



Avonlea
CHRISTCHURCH

Our Home

March 2020

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A message from Armie and Daphne

Warmest greetings to everyone as we move into another year together.

We had such a wonderful Christmas and New Year period with lots of family and friends coming together to share special moments with their loved ones. We thank everyone for making it such a happy festive season for our residents. Special mention goes to our local kindergarten children and entertainers who sang us such wonderful Christmas carols over the course of this time. We hope you all enjoyed some special family time at your own homes over this special season as well.

Over the past couple of weeks we have experienced many changes in the weather, with some hot summer days and others as cold as winter. With the guidance of our flexible and creative diversional therapy team, everyone has made the most out of whatever each day has brought. When it was rainy, everybody was snuggled up in their sweater or cardigans beside the fire enjoying a cup of tea or hot chocolate. When it was hot, all rehydrated with regular cool drinks of different flavours, jellies and homemade ice blocks. Lots of happy memories and laughter followed as we reminisced over other seasons of the past.

Residents love all the special times we spend together and the conversations and jokes we share during our homely tasks such as folding, washing dishes, wiping the benchtop, or making homemade preserves. The aroma of home cooking brings back so many memories of happy times in the kitchen with mums and grandmothers in days gone by. These are the “magic”



moments” we are lucky to share everyday with our residents.

With the settled weather we have enjoyed more recently we have all loved having the doors and windows open and the opportunity to walk in the garden and sit outside in the shade of the gazebo. We have recently engaged the services of a new gardener who has been busy clearing the paths and tidying the garden beds, as well as trimming and tidying our hedges.

Moving ahead, our Diversional Therapy team will soon be busy preparing for Easter. We hope you are able to join us again in celebration this special time with us.

As summer draws to a close and we move into another season, please look out for your influenza vaccination consent form which will be arriving soon, and return it to us as soon as you can.

In closing, we hope to welcome you time and again in the coming months and look forward to sharing many special moments with you all throughout the year.

Dealing with the heat of summer

As we continue through the warmer 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 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.

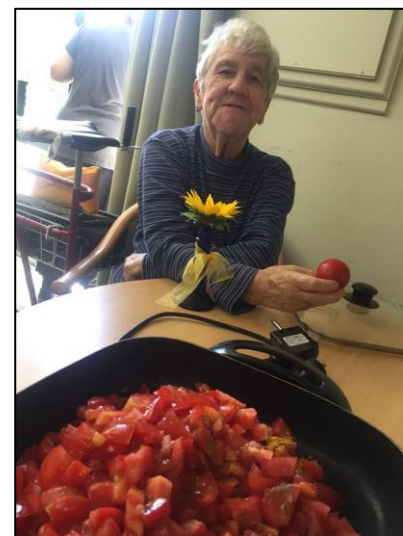
It has been suggested that we consider installing air conditioning in our rest homes for use in the warmer months. This has in fact been done at some of our rest homes, but is not an unqualified success and has itself led to complaints. People experience temperatures differently, and older people in 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 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 and 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.



We turned some locally grown tomatoes into delicious homemade tomato sauce



The fresh plums we picked for our home made jam were a feast for the senses!

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 amazing staff team

Andrew Sheard

Reflecting on the blank page before me I see faces pass across it like a slideshow: the faces of our staff.

Real faces of real people I work alongside, chat with, and pass by each day.

Some of them are so young it astonishes me. Some are older.

Some are Kiwis, some from other countries close by, and some from far across the world.

Every single one of the faces I see is smiling.

One of the things that brings me most pleasure in my role is receiving positive feedback from residents and family members about our staff. At least once a week a letter, a card or a returned survey is received by our admin team praising them. "Do you know how wonderful your staff team is?" I am often asked. In fact no-one knows it better than Jim and I do. Why? Because we are around and about a lot, and our job is to notice things.

It's the job of the facility manager to be the boss, the 'face' of the rest home, the contact person for family members, and to know each and every resident individually. It's their job to lead the staff team, to recognise their achievements, to mentor, coach and guide them. It's

their job to ask them to do things, and to thank them when they do.

A long time ago I was the Operations Manager of not one but two facilities, and I miss the close contact with staff that brought.

Most of all, I miss it being my job to say "Thank you." Thank you for taking the time to explain that this is a lemon soufflé dessert and will taste delicious. Thank you for stopping work for a minute or two to join a game of balloon catch. Thank you for pausing to sit down and listen – really listen. Thank you for sharing a joke and laughing together. Thank you for keeping our home bright and shining. Thank you for singing when you work. Thank you for bringing your own home, your culture and your family to work with you, invisible but always present. Thank you for your warmth, your care, and your generosity in sharing your time, energy and love.

Our staff are awesome and I am privileged to work alongside them.

Thank you for letting us know that you appreciate them too.



We share the responsibility of caring for our vegetable patch amongst a keen team



Making some plum and orange jam, which was enjoyed on fresh pikelets

An invitation to our Facebook page: "Avonlea Dementia Care"

Have you visited our Facebook page yet? If not, we warmly invite you to pay a visit and 'like' the page by clicking the button below the bannerhead. Any future posts will then come straight to your newsfeed.

In response to family suggestions we have a strong focus on using the Facebook page to provide fresh, topical stories and photos about life in our home. Stories include outings, cooking and baking, gardening,

special occasions, staff changes and other items of interest.

With permission, we use photos of residents and family members to honour them and the energy and love they bring to our home.

We love receiving comments on the posts to keep the page fun and interactive.

It's your forum, so please come on board and join us!



Concerns and complaints: your gift to us

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. Your concerns and complaints provides the opportunity for us to pass on this feedback to all our staff and take corrective action when needed, as part of our ongoing quality improvement programme.

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

Caring for possessions

Occasionally we have incidents of treasured jewellery, especially rings, going missing. We would like to remind you of the importance of taking residents' rings away home with you.

It is important to stress that we cannot be responsible for any loss of property, and that this is very likely to occur, especially in an environment where people with dementia are cared for.

If a resident has a strong sentimental attachment to a particular ring, we suggest that you consider substituting an inexpensive copy for the original,

which can then be kept safely by your family. Please ensure that any complaint is made directly to either Armie or Daphne. If they are not available then the complaint can be made in writing on a complaint form to ensure that it goes through the correct investigation and resolution process. Complaints forms are readily available in the entrance foyer. If you have trouble finding one, please ask a member of staff.

Advocacy Services (0800 555 050) are 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.



Relaxing in the gazebo and watering the garden and favourite summer pastimes



We had a fun afternoon with games, fancy hats and delicious food to celebrate Show Day

If you would like to receive our newsletter via email, please email your name and email address to amy@dementiacarenz.co.nz.

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 or vicky@dementiacarenz.co.nz