine Bridge | Professor - University of NSW

ever collected any Australian data about older people to inform Australian standards, and that the data we do have is now quite old and was collected from people in an institution," she adds.

One of the parts of building design in which lack of accessibility is felt the most is bathroom design. "Bathroom design hasn't changed very much since the widespread adoption of innovations in home plumbing, around the late 18th century," explains Catherine. "And because of the need for water containment and sanitation, innovations since then have mostly been about materials that are waterproof and easy to keep clean. But those materials are also generally cold, which makes them a risk for hypothermia. And of course, risk of death or injury, from slips, trips and falls."

Catherine is unequivocal about the fact that the solution to this issue is better design, and the earlier consideration of accessibility in the design process. "Smarter design, which is designed to conduct to people rather than people adapting to the design, is going to make a big difference," says Catherine. "And we need to think about design, not just as a set of isolated objects, but as a whole composition. It needs to be thought of as the core of the process, not an add on. And I think it's about understanding humans as variable, variable in shape and height and size, and variable in abilities over time."

Catherine has conducted and published significant research in this space, including "Bathrooms and Older People" in partnership with Caroma. But she sees there is still a long way to go before accessible design is truly normalised within our built environments. "I think that this is something that, you know, many people can contribute to, and which I would like to see being much more explored and better funded," she says.

But despite the ongoing journey, Catherine is positive about the road ahead. "I think it takes a commitment by society, not to leave people behind. And I think it's a mark of a civilised society that we allow people to be the best that they can be. I don't think anyone aspires to be less than, and all people with disabilities aspire to be recognised for what they can do, not for what they can't do - and I look forward to seeing that reflected across our society."



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# Where technology meets design: Better buildings for aged care



Sadie Burling | Health & Ageing Business Development Manager at Paynter Dixon

**D**esigning for aged care is an increasingly important area of architecture and design for many reasons. First, our ability to provide the requisite levels of care and safety to aging people has been brought into sharp focus by the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, concerns around parts of Australia's aged care system were enough to warrant a royal commission, which has subsequently returned 148 recommendations for reform. Third, as our population continues to age, greater capacity - and greater compassion - needs to be built into our aged care system to ensure a high standard of care and dignity for all elderly Australians.

Sadie Burling is the Health & Ageing Business Development Manager at Australian-owned construction services company Paynter Dixon. She's also a registered nurse, a non-practising midwife and holds a Child and Family Health Certificate, Bachelor of Health Science and a Master's in Management. She has significant practical and academic expertise in the field of aged care construction, honed over a long career.

The design of aged care facilities has changed over the years," says Sadie. "We had our roots historically in poorhouses and asylums. And over the years, thankfully, we've changed the way we house and accommodate our seniors. Now, we're much more focused on the design of the building, and how it can work smarter to alleviate some of the workload for the staff. This can increase capital costs upfront, but the return on investment will be realised in staffing costs and utility costs.

"The pandemic has shown that even the newest of buildings doesn't always accommodate some of the infection control processes that are required during a pandemic," she continues. "So that's an opportunity going forward to work more closely with clients on the infection control aspect of the building." One of the recommendations emerging from the Royal Commission is to get rid of the large vertical buildings that are common these days, and go back to the small house model. "The question is, can small house models be built into a vertical building?" asks Sadie. "And yes, they can. We've built a facility that has a 12 bed small house model within a seven storey building. So those people have their own social spaces and quiet spaces, kitchen and dining and lounge areas. But we've built a back spine into the building so areas such as the nurse's station, medication room, and the dirty utility room are behind the scenes. So it's not part of the house, but still easily accessible to the staff."

For Sadie, the future of aged care sits at the intersection of design and technology. "We need to look at how we can make the aged care environment look homely, but also meet the care needs of the residents," she says. "Technology plays a huge part in aged care these days. For example, dementia is on the increase, so we need technology to be able to let the resident be themselves - to walk around and be safe, but also for the staff to be able to have a mechanism by which they can keep an eye on the residents. So real time locator service technology is very beneficial, and often helps alleviate the need for securing units to contain people, which is not really very humane. So what we're trying to do is to build environments that allow people the freedom and the liberty to move around as they wish. And having some technology in place often helps the staff ensure that the safety of the resident is maintained."

