

# Family Newsletter

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## A message from Roxanne and Rhea

Welcome to 2019! There have been a few changes in the home recently. Late last year, construction started on a new wing with 13 beds. Our residents in Toetoe are enjoying seeing all the changes occurring, and watching the tradesmen using their heavy equipment.

In December last year we tidied up the paddock area, sectioned them and put new fences up. This is for the six ex-show horses that are now grazing in the paddock. The horses are thoroughly enjoyed by residents and families, including the staff. The Afternoon Walk activity is now more engaging and enjoyable when residents go around to see the horses and feed them with carrots, which are grown in our raised veggie bed. These horses are also being moved around the area to help with the lawn and so at times you can see them on the side of the building when you drive up.

Currently, the front lawn area of the facility has been fenced for more horses to graze on. Currently we are working on clearing the blackberry bush and getting a trough for them.

We have also trialed a new activity called Gardening with Brian. This is held in each home with residents invited to help Brian in the garden while he gives a brief talk about gardening. This is a popular activity, with residents either observing or assisting Brian with the gardening. The next



Gardening with Brian session is planned for April when the weather cools down. You can check our progress on our Facebook page.

The Christmas Family Gathering was held in the middle courtyard area between Nikau and Tanika homes on a very fine December afternoon. We were delighted to be joined by a great number of families and visitors. Even the staff who were off duty attended this special event. We were lucky to be thoroughly entertained on this occasion. Bill performed Christmas songs as well as classic carols; a family member played a cello while another sang in such a beautiful voice. We also thank our cooks who catered for the event, preparing sweet and savoury treats for everyone. This event was a great success, and our activities team is planning for the next one to be even better!

We look forward to welcoming you often, sharing many happy times together during the course of the coming year.

## IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please ensure that all items of value, especially hearing aids, dentures, glasses and jewellery, are fully insured. Unfortunately we do not take responsibility for loss or damage which may occur.

We advise against the purchase of delicate or woollen items which may be damaged during the laundry process.



## Representational Child Therapy



A person with dementia interacting with their new representational child is intensely moving

At times you may see residents with dolls or soft toys. The use of these 'representational children' is a recognised form of therapy for certain carefully selected residents.

Representational Child Therapy was first researched in 1985 at Queen Elizabeth Psychiatric Hospital in Toronto by Isabel Milton and Judith McPhail. In 1983 Representational Child Therapy was established by Judy Cooper in the Dementia Unit of Parklands Hospital, Christchurch, with the dignity and respect of clients being paramount.

In some of our rest homes/hospitals the therapy is led by the diversional therapy team, with the support of the diversional therapy team leader, registered nurses and caregiving teams. All staff have a full understanding of and commitment to the therapy, and family members are consulted and give their consent prior to the therapy being made available to a resident.

The introduction of this recognised therapy for certain residents means that at times you may see residents with dolls or soft toys. The use of

these 'representational children' has significant potential benefits to the resident concerned. These benefits may include:

- A minimisation of distress, improvement in social interactions and raised self-esteem
- Isolated residents becoming involved in other activities and therapies
- Uncommunicative residents communicating more readily
- Reduction of repetitive speech and behaviours of concern
- Medication being reduced
- Restlessness at night decreased
- Mobility encouraged
- Communication becoming easier for relatives, who visit more often as a result.

If you have any questions or concerns relating to Representational Child Therapy, or feel your loved one might benefit from this, please speak to our Diversional Therapy or Registered Nurse team.



There is nothing more refreshing, heart warming and beautiful than to hold a new baby.

## A hand picked team

Occasionally family members and visitors express surprise at the age and multicultural makeup of our staff team.

Each member of our team has been hand-picked with great care. Many are registered nurses in their own country, with the courage and initiative to start a new life far from home and family. Every staff member is chosen because they have what we call 'knack' in working with people

with dementia. They know how to love and care for someone as if that person is their very best friend, and they are passionate about working in this way. Our staff are loving, capable and experienced. We are enormously proud to have such committed and professional people working with us. Their cultural diversity, energy and dedication enriches us all.

## A message from Andrew Sheard

I write to you today as I wrestle with the events that happened in Christchurch recently. My thoughts are with those that have been affected so personally. I feel very sad and sometimes I am finding it a bit hard to go to sleep at night.

