



**Aberleigh**  
MARLBOROUGH

# Family Newsletter

December 2018

17-19 McCallum St  
Springlands  
Blenheim  
7201

Phone: 03 578 7966  
Fax: 03 578 9558

e-mail:  
[om@aberleigh.co.nz](mailto:om@aberleigh.co.nz)  
Web:  
[www.aberleigh.co.nz](http://www.aberleigh.co.nz)

#### *In this issue:*

- A message from Maja and Susan
- Invitation to Christmas Family Gathering
- Dealing with the heat of summer
- Learning and growing together
- Happy Christmas from Andrew Sheard
- Life in our small homes
- Outing reminder

## A message from Maja and Susan

It is hard to believe we are once again approaching Christmas time, and extend our special greetings to you all as this special time of year draws near.

The last few months have been busy here at Aberleigh. We celebrated cultural diversity in August with the Blenheim and Picton Scottish Dancers visiting for half an hour of dancing in their tartan kilts, and the Kapa Haka group performing on another day to showcase our Maori culture. A Kiwi favourite, fish and chips, was enjoyed during an outdoor lunch on a beautiful sunny day. In recognition of the diversity of our staff team, participants representing the Philippines, India, Fiji, Nepal and Indonesia came in beautiful costumes and entertained us with traditional dancing. Residents showed their appreciation of this special event by the smiles on their faces and the attention shown during the performance.

In September we took part in World Alzheimer's Month by hosting Cuppa for Cause, joining the Memory Walk and encouraging our staff to wear purple on World Alzheimer's Day.

We have continued supporting our residents to remain involved in community events by hosting Bethsaida Rest Home residents who joined us for another game of darts in October. In addition, some of our rest home residents visited Springlands Lifestyle Village for an indoor bowling competition, as well as joining with other rest homes in Blenheim



for a Quiz at Ashwood Park Retirement Village.

Diversional Therapy Awareness Week took place in October, with one of our Trainee Diversional Therapists Rojee Khadgi giving a short talk about the significance of the role and how each member of the team can use diversional techniques to avoid and de-escalate challenging situations.

Our regular in-service education on clinical and health and safety issues has taken place as usual, with the highlight being a Registered Nurse Professional Development day on 4<sup>th</sup> September.

In addition to the above special events, we continue to experience and share many magic moments with our residents each day.

We hope you will be able to join us for our Christmas gathering this year, and look forward to welcoming you on many other occasions during the summer months ahead.



*You are very warmly invited to join us for our  
Christmas Gathering*

*Rata/Matai/Ngaio – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00pm  
Totara/Kowhai/Koromiko – Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00pm*

## Dealing with the heat of summer

As we move into the summer months some families express concern regarding the comfort and welfare of our residents on very hot days.

An article published in the NZACA's Insight magazine in August 2018 acknowledged that indoor temperatures in aged care homes could have a dramatic impact on the wellbeing of residents, particularly those with dementia, according to new research out of Australia.

The World Health Organisation suggests that older people should not be exposed to temperatures lower than 20 degrees, while the International Organisation for Standardisation recommends maximum temperatures not exceed 26 degrees.

The study noted that it was interesting that residents felt comfortable over a wider range of temperatures than staff members.

It has been suggested that we consider installing air conditioning in our rest homes for use in the summer months. This has in fact been done at some of our rest homes, but is not an unqualified success and has itself led to complaints. People experience temperatures differently, and older people in particular tend to feel extremes of cold more than those of heat. Temperatures which active younger people find distressingly hot are not experienced as such by everyone, especially those who are not mobile.

We have complaints of 'drafts' from residents who do not enjoy the sensation of cool air indoors. Everyone experiences temperatures differently and has different preferences. People of our residents' generation are not usually used to air conditioning, as this was not common in family homes of

their era. They are accustomed to being hot in summer and cool in winter. It is generally not harmful for them to experience seasonality in this way, and may even provide opportunities for conversation and reminiscence.

Our care staff, under the guidance of our Registered Nursing team, are aware of the effects of hot weather on the elderly of the importance of ensuring that this is appropriately managed. Measures for doing so include the following:

- Take residents out into the garden area and let them enjoy the shade under the trees
- Ensure residents are wearing loose, light clothing
- Keep doors and windows open, especially door to the outside garden area
- Keep fluid rounds regular, and encourage residents to drink often
- Keep fans on and air circulating as much as possible

Rest assured that we will do all we can to keep our residents happy and comfortable during the summer months.

### Naming clothes

Please remember that all new items need to be clearly marked with the owner's name before they arrive. This is especially important at Christmas time, when many lovingly chosen new items are given as gifts by family members. We discourage expensive woollen items, which are easily damaged in the wash. Please select easy care clothing wherever possible.



It is fun to dress up in fascinators and get back in touch with the glitz and glamour of Melbourne Cup Day



Preparing our summer garden starts with the therapeutic task of pulling weeds

## Learning and growing together

In the work we do we focus every day on people: our residents, our family members, our team as a whole, and the individual members of our team. We do appreciate each one of the special people we are privileged to have in our lives.