As it is across all construction, sustainability is also a concern in designing for aged care - one which Sadie, in her role at Paynter Dixon, keeps front of mind. "We review the land suitability and optimise the site to minimise the impact of construction to the local ecosystems. We look at energy optimisation wherever possible and determine the best outcome for the client in terms of energy consumption and costs, bearing in mind the impact to the environment. We look at indoor environmental quality, sustainable building, maximising daylight, appropriate ventilation and moisture control to make sure that we don't get high VOC emissions, temperature and lighting controls are also important aspects of sustainable quality environments. So there's lots of things that we look at in creating a building."

Lots of things, indeed. There's no doubt that designing and building for aged care presents a vast number of considerations above and beyond what might ordinarily be required for a building. But - as Sadie has said - through careful planning for the needs of residents and significant commitment to sound design principles, we can produce better buildings for our ageing population.



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# Focus on wellbeing, not disease: **Designing for dementia with Karen Cmiel from Dementia Australia.**

**A**s Australia's population continues to age, designing for aged and health care has become a significant priority. And as a disease (or umbrella term for a group of diseases) that more commonly affects older people, designing for dementia is becoming a growing consideration in the way we craft spaces for care.

"We're the peak body for dementia in Australia," says Karen Cmiel, Learning Designer and Facilitator at Dementia Australia. "We've been representing people with dementia and their carers for a long time. So we represent the needs of more than 472,000 people living with dementia at the moment in Australia. But we also support 1.6 million people who are involved in the care of people living with dementia, and that's paid and unpaid carers as well."

Karen has been working in the Aged Care sector for over 20 years. She has qualifications in Community Leisure and Health, Community Services Management, Dementia care and Education and Training. In her current role with Dementia Australia, she advises and educates architects and builders in dementia-friendly design, and what constitutes meaningful design for people living with dementia.

"People in this space should be asking three really important questions," she says. "The first one is, who is the space for? So who are you designing the space for? The second question is, what is the function or the purpose of the space, and is it going to be obvious as to its functionality? And the third question, then is, does the design fulfil the purpose and the needs of who you're designing the space for?"

Karen notes that in the past, the sterile, hospitalised environments of dementia care have not contributed as positively to the wellbeing of those in care, than they perhaps could have. Similarly, those that look too modern or designed may also be confusing for someone who is suffering from memory loss or other cognitive impairment.



Karen Cmiel | Diversional Therapist at Dementia Australia

"A lot of modern builds are not necessarily designed best for the person who's going to be living there, but are geared more to the family who will admit their relative to live there. So if it looks nice, or fancy, or pretty, then perhaps they're more likely to actually look at admitting their loved one there," says Karen. "But I was recently at a facility and overheard an elderly lady in the dining room asking people who she had to pay for her meal, and getting quite upset as the staff were telling her she didn't have to pay. But the dining room didn't look like a house, it looked more like a restaurant or a hotel - and what do you do at a restaurant? You pay for your food. So we're designing to actually cause confusion rather than setting up a space that's really familiar."

But the picture is far from bleak - Karen is seeing growing numbers of well thought-out, considerably-designed spaces. "At Dementia Australia, we recommend the small house model of no more than 15 people with dementia in a space so it's more intimate, and easier to find things," she says. "And some geriatric wards have been rebuilt - so they've been gutted and then they've looked at the whole design, and included some single rooms, they've divided the bigger wards into smaller spaces."

"We're also seeing facilities using another approach called salutogenesis, which is about creating an environment that fosters wellbeing rather than disease. A great example is the Royal Melbourne Hospital for Children where they have these big fish tanks, they have meerkats on display. And a lot of places that I have done reviews for have actually taken on that approach and have looked at ways of bringing in certain artwork or different features that actually promote health rather than concentrating on disease."

Karen elaborates at length upon numerous other methods and design frameworks - including Dementia Australia's 10 Dementia Enabling Environment Principles, and reiterates just how positive the outlook is within the space, for creating built environments that support sufferers of dementia and ageing people.

This article is written from a snippet of a longer podcast.



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# Golden Grove



**Developer:** Helping Hand **Architect:** Walter Brooke Architects **Primary contractor:** Kennett Builders  
**Project specs:** Total of 130 toilets and 150 basins installed throughout 110 rooms  
**Caroma products:** Care 800 accessible toilet, Opal 920 shelf basin, Opal 720 shelf basin

## Background

Australians have one of the highest life expectancies in the world, with the current estimate sitting at 83.5 years. While a long life is certainly something worth celebrating, living independently and in comfort in later life is what most of us hope for.

