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## **Empowering people to manage**

This year, Resthaven celebrates 75 years of service to older South Australians.

'Over the years, many things have changed. One thing that hasn't, is our commitment to supporting older people and their carers,' Resthaven Chief Executive Officer Richard Hearn affirmed.

'It is easy to forget that in the early years of South Australia's settlement, there was no government welfare support. Services for the elderly were very limited. Many relied on Christian charity to survive. Resthaven was established in 1935, at the time the world was emerging from the devastation of the Great Depression. It took courage, dedication and commitment.

'Today, more than 8000 older people benefit every year from the various residential and community services offered by Resthaven. Some people require high level residential care, whilst others may need only a little support to manage at home.' Sue McKechnie, Executive Manager, Community Services, explains.

'Everyone wants to have a good quality of life, live in the home of their choice and make a contribution to society. But with age, many people find their health affects their confidence and what they are able to do.

'Resthaven effectively supports people to remain living at home and this has many benefits for the individual, their family and the community.'

'Chronic health conditions often lead to physical weakness and tiredness and feelings of being less able to engage in daily living tasks. People living with a chronic condition may feel forced to give up activities such as shopping, housework, walking, sport, crafts and other recreational pursuits.'

'Resthaven promotes the principles of self management and offers structured programs at our Therapy Services that are specifically designed to increase strength, exercise tolerance and a good understanding of lifestyle changes to meet the challenges of every day living.

'Specific services address common health conditions such as arthritis, asthma, bronchitis and emphysema, osteoporosis, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, Parkinson's Disease and continence difficulties. Services to support people with depression, pain that is constant, short term memory loss or dementia are also available.'

'We help older people and their carers to work out the steps to allow successful self-management. In each situation, we assess and help the client develop a plan that outlines their goals and considers what they are able to do, along with the aspects our support workers or health professionals can offer.'

'Our person centred approach is really geared to empowering people to do what they can, with assistance when needed.'

For more information, about Resthaven Community Services, call 1300 136 633

Photo caption: Resthaven clients enjoy Keep Fit classes to help them manage their chronic conditions.