Coombe House

Person Led Support

Ann Gray







1

Coombe House





Everyone is equal and valued.

Everyone is unique.

Everyone's life experience is different.

Every day is different.

Every day is important.

Every day should be special.

2

Coombe House







3

3

Coombe House





Staff didn't rush people or make assumptions, instead they took time to understand each person's history, preferences and needs. That meant people experienced care that truly reflected who they were and what they loved.
CQC 2026

4

Coombe House







5

Coombe House





The front door was not locked and allowed people to access the extensive gardens and outside spaces.
CQC 2026



6

Coombe House







7

Coombe House





8

Coombe House







9

Coombe House





"One person's relative told us they have the freedom to walk out whenever they want in a secure environment. My mother can go into the kitchen at any time. It's that freedom that I appreciate most".
CQC 2026

10

Coombe House





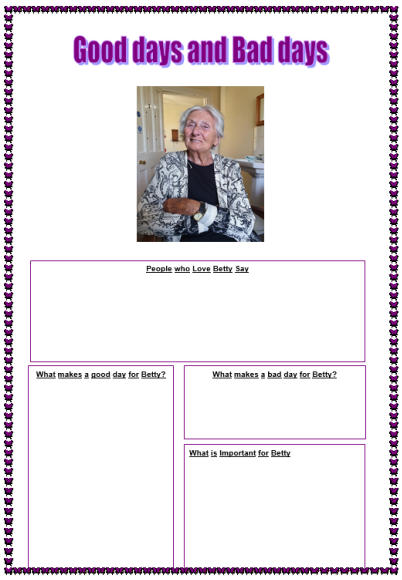
Staff knew people exceptionally well, recognising early signs of distress and responding immediately so people felt reassured and safe.

CQC 2026

11

Coombe House





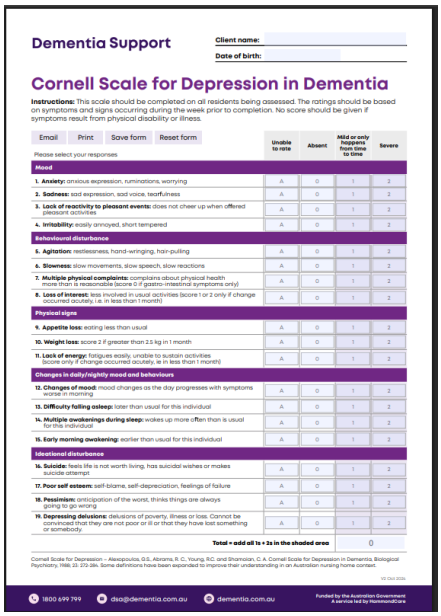
"What stood out most was how confidently people were supported to make choices, maintain independence and stay connected to the things that mattered to them".

CQC 2026

12

Coombe House





Dementia Support

Client name:

Date of birth:

Cornell Scale for Depression in Dementia

Instructions: This scale should be completed on all residents being assessed. The ratings should be based on symptoms and signs occurring during the week prior to completion. No score should be given if symptoms result from physical disability or illness.

Email | Print | Save form | Reset form

Please select your responses

	Unable to rate	Absent	Mild or only happens from time to time	Severe
Mood				
1. **Anxiety:** anxious expression, ruminations, worrying	A	0	1	2
2. **Sadness:** sad expression, sad voice, tearfulness	A	0	1	2
3. **Lack of reactivity to pleasant events:** does not cheer up when offered pleasant activities	A	0	1	2
4. **Irritability:** easily annoyed, short tempered	A	0	1	2
Behavioural disturbance				
5. **Agitation:** restlessness, hand-wringing, hair-pulling	A	0	1	2
6. **Slowness:** slow movements, slow speech, slow reactions	A	0	1	2
7. **Multiple physical complaints:** complains about physical health more than is reasonable (score 0 if gastro-intestinal symptoms only)	A	0	1	2
8. **Loss of interest:** less involved in usual activities (score 1 or 2 only if change occurred acutely, i.e. in less than 1 month)	A	0	1	2
Physical signs				
9. **Appetite loss:** eating less than usual	A	0	1	2
10. **Weight loss:** score 2 if greater than 2.5 kg in 1 month	A	0	1	2
11. **Lack of energy:** fatigues easily, unable to sustain activities (score only if change occurred acutely, ie in less than 1 month)	A	0	1	2
Changes in daily/nightly mood and behaviours				
12. **Changes of mood:** mood changes as the day progresses with symptoms worse in morning	A	0	1	2
13. **Difficulty falling asleep:** later than usual for this individual	A	0	1	2
14. **Multiple awakenings during sleep:** wakes up more often than is usual for this individual	A	0	1	2
15. **Early morning awakening:** earlier than usual for this individual	A	0	1	2
Ideational disturbance				
16. **Suicide:** feels life is not worth living, has suicidal wishes or makes suicide attempt	A	0	1	2
17. **Poor self esteem:** self-blame, self-depreciation, feelings of failure	A	0	1	2
18. **Pessimism:** anticipation of the worst, thinks things are always going to go wrong	A	0	1	2
19. **Depressing delusions:** delusions of poverty, illness or loss. Cannot be convinced that they are not poor or ill or that they have lost something or somebody	A	0	1	2
			Total = add all 1s + 2s in the shaded area	0