With more than 7,000 older Australians living in South Australia, Helping Hand – a non-profit organisation providing residential living – recently embarked on its latest project, the Golden Grove Aged Care development. Located just 20km from Adelaide’s CBD, the three-storey Golden Grove Residential care home would provide locals with the highest level of care and a uniquely independent lifestyle. Boasting a prime location opposite The Grove Shopping Centre, residents could expect beautiful, light-filled rooms, as well as an enviable range of services, including an indoor/alfresco café, hair salon, health services and bar.

## Challenge

For Victoria Sands, a member of the Walter Brooke Architectural team, a key challenge for Golden Grove was marrying style and safety. “There’s certainly a balance of functionality and care methods”, explains Sands. “We have to consider infection control, accessibility and risk mitigation, while remembering that we’re creating a home that must look and feel welcoming and stylish”.



## Solution

Having worked closely with Helping Hand on previous projects, Caroma were the first choice to supply bathroom products throughout Golden Grove’s 110 residential rooms: but with an innovative twist! Further to a brainstorming session, Larby raised the idea of incorporating the removable drop-down armrests and nurse call button to Caroma’s Care 800 accessible toilet suite. What followed was a collaboration between Caroma and aged care solution-provider, Customtel, resulting in all 110 resident toilets across the facility being successfully modified to feature the armrests and in-built call button.

Complemented by Caroma’s Opal 920 and Opal 720 shelf basins, Golden Grove residents now benefit from bathrooms that meet the highest standards in aged care safety and accessibility, while keeping the clean lines and modern finishes for which Caroma is recognised.

For Larby, working with Caroma brings an unmatched level of confidence to Helping Hand projects. “We know that Caroma is the market leader but, beyond that, they know exactly what we need. When we liaise with Caroma about new projects, they make suggestions about additional or new features without us even having to ask. The fact that they’re constantly investing in innovation means that when we make suggestions about how products can be modified, they’re as excited about it as we are. That’s why they’re so attuned to the needs of the aged care sector”.

**“It’s crucial to use the highest standard products in aged care. We need to ensure that products, particularly in bathrooms – which can carry greater fall risks – consider safety without compromising on aesthetics”**

# The Regent

**Developer:** Japara **Architect:** Spowers **Caroma solution:** A selection of different Caroma products were installed across 105 luxury aged care ensuite bathrooms; including Care 800 Cleanflush toilets, Urbane toilet, Urbane semi-recessed basins and wall basins, Liano Nexus basin mixer and shower tap set and Virtu Comfort Shower seats.



## Solution

Working closely with Japara's General Manager of real estate, Toby Hicks, the Spowers team enlisted Caroma's expertise in specifying the perfect bathroom range to meet The Regent's high standards. A range of Caroma solutions were installed across 105 aged care ensuite bathrooms; including Care 800 Cleanflush toilets, Urbane toilet, Urbane semi-recessed basins and wall basins, Liano Nexus basin mixer and shower tap set (with a WELS 6 star rating) and Virtu Comfort Shower seats. "Caroma is easily our preferred bathroom supplier – we know we can rely on them", reveals Hicks...

*“They can help with everything – from on-going maintenance, assisting with any problems or faults to product availability. Caroma offers a diverse range of products, including premium options, such as those we've used in The Regent, as well as more traditional options; all delivering luxury experiences.”*

Feedback from The Regent's first residents has been hugely positive and both Spowers and Japara have been pleased with the bathrooms' contribution to the final look and feel of the rooms. "We wanted a contemporary, clean aesthetic to help create a sense of calm and warmth to the homes, and the Caroma range has played an important part in helping us to achieve that", remarks Robinson.



## Background

For some, aged care accommodation conjures up negative images of clinical environments; but, in recent years, standards for aged care living have undergone a radical transformation. Increasingly, developers have re-imagined the possibilities for aged care living, providing customers with accommodation options that take style, comfort and lifestyle as seriously as care levels.

The Regent, by Japara, is one of the latest of these next-generation care homes, setting an entirely new standard in luxury retirement living. Set in the highly sought-after Regent Street, in the affluent and leafy Victorian suburb of Mount Waverley, The Regent consists of 105 luxury resident rooms and suites, all with private ensuite bathrooms, floor-to-ceiling windows and views of the stunning Valley Reserve.

