



Avonlea
CHRISTCHURCH

Family Newsletter

September 2018

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A message from Charisma and Sue

Warmest greetings from the team at Avonlea.

Our residents are enjoying the arrival of spring after crisp winter days and cosy evenings in our homely lounges with the gas fires blazing.

As always, winter has been a time of increased risk to our residents in terms of illness and a reminder about helping our residents stay well is timely. Before entering Avonlea please use the hand sanitiser at the entrance. Please refrain from visiting if you are unwell. If you or any family member has suffered from diarrhoea or vomiting, you should not visit for 48 hours from the time of the last episode.

The Royal Family has given us plenty to celebrate recently with the birth of a new baby prince, a royal wedding, and the Queen's birthday. This has been an excuse for us to hold a number of Royal Theme weeks which have been much enjoyed by all. Staff joined in by having a special dress-up day on the 1st June, surprising many residents who are used to only seeing staff in their uniforms. Many Oohs and Aahs followed upon seeing our beautiful staff in their finery. The residents looked gorgeous as well with special hats, ties and beads. We all enjoyed a special high tea in the afternoon together, as the photos on the noticeboard show.

We held our Winter Family Gathering in July, with a black and white theme. It was a special afternoon with live music, and a yummy afternoon tea. Our family gatherings are a highlight of our year, and it was lovely to have many of you attend.

We are proud to have three of our Diversional Therapists graduate this year after completing their full qualification. A few of our staff were able to attend the Diversional Therapy conference and



graduation in August and have enjoyed sharing all we learned with our colleagues.

We are also proud to announce our lead Diversional Therapist Kim Prasad has been voted in as Vice President of the NZ Society of Diversional Therapists, a huge achievement and well deserved recognition of the knowledge and passion she brings to her role.

Our therapy dog Merlin is always a source of great interest and pleasure, especially decked out in his smart red winter coat. Now steady and settled, it is hard to recognise him as the bouncy puppy of a year ago! Recently our residents had a double treat when Merlin was joined on his visit by Sue's pet lamb, Annie. It was wonderful to see how relaxed the two visitors were together in the happy, welcoming environment of our home.

A reminder that if you wish, family are more than welcome to bring in residents' own furniture to make the residents room feel more familiar and homely.

In closing, we would like to thank you for entrusting your loved one to our care. It is a pleasure and a privilege to have you as part of our Avonlea family. We warmly welcome your visits to Avonlea and enjoy catching up or helping in any way we can.

As the end of life approaches



We had a special visit from some lovely children from Hoon Hay Primary School, who entertained us with singing

Often we can't find words to discuss the inevitable time ahead for each and every one of us: our last days or hours on earth. What will that be like? What might we expect and who will help us?

As you or your loved one enters our home a discussion about what may happen as you or your loved one's health declines should occur.

"Thinking about your loved one's quality of life" is a document to start discussion for families and residents in association with registered nurses. The discussion centres around what to expect, what care can be given, what can be planned in advance and what pastoral and practical support can be offered. This discussion should take place soon after your or your loved ones admission.

Many people are unfamiliar with end of life care and are unsure about our ability to provide this. In fact all our Registered Nurses are trained and competent to provide nursing care to residents at the end of their life. Extra support can be sought through Nurse Practitioners or General Practitioners if indicated, and on occasion a community palliative care nurse may provide support. For the most part, however, onsite staff manage residents' end of life care entirely. This means there is usually no need for a person to be moved to hospital. Rather, they can pass away here at their home, among people they love and who love them.

It is also important to know that as the end approaches, close family members can stay with their loved one day and night if they wish to. We will make arrangements for a lazy boy chair to be brought into the room for your comfort, and will provide you with meals, cups of tea and shower facilities. This is your loved one's home, and when the time comes for them to pass away, it becomes your

home also.

Planning ahead for your or your loved one's end of life care allows you the opportunity to think through what might happen, whether there is a sudden unpredictable decline in health, or health decline is slower. Planning for both eventualities is important, especially when thinking about notifying extended family who may need or want to travel at that time. Is your preference for public hospital inpatient acute setting treatment, or loving supportive care in the home with people you or your loved one know well? It is also important to consider what quality of life might be like during proactive treatment and potentially beyond. Sometimes treatment options are not indicated medically for the very reason that the person would suffer too much during the process. Generally medical interventions are reduced when a person is known to be dying, and there is a focus on comfort care. This often includes staying here in the care home with those they know and love.

Often people imagine that death is a painful process. In most cases this is not the case. If pain is present, it can be managed effectively. All homes provide a range of vital medicines and nursing skill to manage any pain there may be.

Having conversations about what is likely to occur, what support is available, especially family support, and what happens after death, is important. Planning through a formal document called Advanced Care Planning is helpful. You and your loved one's wishes can be upheld.

Please arrange a time as soon as practicable to talk through end of life care and any desires, requests, worries or concerns you have. We are here to help you navigate this journey.

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May love and laughter light your days,
and warm your heart and home.
May good and faithful friends be yours,
wherever you may roam.
May peace and plenty bless your world
with joy that long endures.
May all life's passing seasons
bring the best to you and yours! 🍀🍀

~ Irish Blessing ~



Putting our baking skills to work making Anzac biscuits

Planning for the Future

This is the time of year when we plan for the next 12 months. This year has been particularly interesting as we decided that our Vision and Values that have guided us for the last 18 years were in need of updating before we embarked on developing a new Business Plan. Our Vision and Values and our plans are interdependent, and are intrinsic to the way we care for people.

