

AUSTRALIAN PRESS RELEASE

UNIQUE VENTURE HITS QUEENSLAND

If you're looking for motivation then Queensland businesswoman Sharon Blackbeard is the woman for you.

The 43-year-old knows only too well a healthy body leads to a healthy mind and is now determined to spread the message across the continent.

The mum-of-two, who has suffered a stroke and cancer herself, has just launched a Motivation & Co franchise, the very first in Australia, offering fun exercise classes to residents of all ages in day centres and care, residential and nursing homes.

Initially, classes are on offer in the Gold Coast and Brisbane area, but Sharon has her sights set on the rest of the continent and New Zealand eventually.

The concept has been imported from the UK and is the brainchild of British business woman Elaine Everett.

Motivation & Co delivers one-hour classes in exercise, mental stimulation, group games and relaxation, designed to promote good health and well-being.

This is an entirely new concept in Australia's care industry and has been welcomed with open arms by the likes of the Alzheimer's Society.

Sharon, who now has the rights to run the Motivation franchise in the whole of the Gold Coast and Brisbane area, found out about the business from her brother Warren, who lives next-door to Elaine in West Yorkshire, England.

After suffering ill-health herself 15 years ago, Sharon immediately recognised the benefits of motivational classes and made the trip to England to persuade Elaine to allow her to bring the venture to Australia.

"After fighting my way back to fitness and bringing up my two children, I was looking for a business to operate in Australia," said Sharon, who moved to Queensland from South Africa ten years ago.

"My brother had told me all about Motivation & Co and I knew immediately it was something I really wanted to bring to Australia," said Sharon, who used to work with youngsters with special needs.

"Gentle exercise is really beneficial when you are recovering from an illness, particularly in a group setting. It also improves strength, appetite, memory, general health and self-esteem in the elderly and those with mental health issues and Alzheimer's."

After conducting market research, Sharon and Elaine met first in England and agreed to launch the franchise in Australia. Elaine, who founded the business in Britain in 1997, then travelled to for the first time ever to Australia to help set up Sharon's new business.

"Motivation & Co is offering an entirely new concept for the Australians and it has received massive support from its own Alzheimer's Society and MPs which is fantastic," said Elaine, who already operates 30 franchises in Britain.

"Sharon is extremely driven and I know she will make a huge success of spreading the word across Australia.

Initially, Sharon, who lives in Helenvale, Oyster Cove, Queensland, with husband Lance, will be offering Motivation & Co classes in the Brisbane area.

If all goes well she is hoping to operate a master franchise in Australia and others will have the opportunity to take on franchises in their territory.

Elaine launched Motivation & Co in Britain after visiting her grandfather in a care home and discovering many residents appeared to be whiling away the hours with little to stimulate them.

The exercise and physiotherapy classes have been developed in conjunction with experts from British universities and are offered on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

After each class each resident's activity level are recorded and can be used for in Care Plans.

"Our classes are fun but have a real purpose. In Britain residents have found they regain movement, awareness and mental agility they thought they had lost forever," said Sharon.

"This is a really exciting venture and is the start of a whole new life for me, and hopefully many, many others."

To find out more about Motivation & Co classes in Australia contact Sharon on +60 75530 1834 or email info@motivationandco.com.au

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For further information contact Sharon Blackbeard on 60 75530 1834, Elaine Everett on 01937 557166 (UK) or Julie Waites on 07778 743517. (UK)

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