## Challenge

With a reputation built upon building care homes with the highest standards of quality finishes and stylish design, the challenge for Spowers – lead architects for The Regent – was to exceed prospective residents' expectations. As Annie Robinson, Associate at Spowers, explains, "The main challenge is delivering a safe environment which responds to clinical and functional aged care requirements, but wouldn't look out of place in a luxury hotel or resort. The selection of fittings, fixtures and finishes – especially for the bathrooms – are vital in delivering this approach".

In order to ensure that residents can maintain as much independence as possible, for as long as possible, Robinson and her team had very specific requirements for The Regent's bathrooms – including raised toilet pan heights, slip-resistant flooring and lever controlled taps, for effortless water control. All this – while also fitting in with the ultra-stylish look and feel found throughout the rest of the design scheme, which included expensive timber and stone finishes.



# Holy Spirit, Casula



**Products:** Opal Cleanflush armrest toilet suites with Anthracite Grey seats, Opal 720 shelf basins, Elegance lever basin tapware, Elegance shower wall top assemblies, Caroma Plus Starsafe II care showers, Grab rails, Urbane and Luna toilet suites for the staff amenities, Cleaner's sinks.

## Background

The well-established Sydney suburb of Casula has welcomed a brand-new residential aged care home, Holy Spirit. Unveiled to the public in February 2021 in response to the neighbourhood's growing need for high-quality, community-orientated aged care facilities, this architecturally designed establishment caters for up to 144 residents and offers a range of comfortable, light-filled rooms with ensuites that are arranged to ensure the occupants feel at home.

## Challenge

In designing the Holy Spirit facility, creating a non-institutional sense of comfort and familiarity was of utmost importance to the team at Catholic Healthcare - on par with creating an easy to navigate, accessible and safe environment that would prioritise the wellbeing of the residents. This consideration was particularly vital in bathroom design.

David Krakowszky, Catholic Healthcare's Development Manager, explains: 'We try to provide non-institutional environments for our residents - environments that are as close to residential as possible. That's very important to us.' Equally, the facilities must be designed to provide the residents with all of the necessary supporting features - including appropriate grab rails or colour choices that aid visibility - which allow staff to assist the residents as and when required.

## Solution

Caroma's range of products offered the balance between the desired residential appeal and design that prioritises the wellbeing and safety of the residents.

Aligning the choice of specific products with their rigorous design guidelines, Catholic Healthcare fitted out Holy Spirit Casula's bathrooms with Opal Cleanflush armrest toilet suites, Opal 720 shelf basins, Elegance lever basin tapware and shower wall top assemblies, and Caroma Plus Starsafe II care showers, creating spaces that not only feel like home but also excel when it comes to safety features and practicality.

David Krakowszky explains some of the essential considerations Catholic Healthcare had to keep in mind: 'When it came to the toilet, we were faced with two options. One is to provide a very non-institutional toilet suite and couple it with drop-down handrails, which would be fixed to the walls. That seemed too institutional, and we felt it would be better to have the rails mounted onto the toilet itself.' The specified toilet suites with

integrated drop-down armrests were installed at a 45-degree angle to provide easy access for a care staff member and are equipped with Anthracite Grey seats to offer helpful visual cues for the residents.

Contrasting against the darker wall tile, Opal 720 shelf basins were specified for a variety of reasons. They allow more space for residents to keep objects like hand creams or hairbrushes handy up top. Lack of joinery underneath also removes both residents and staff's need to bend over to access the essential products. 'The choice of the Caroma Opal 720 basin with bottle trap also provides greater accessibility for shower commodes or shower trolleys to move beneath,' David adds.



The basins are equipped with Elegance lever basin tapware, which combines familiar shape and contemporary design with hot, cold & warm coloured indicators for better visibility. The tapware also features extended levers to give users with limited hand mobility a comfortable grip on the handle. The range was installed in the showers alongside Caroma's Plus Starsafe II care product too.

The essential fittings were also extended to the toilets near the lounge room, and the project was completed with a selection of Caroma sinks and toilet suites for the staff amenities, and an assortment of grab rails, further advancing the non-institutional appeal in the context of a modern aged-care facility.

**“ ...creating spaces that not only feel like home but also excel when it comes to safety features and practicality. ”**

# Dural House - Aged Care Home

**Builder:** Northside  
Constructions **Products:**  
Elegance Bath Shower Mixer  
and Basin Mixer, Elegance  
Sink Mixer, Opal 900 Twin  
Shelf Wash Basin, Care 660  
Easy Height Toilet, Care 610  
Cleanflush Connector Suite



## Solution

As a result, all bathrooms were fitted out with a range of Caroma's signature products that fuse the appeal of familial aesthetic, intuitive design and innate consideration for users with restricted mobility.