The result of our review of our Vision and Values is now in draft form. This has involved much discussion and our teams have all been able to be part of this. The draft is below for your interest and input. You may notice that there are some new principles incorporated that reflect our developing thoughts around inclusivity and increasing commitment to support the realisation of the potential of every person. We have been inspired and invigorated by this process. If you would like to make comment or have ideas, please feel free to email vicky@dementiacarenz.co.nz.

We are adding the finishing touches to our Business Plan for the upcoming 12 months. This is the culmination of a process which has taken much energy and conversation, with input sought from our wider staff team in the

Andrew Sheard

context of our Strategic Plan.

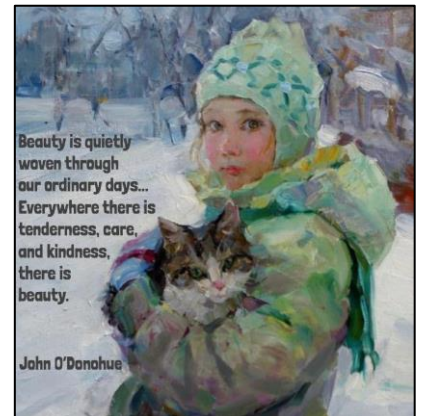
Being relatively small and privately run, we have the advantage of being 'light on our feet', able to make changes quickly and adapt to changing thoughts on the best ways to ensure dignity and care for people. In the next little while a shift in thinking will become increasingly apparent in our approach to caring for people. This is focused on an enhanced awareness of the absolute human right to dignity, respect, acceptance and freedom for all.

Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher, is known for his ideas of change being central to the universe. I particularly like this quote from Heraclitus and it seems relevant to where we are and where we are going:

"You cannot step into the same river twice, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you."

I am enjoying working with a wonderful team who bring fresh ideas.

It is our absolute pleasure and a privilege to care for the people who live in the homes we provide. Thank you for giving us this opportunity.



Beauty is quietly woven through our ordinary days... Everywhere there is tenderness, care, and kindness, there is beauty.

John O'Donohue

Current Vision and Values

OUR VISION

To create a loving, warm and homely atmosphere where each person is supported to experience each moment richly

OUR VALUES

We strive to achieve this vision by promoting:

- * the uniqueness of each person
- * the immense value of each person
- * openness, honesty and integrity

In these ways we enrich each person, the community and the world

Proposed Vision and Values

OUR VISION

To accept all people with kindness and love
To provide peace, comfort and joy
To be proactive, innovative and courageous
To enrich each person, the community and the world

OUR VALUES

We strive to achieve this vision by working with openness, honesty, integrity and passion.

THE WORK WE DO

We establish trusting relationships based on respect and acceptance
We encourage people's participation in companionship-based care in their small homes

We stay alongside people as they journey towards the end of their life
We welcome family/whanau and the wider community as integral to people's lives

We promote inclusion and the rights and values of each person
We celebrate unity in diversity

We support each person to fully realise their personal potential

Welfare Guardian Survey results

In this year's surveys a number of questions were added to obtain an overall rating in some key performance areas.

There were also a number of supporting questions in some key performance areas. These had a benchmark set at 75%. In areas where results are below this mark it would be expected that a Quality Improvement is raised to address the shortfall.

For Avonlea, 55 welfare guardian surveys were sent out on the 8th January 2018. 25 responses were received before the close off date of 31 January 2018, giving a 45% return rate.

For your interest and information, here are some of the comments we received. A 'QI' is a quality improvement, which is a mechanism in our quality system for positive change.

If you could change one thing at this home, what would it be?

- "Family newsletter - just not frequent enough."
- "Easier access to dementia rest home units and care parking." – **Proposed redevelopment under consideration.**
- "Make it easier to get through on phone." – **New phones in place.**
- "More useable outdoor space for all units. You do very well with the areas you have and these are appreciated by both residents and visitors." – **More outdoor furniture has recently been purchased.**

Is there any way we could make visiting more comfortable for you?

- "We are always made to feel very welcome, I would like there to be a system of recording who visits because Mum doesn't always know who has been."
- "Sometimes I find it too hot but this

will be the temperature the residents like."

- "Difficult for our family as have to try and organise Mum and Dad (who are at different levels of care) meeting together - usually after tea. However staff are very helpful if requested. One thing that Avonlea does better than anywhere else, is the exceptional hospitality extended to family when visiting."
- "Everything is fine when visiting. Made to feel very welcome."

Do you have any further comments?

- "Sometimes it's hard to understand staff on phone."
- "The baking and sandwiches are beautiful. I feel the meals are substandard in the quality of the protein (sausages etc) also there needs to be a system so all staff are aware of dietary needs. Often if I am there is fill in staff giving Mum food she cannot eat." – **CM to ensure process for ensuring information about residents' dietary needs is communicated to all cooks and care staff.**
- "I think the linen and towels need replacing the sheets and bedding are very thin and the towels look very old. Also I feel each resident should have a lazyboy chair in their room."
- "Various laundry issues." – **Ensure the process around families wishing to take woollens home to wash is well set up and communicated to all care staff. When a resident is new please ensure this information is communicated at handovers, in communication books and signage placed in resident's room.**



All set up for our Mother's Day celebration



Brightening up the day with some music