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## Media Release

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### Embracing Cultural Diversity

This year, Resthaven celebrates its 75th Anniversary. Established in 1935 by the Methodist Church, today Resthaven is an agency of the Uniting Church.

Over the decades, Resthaven has grown in size and in the range of services provided. Each year, around 7,000 South Australians benefit from Resthaven's services for older people and their carers. Services currently extend from a little help at home for a few hours a fortnight to 24 hours a day, seven days a week residential aged care.

Chief Executive Officer, Richard Hearn, explains, 'Resthaven continues to respond to the changing needs of society. Over the past 20 years, there has been significant expansion and development in provision of services to support older people who are living at home, and for the people who care for them.'

'A notable change is the rapidly ageing post war migrant communities, who represent more than 20% of the general older population.

'Coupled with this, those working in aged care also have diverse cultural backgrounds. We attract overseas trained professionals and new migrants.'

'Currently, approximately 8% of people living in our residential services, 13% of community based clients and 15% of our workforce have culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.'

'This cultural 'melting pot' can be exciting but also challenging.'

'Resthaven has adjusted very well to the challenge, putting in place policies, programs and systems to ensure that people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have equal access to our quality aged care services.'

'We employ dedicated multicultural project officers to support staff with issues relating to cultural diversity and provide a number of culturally specific programs.

'We also regularly conduct cultural awareness training for staff and match culturally diverse clients with staff if appropriate.'

'We also collaborate on a number of community development initiatives with South Australia's multicultural communities.'

**ENDS**

Photo: Registered Nurse, Silence Matenhire