Cornell Scale for Depression – Alexopoulos, G.S., Abrams, R. C., Young, R.C. and Shamoian, C. A. Cornell Scale for Depression in Dementia. Biological Psychiatry, 1988, 23. 271-284. Some definitions have been expanded to improve their understanding in an Australian nursing home context.

VC Oct 2026

1800 699 799 | dso@dementia.com.au | dementia.com.au

Funded by the Australian Government
A service led by HammondCare

Any changes in a person's condition were identified immediately because staff knew people well. This meant specialist support could be requested promptly.

CQC 2026

13

Coombe House



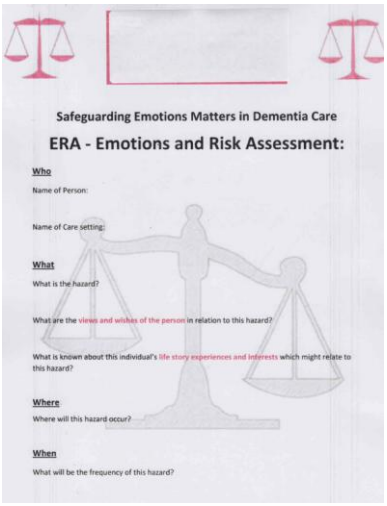




Where do you see yourself?

14

Coombe House



Safeguarding Emotions Matters in Dementia Care

ERA - Emotions and Risk Assessment:

Who

Name of Person:

Name of Care setting:

What

What is the hazard?

What are the views and wishes of the person in relation to this hazard?

What is known about this individual's life story experiences and interests which might relate to this hazard?

Where

Where will this hazard occur?

When

What will be the frequency of this hazard?





Staff supported people to take positive risks, helping them stay independent and active, which led to improved mobility, confidence and wellbeing.
CQC 2026

15

Coombe House





Person led support
Ann Gray, Coombe House Since 1984.

16

Coombe House



Where We Started:

- Dementia Care Conference 2008
- Leadership Matters In Dementia Care



17

Coombe House



- Leadership
- Senior Carer On Board
- I Unpicked My Knitting
- I Asked My Staff For Help



18

Coombe House



- We Changed Our Training, Our Appraisals
- We Took Down Our Qualifications



19

Coombe House



- We let go of “them and us”
- We ate together
- We made life history books
- We shared ourselves
- We involved our families
- We took more risks



20

Coombe House



- We Asked David Sheard To Come For 2 Days Team Training
- The Staff Opened Up To Each Other
- All Had A New Energy And Inspiration For Their Work



21

Coombe House



- We Put On A Family Evening
- Families Understood How Important They Still Were
- Staff Were More Confident With Families



22

Coombe House



- Staff Morale High
- Staff Retention High
- Praise For Our Care High
- Waiting List + 100%occupancy



23

Coombe House



- All change is scary
- No-one else was doing it in our part of the world
- There was no pressure to do it at all





24

Coombe House



- Happy relaxed atmosphere in the Home
- Letting go of task orientated working didn't mean it all fell apart
- Taking more risks wasn't dangerous, it led to a better way of living





25

Coombe House





"This exceptional level of kindness had a tangible and powerful impact on people's quality of life. People were emotionally secure, relaxed, and felt genuinely at home, which enabled them to build trusting relationships, express preferences confidently, and engage more fully in daily life. Relatives told us this compassionate culture reassured them that their loved ones were not only well cared for but genuinely cherished".

CQC 2026

26



"More opportunity to move about, maintains mobility and actually decreases the risks of falls" and recorded information provided by a consultant psychiatrist whom had stated "International studies have found that time spent out of doors, even in the rain, is more powerful than the highest doses of anti-depressants". ***CQC 2026***

27

27



I pour a lot of myself into my work - to be a role model, to make a difference, and to show up for others. Winning the award reminds me I matter, and the work I do matters too.
Penny, winner of the Dementia Champion Award 2024

28

28