The Elegance Bath Shower, Basin and Sink Mixers boast a user-friendly design with clear cold and hot water indicators for improved visibility and an easy-grip loop handle, making turning the tap on and off comfortable and straightforward. The basin and sink mixers were specified alongside Caroma's Opal 900 Twin Shelf Wash Basin. With rounded contours and clean, integrated shelf space, the basins are defined by a simple and uncluttered aesthetic and offer plenty of easily accessible storage that's ideally suited for essential objects, like hair brushes or hand creams.

The toilet units specified throughout the facility are underpinned by the same innate idea of comfort and support. Care 660 Easy Height Toilet and Care 610 Cleanflush Connector Suite offer an elevated pan that enables easy transfer on and off the seat. This considered design is perfect for users with limited mobility or disability. In addition to that, both models are equipped with Cleanflush®. This rimless flushing system offers an advanced hygiene profile, well suited for hospitals and aged care homes where a superior level of hygiene and thorough cleaning are paramount.

Combining an elegant and familiar aesthetic, high-quality finish and considered design, the specified range of products fits in with the high-end character of the facility while ensuring all the comfort and support the residents and staff may require.



## Background

Dural House is Thompson Health Care's brand new Additional Services home. Nestled in Sydney's leafy suburb of Dural, in close proximity to local cafes, shops and transport, this contemporary, resort-style accommodation offers 145 beds that span high care, permanent and respite spaces.

With beautifully appointed rooms equipped with individual en-suites and oversized windows that offer views of carefully maintained courtyards and gardens, this high-end project provides the residents with superb amenities while retaining the alluring, semi-rural charm of the area.

## Challenge

With a charming location and outstanding amenities, all interiors had to be thoughtfully considered to create a space that would be sympathetic to its tranquil setting and in tune with the resident's needs and preferences.

In addition, it was paramount to ensure that the personal spaces - including the bathrooms - provided an adequate level of comfort, support and safety, alongside a residential feel that would generate a familiar and homely ambience.

**“...it was paramount to ensure that the personal spaces - including the bathrooms - provided an adequate level of comfort, support and safety, alongside a residential feel that would generate a familiar and homely ambience. ”**



# Specialist Disability Accommodation, Bayview Rd, McCrae



**Client:** GenU Architect: Morton Dunn Design & Construct **Operator:** Aged Care Developments (ACD) **Plumbing Contractor:** Colchester Plumbing **Products:** Liano Cleanflush Easy Height Wall Faced Suite with Liano Double Flap Seat, Care 800 Cleanflush Wall Faced Suite, Pedigree II Care Double Flap Seat, Liano Nexus Semi Recessed Basin Single Tap Hole - with exposed pipework beneath the bench, Opal 900 Twin Wall Basin Single Tap Hole, Skandic Care Sink Mixer (Hot/Cold) - with extended lever handle, Skandic Care Basin Mixer (Hot/Cold) - with extended lever handle, Elegance II Washing Machine Set CP, Skandic Bath/ Shower Mixer, Urban Multifunction Fixed Wall Shower.

## Background

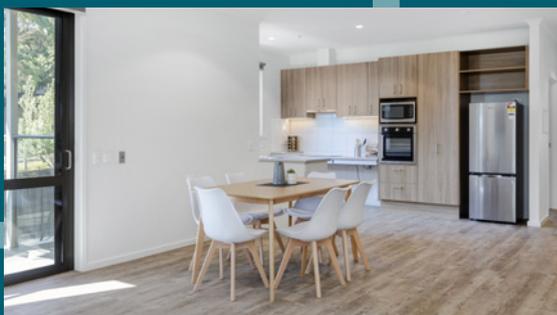
A result of collaboration between a design and construct operator, Aged Care Developments and Morton Dunn architects, this highly considerate project was commissioned by GenU, an organisation whose mission is to build happier and healthier lives for people living with disabilities and those experiencing disadvantage.

This development was no exception. An example of independent and sustainable housing that answers to the individual needs of the occupants, the beautifully-appointed McCrae project is a Specialist Disability Accommodation completed in August 2021. Built on an elevated block, the state-of-the-art development comprises six bedrooms, three ensuites, two kitchens and a selection of store rooms, large accessible bathroom, laundry and lift for easy access.