We are reminded of aspen trees. Above the ground Aspens grow as individual trees. Below the ground, they have an interconnected system of roots. At the same time, each tree is both an individual tree and a part of a living community. When one Aspen tree gets into difficulty, it affects the whole grove of trees.

We are a bit like the Aspen trees. We are inextricably linked. Each individual linked with the team, and the carers with those they care for, and with their families and friends. As with the trees, what happens to one of us, affects all of us.

Each of us is a unique and incredibly special individual, and yet at the same time part of a greater whole. We need each other. We are interdependent.

As we compile our strategic plan, business plan and annual training and professional development programme for staff, we are reminded of this. Our Vision and Values, Best Friends, Changing Minds, Embracing Diversity and De-escalation education programmes are important learning opportunities for all staff, above all in terms of the nature and quality of personal interaction. Our philosophy of care is backed by best practice and embedded in all we do. We are a values-based organisation and have further enhanced our learning by applying the learning from a DHB training initiative "Walking in Another's Shoes". This offers workshops and full day classes. This programme supports the application of person-centred care, a philosophy of care deeply important to our business.

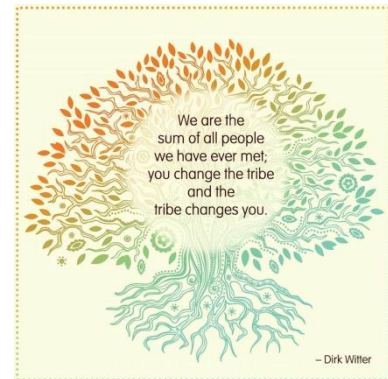
Supervision and coaching continue to be

strategies used to develop key employees and build strong teams, with clinical supervision occurring for our registered nursing staff on a regular basis.

The web of interconnectivity extends further, to the large number of allied health professionals who are contracted to each facility, including GPs, dieticians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, podiatrists and pharmacists, as well as to the MoH and DHBs.

We love to bring our teams together to share, learn, grow and explore. Over the course of the past year we have supported staff to attend the National Diversional Therapy Conference in Christchurch, as well as hosting a National in-house Diversional Therapy Day, Registered Nurse Education Days for each region, and a National Clinical Manager Professional Development Training Programme. This is over and above the regular in-house training sessions and competencies which occur on an ongoing basis in each home.

The result is a holistic care experience informed by passionate and committed individuals who together make up a team of which we are humble and proud to be part of.



Our lead Diversional Therapist Colleen shows of the certificate Aberleigh was awarded for taking part in the DT Video competition



Dementia Care NZ had a great contingent at the Annual Diversional Therapy Conference in Christchurch



## Happy Christmas from Andrew Sheard

As Christmas approaches each year, I find myself enjoying the special magic of this time of year. This is increased by the presence of the children in my family, and especially this year our newest arrival, Stella.

We love to have families and children visit our rest homes over the holiday period, and their presence never fails to leave a special sparkle in the eyes of our residents. Christmas is a family time, and the sense of family within our homes is heightened as together we prepare by decorating the home, trimming the tree, and making cards and small gifts together for family members. Christmas music is played, and we welcome visits from various volunteer groups who come and sing carols with us. The song sheets are seldom needed as people recall the words of the songs they sang as children.

As I travel around our homes and absorb the sights, sounds and smells of this

## Life in our small homes

You may not see a traditional 'activities programme' in action in our home.

The reason is simple: it is important for people to have the freedom to experience life in their own way.

An older person in a family home in the community does not often take part in regular organised 'activities' within their home. When at home they simply live life.

We have diversional therapists who will spend time with residents doing things they enjoy. We create an environment

special time of year, it is wonderful to see our new Vision and Values reflected in the kindness, love, comfort and joy I see in the faces of those providing care and those receiving it. It is heartwarming to see how the members of our team, themselves often far from home and family, embrace our homes as their own, and our residents as their families.

We have always spoken of the care we provide as 'person-centered'. Increasingly, I find myself taking this a step further, and seeing our care as in fact 'relationship-based'. Any relationship is a two-way street, and in giving love and care, one receives it back a hundredfold. The giving and receiving of love is for me the true meaning of Christmas.

I wish each and every one of you a very happy Christmas.

that closely mirrors a household living experience, with access to familiar homely pursuits such as showering, choosing what to wear, applying makeup and selecting jewellery, shaving, setting the table, folding linen, peeling vegetables, flower arranging, gardening, preparing and eating a meal, washing the dishes, or reading a magazine. In our small homes these interactions occur spontaneously with all staff and all residents every day, many times within a day.



Recently a group of our residents joined our friends at Springlands Retirement Village for a bowls tournament



A group of us enjoyed a trip to the Makana chocolate factory in August

### Outing reminder

If you intend to take your loved one home for the day or afternoon over the Christmas period please discuss this with a Registered Nurse so that medication and comfort requirements can be arranged.

For safety reasons outings of this nature first need to be discussed and approved by the EPOA.