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Arthur Gorrie, The Editor

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Gympie Today

Dear Sir,

Re: coverage in the last edition re “Costs to vulnerable aged – staggering” 26.7.24

I was interested to read Tony Jakeman’s letter outlining the “staggering” savings made by moving to a self-managed Home Care Package (HCP) option for a senior local – no mention in it or the accompanying article was made of the community-managed option which is proving a very successful compromise in the Kilkivan-Goomeri-Woolooga districts and delivering significant community benefits.

For more than two years, Kilkivan Care (a unit within Kilkivan & District Community Care) has offered our local seniors what we believe is the best solution in rural areas (given the current regulations) to receiving good value support to remain at home. This relies on a collaboration between provider Trilogy Care and Kilkivan Care’s Coordinator and uses support workers registered on the Mable platform.

Instead of traditional, big providers based elsewhere delivering HCP support, our very locally-focussed model accesses the “savings” (12% of the package value) of the self-managed option which come to Kilkivan Care as coordination fees from Trilogy Care. These fees are used to fund a self-employed coordinator who lives (and spends) locally. Part of her quite complex role is to work with clients to assist them to source local “Mable workers” who also live & spend locally. She also ensures that the increasingly-regulated funds are [used according to legislated guardrails, and stays in regular contact with each client](#). With now over 35 clients (with Levels 1 – 4 HCPs) across our area, Kilkivan Care’s estimate is that over \$700,000 per year is coming into the district and being spent here, which was not previously when the traditional, large providers prevailed and usually had support workers driving considerable distances to deliver small chunks of support.

While we acknowledge that a self-managed, rather than community-managed, option *can* be cheaper for any client, our experience is that most clients and their families do not have the time, skills, knowledge or experience to be able to get the most out of their provider-delivered & controlled HCP funds. In contrast, the coordinator oversees the on-the-ground use of the HCP funds and is able to get a more efficient, beneficial outcome for the client.

Home Care is a complex, dynamic scene, and subject to continual changes imposed by government. Our Kilkivan Care experience has been that, on balance, our community-managed model works well in our thin market while also delivering overall economic benefits

to the whole district. It's not perfect but it's the best option for most seniors we know, and this community.