## Challenge

Based on the profile of the accommodation, it was paramount for the interiors to be an inviting fusion of practical serviceability and comfortable luxury. While ensuring ease of maintenance and mobility were appropriately prioritised, the accommodation had to retain an elegant look and feel in order to generate a pleasant and empowering space that would feel like home.

This consideration had to be reflected in all the fittings and fixtures throughout the interiors, including the bathrooms, where accommodating mobility limitations felt particularly important in order to create a space that nurtured dignity and sense of independence.



## Solution

Caroma LiveWell is a dedicated range of products designed to help create empowering independent living solutions. Designed with purpose, this specialised collection is a result of extensive collaboration with health and aged-care specialists, and offers a mindfully curated selection of innovative solutions that enhance the wellbeing of the occupants. A reliable combination of meaningful design, quality and timeless aesthetic, the range was ideal for this project, and as such, an extensive selection of Caroma's products was specified for the ensuites and bathrooms.

While Caroma's Liano Cleanflush Easy Height Wall Faced Suite with Liano Double Flap Seat was installed in the staff ensuite, Caroma's Care 800 Cleanflush Wall Faced Suite Pedigree II Care Double Flap Seat was installed in the resident ensuites and bath toilet suites. This particular model was designed with ease of cleaning and maintenance in mind, and caters for residents with restricted movement, with extended 800mm pan projection making it suitable for wheelchair use.

In addition, the Liano Nexus Semi Recessed Basin Single Tap Hole - with exposed pipework beneath the bench - was specified for the staff ensuite and a selection of resident ensuites. For the bath wall hand basin, the specifiers selected Opal 900 Twin Wall Basin Single Tap Hole. Both products have been designed with modern simplicity and ease of use in mind, elevating not only aesthetic appeal, but also the practicality of the bathroom spaces.

These fixtures were then completed with the addition of Skandic Care Sink Mixer (Hot/Cold) and Skandic Care Basin Mixer (Hot/Cold) - both with extended lever handle for added convenience, particularly for the residents with restricted movement - which were specified in staff ensuite basin taps, kitchens and a selection of resident ensuites. To ensure a consistent look and feel for the laundry, ensuite and one of the bathrooms, Caroma Elegance II Washing Machine Set CP and Skandic Bath/ Shower Mixer with the Urban Multifunction Fixed Wall Shower were selected. Caroma's Elegance II Washing Machine Set CP and Skandic Bath/ Shower Mixer with the Urban Multifunction Fixed Wall Shower were selected.

Combining modern simplicity and timeless elegance, as well as ease of maintenance and utmost considerations for limitations where mobility is involved, Caroma's range of products helped create a stunning, and comfortable interior that fosters independence, enhances wellness and celebrates the individual needs of the residents. "When needing products that are luxurious whilst maintaining a high level of serviceability and reliability and ensuring compliance with AS 1428.1, the obvious answer was Caroma," says Jesse Selby-Hele, the Construction Manager of the project.

“ Design professionals can influence industry behaviour by emphasising product conformance throughout all stages of the supply chain. ”



## Caroma

For more than 80 years, Caroma has advanced Australian design, engineering and ingenuity. By cultivating local craftsmanship and manufacturing, the company stands as a market leader, one forever at the forefront of innovation and sustainability through design and product development.

Caroma's local designers and engineers have a long history of working on site with select industry professionals to aid in resolving issues to thereby develop innovative solutions.

Caroma products are specially designed for Australian and New Zealand plumbing installation practices, which optimises installation efficiencies and reduces potential errors on site..

The range of products are rigorously tested over and above minimum requirements for compliance. For example, Wall Faced Vitreous China Toilet Pans are tested to 2000 Kilogram load capacity instead of the 400 Kilogram minimum requirement. Toilet seats are subjected to the "Wriggle Test" to help reduce seats coming loose over time, ensuring suitability for heavy commercial use.

Regular batch testing ensures compliance in changing market conditions, with representatives onsite at the factories to ensure strict supervision of production processes and ongoing quality assurance.

Caroma offers a complete range of fully Watermark-compliant plumbing fixtures to ensure compatibility and consistency throughout the bathroom.

Backed by market-leading commercial warranties further demonstrates the company's long-term commitment to delivering high quality, reliable solutions to the Australian construction industry.

Customer support is provided throughout the product lifecycle, which is especially important in busy commercial environments where product wear and tear is unavoidable. The company also offers a range of spare parts, with a National After Sale and Service network that ensures optimum user experience.

