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MEDIA RELEASE

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REFURBISHMENT OF STAR OF THE SEA BEGINS

17/06/2016

Blue Care Star of the Sea Elders Village, Australia's most northern aged care home, will undergo a \$25 million refurbishment and upgrade.

Blue Care's Executive Director, Robyn Batten, said the not-for-profit organisation has been working with residents and the community on Thursday Island to design new facilities of which they can be proud.

"We'll be making lots of changes, but most obvious will be the new community areas which make the most of sea views and natural breezes. The Elders are looking forward to being closer to their usual environment.

"We'll also be adding beautifully equipped new rooms, and upgrading existing ones to match them. The village's number of beds will remain unchanged, however we will be better able to meet the Elders' needs.

"Twenty-four new accommodation units for staff are also being built, and the current eight units are being upgraded.

"This is a major project, that will take approximately two years to complete, and we anticipate that it will provide a boost for the economy, with local tradespeople needed to work on the project."

Blue Care has been active on Thursday Island since 2008, when it was asked to assist the former operator of Star of the Sea with running the facility. In December 2012, Blue Care formally became the operator of the facility, working in partnership with residents, families and local Elders.

Funding for the upgrades was provided by two grants, totalling nearly \$24.9 million, from the Australian Government's Department of Health.

Blue Care Star of the Sea Elders Village is located on Waiben Esplanade, and has home to up to 40 residents.

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