I have four children and I need to stay full of hope. We are going on bike rides and walks, swimming and reading stories at bedtime. We are noticing and talking about the wind in our hair, the leaves that are changing colour, the smiles on people's faces, the warmth of cuddles, the special words that are whispered at bedtimes. There is so much love and beauty in the world. We are focusing on all these wonderful things.

As carers for people who are needing a little bit of extra help in their lives, this seemed like the time to go back to our Vision and Values once again. We try hard to ensure they are embedded into the way we do things. Our vision and values say we work towards:

*Accepting all people with kindness and love*

*Providing peace, comfort and joy*  
*Establishing trusting relationships based on respect and acceptance*  
*Promoting inclusion and the rights and values of each person*  
*Celebrating unity in diversity*

We don't always achieve this, but by endeavouring to uphold these values we have the potential to enrich each person, the community and the world.

We are immensely privileged to provide care for people and to provide employment for people from different countries, cultures, religions and sexual orientations.

We are asking our teams to talk with us if there are any instances of prejudice; anything that just feels uncomfortable.

We ask you, our residents, family and friends to come to us, also, if we could do better in this regard. This is important to us.

I speak directly to each and every one of you: You are valued. You are loved. You are supported.



Children bring us so much refreshing joy and energy when they visit our homes.

## The benefits of hip protectors

Hip protectors are a product designed to reduce the risk of serious hip injury as a result of a fall. They work by absorbing the impact as well as diverting impact away from the hip joint into the surrounding soft tissue.

While there is no guarantee that wearing hip protectors will protect the wearer against sustaining a severe injury, research has shown that they can reduce the risk of sustaining a hip fracture by as much as 84%.

This is good news for our residents who, because of their age and dementia diagnosis, are at a higher risk of falling. For this reason families are usually asked whether they would like to purchase Hip Saver hip protectors for their loved one. We encourage you to consider the benefits of providing hip protectors for your loved one as a means to reduce their risk of serious injury.



We are delighted to be hosting six beautiful show jumpers who will be spending their well-earned retirement in our paddock.

**Millvale Lodge has a Facebook page!**

We warmly welcome visits, "likes," questions and ideas from the families and friends of our residents.

Find us by Googling: *Millvale Lodge Lindale Facebook*



## Concerns and complaints: When things don't go according to plan

As we strive each day to provide the very best possible care to our residents, it can sometimes be hard to identify where changes are required to improve upon the service that we provide.

We would like to say a special thank you to each and every one of you for providing us with feedback, either positive or negative. We really appreciate your honesty and the time it takes to let us know when things have not gone quite the way you would wish. As part of our ongoing quality improvement programme, your concerns and complaints provide the opportunity for us to pass on this feedback to our staff and take corrective action when needed.

Please remember that our door is always open. You are welcome to pop in for a cup of tea and a chat.

Suggestions to improve our service are always welcome, either verbally or in writing. If you wish to make a complaint about something you are unhappy with, a Complaint Form should be used. The completed form can be given to any staff member, or put in our suggestions/complaints box.

Please ensure that any verbal complaint is made directly to either Roxanne or Rhea. If they are not available then the complaint should be made in writing on a complaint form to ensure that it goes through the correct investigation and resolution process.

Advocacy Services (0800 555 050) is available to assist you, if required.

We always welcome your ideas and concerns, and your loved one will never be disadvantaged by anything you may share with us.



Sharing afternoon tea on the deck with friends is a favourite Kiwi pastime.

## The importance of flu vaccination

As summer draws to an end we ask you to begin thinking about the annual influenza vaccination which is offered free of charge to all residents.

We strongly advise EPOAs to take advantage of this to protect their loved one from the serious effects of the dangerous strains of influenza which are prevalent every winter.

There is a very clear correlation between those residents who struggle with persistent ill health over winter, and those who did not have the flu vaccine.

Please choose to vaccinate this winter, and help your loved one stay well!



Our wonderful volunteers from Canine Friends, Coast Community Church, Anglican Church and our bible study group.

**Second Point of Contact:** Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, there may be a need for a second point of contact to discuss an issue with. Vicky Jones, our Operations Management Leader, is available Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. to discuss any issues of concern. (03) 347 7724 x 2 or [vicky@dementiacarenz.co.nz](mailto:vicky@dementiacarenz.co.nz)

**Admissions and Funding Navigator:** Deidre Hickey, our Admissions and Funding Navigator, is available to help you through the unfamiliar and sometimes confusing admission and subsidy application process. Deidre can be contacted at [deidre@dementiacarenz.co.nz](mailto:deidre@dementiacarenz.co.nz).