

# Reducing the incidence of violence & aggression against aged care workers

## Case Study: The Ambassador Pilot Project

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Presented by Tatjana Jokic – Managing Director, JK Corporate Resourcing*

*Jane...*



# *Who are we & what did we do?*

JK Corporate Resourcing - workplace rehabilitation provider, safety consultancy and medico-legal report provider

## *What did we do?*

Developed Resident Experience Ambassador Pilot Project, the first of its kind anywhere in the world.

IRRI Funding - WCQ



**Project Team**  
Tatjana Jokic  
Dominic Manca

# Occupational Violence

- High levels of resident violence and aggression directed at aged care workers
- 2020 report by RMIT University.
- 93% of workers had experienced physical violence at work.





# *Psychosocial Hazards & Factors*



In the context of Residential Aged Care (RAC), there are various psychosocial hazards which can lead to or meet the definition of occupational violence/aggression.



# The Resident Ambassador Pilot Project

- The first of its kind.
- Inspired by similar Ambassador programs.

*Promoted resident and staff safety while balancing care needs.*

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# Choosing the Resident Ambassadors

- Four (3 females, 1 male) were chosen - all had experience in aged care.
- Interpersonal skills.
- Focused on behaviour management.
- Sought to identify escalating behaviours and de-escalate the situation before it led to an incident.





# *Training - who did we train and when?*

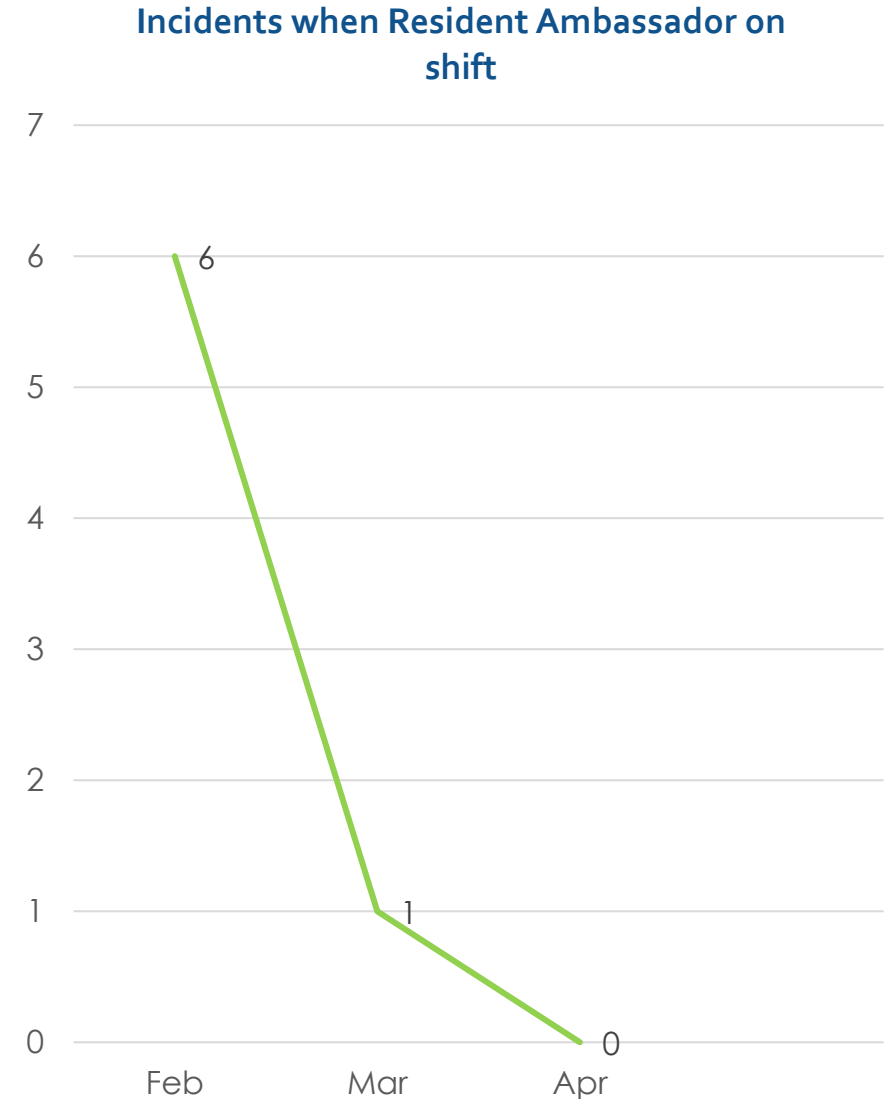


The training included:

- Behaviour management training
- Dual-diagnosis and strategies
- Shift procedures and resource training
- Specific de-escalation training

## *What was found?*

- **When Resident Ambassadors were on shift, zero incidents / injury or notified behaviours.**
- During the 3 month pilot there were 2 incidents of occupational violence





# *Challenges*

The main challenges included:

- Small percentage of staff were resistant.
- Collaborative team effort.
- **Vicarious trauma** still exists as a hazard for staff-  
Ambassadors don't remove uncontrollable hazards.

# *What was crucial?*

Key differences included:

- Prior experience with dementia care.
- Trained in behaviour management strategies.
- Medication wasn't used as a restrictive practice.



# Qualitative Evaluation



*Staff feedback was overwhelmingly positive.*

- 90% of staff had been impacted by occupational violence.
- 80% of staff saw the value in having Ambassadors on set shifts.
- All staff felt the general training on Ambassadors helped them understand how to manage behaviour.
- Staff "*felt like we're making a difference*" to reduce escalating behaviour.
- Staff felt the risk of violence was significantly reduced.

*NOTE: feedback from the team 3 months post project, Jack's behaviour sustained*



# Opportunities

## AMBASSADOR ON IDENTIFIED SHIFTS

Additional "Ambassador Shifts" - cover high risk periods throughout the day

## FURTHER TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Both the Ambassador and general staff training to include incident reporting and investigation

## ADDITIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Allowing for better accessibility of specific behaviour interventions for all staff

## QUARTERLY REVIEWS AND EXECUTIVE DISCUSSION

Review the statistics, continuous improvement



# Where to from here?

- Decrease in injuries and claims.
- A "buddy" system formulated.
- Reasonable intervention to reduce risk of violence/ aggression.
- One-off training is not sufficient.
- Ambassadors should have some aged (dementia) care experience, strong communication/ interpersonal skills and empathetic personality traits.





# Where to from here?

- An Integrated risk management approach is still needed
- The ambassador helps, but more is needed:
  - Resident intake and assessment
  - Incident reporting
  - Incident investigation
  - Clinical information sharing



# *Learnings for the injured workers*

*What can we take away to help us safely return workers back to work after a workers compensation claim?*



# *Learnings for the injured workers*

## *Meaningful suitable duties for injured staff:*

- Upskill and train injured staff in evidence-based behaviour techniques.
- Consider supernumerary duties
- Roll-out Ambassadors BAU





# Questions?

Thank  
you!



Tatjana Jokic  
0466 651 904  
tatjana@jkcr.com.au  
[www.jkcorporateresourcing.com.au](http://www.jkcorporateresourcing.com.au)