



Caring with dignity

LOUISE GOODWIN

NURSING staff at Minchinbury Manor didn't know what to do when Gwen Grugan would cry out.

The resident, 88, is in the advanced stages of dementia at the Rooty Hill aged care facility.

But since she was placed in the Namaste Care program, Ms Grugan's anxiety has disappeared.

Its American founder, Joyce Simard, visited the facility last week to brief staff and patients' families about the program.

Minchinbury Manor is

one of three aged care facilities in NSW trialling Namaste Care, which focuses on individual care, dignity and respect for advanced dementia patients.

Research director at the School of Nursery and Midwifery, University of Western Sydney, Professor Esther Chang, secured a federal grant to run the trials and report on the results. "What we want to see is that people have the opportunity to see that it works and that they would want to adopt as well," Prof Chang said.

"It's not necessarily com-

plex but it's a different way of caring and thinking about the people we are working with."

The program blends nursing care with activities, beginning each day with a welcome to the care room, which is filled with the sound of classical music and the smell of scented oils.

Each patient was treated to food or activities they enjoyed before the onset of the dementia.

A core component of the program is loving touch from staff.



Joyce Simard (left) with Gwen Grugan, 88, at the manor.