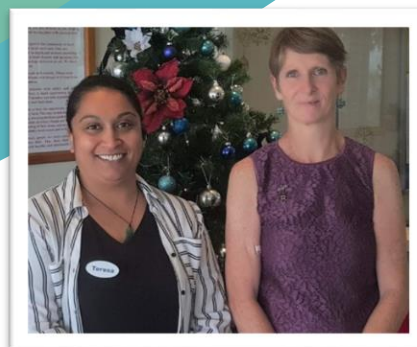




Our Home



A message from Liz and Teresa

Greetings ... Kia Ora and Merry Christmas to one and all.

Wow what a year this has been! I'm sure you will all agree it's been like no other!

Firstly, we want say a special thank you to all families and friends for your patience during this year with COVID-19 and the requirements we have had to implement around visiting your loved one. We know it has not been easy for you ... and it has not been easy for us to make these decisions either. You all put so much faith and trust in us to ensure that care is provided in a safe environment to the best of our abilities. We simply cannot take any chances with the welfare of precious residents, families and staff at stake. From us to you, thank you for your continuing patience and understanding.

While we are at Level 1 we still require family to contact us before visiting, sign in at the front door and have your temperature taken before entering the facility. Thank you for your patience with these requirements.

We wish to also thank our amazing staff team for their continuing support, love, care and dedication. They truly are an amazing bunch to work alongside and we are very proud of each and every one of them. They go above and beyond the call of duty and treasure the special moments they experience each day.

We welcome residents and family members to nominate a staff member for our Staff Member of the Month Award, so if there is something special you have noticed please feel free to let me know we will make sure the staff member concerned is recognised for a job well done.

Sadly, we have said farewell to a number of staff members over the past few months. Nisha Spence RN left in October and is now working for Health Care NZ. Becs Haereroa has moved to chilly Invercargill to be closer to family, and Sandra Glassford, who has been

with us for many years in many roles, has gone to work for her son in his new business. Roberta Smith, one of our amazing Diversional Therapists, has also left us. All will be greatly missed. We held a lovely farewell morning tea with staff and residents which gave them an opportunity to say their goodbyes.

With their departures we would like to welcome a few new members to the team. Cassie Walker and MJ to the Diversional Therapy team, Jenny Pasiol and Paige Wiki as Caregivers, Celeste Craig as a Home Assistant and Bithu Mathew as our new Registered Nurse.

Earlier in the year residents of Leighton House were invited to participate in a community art exhibition with the theme "Celebrating our Uniqueness". Unfortunately, due to COVID this was cancelled. The residents continued with a project they had started: a Leighton House Korowai. Each feather represents a part of each resident's wairua (spirit) who helped to create this and connects us all.

The cloak is worn at a celebration of any kind and every wearer is symbolically supported by all hands who made it and take away a small part of each person with them as they start their new journey in life. Roberta Smith, one of our amazing Diversional Therapists, was given the cloak to wear on her last day of work. The meaning of it had such an impact on her, she could not contain her emotions, she went and thanked each and every resident and embraced each one.

As we move towards Christmas we look forward to many wonderful times together and to a less eventful year to come.

We do things differently, and it works.

A Christmas message

Andrew Sheard, Managing Director

Sitting down to write my Christmas message I find myself, as always, reflecting on the year past and the year to come. As I do so now, approaching the end of 2020, I find myself lost for words. What is there to be said about the year we have just lived through? Where to begin? And with the world as we knew it rocked to its foundations, who is to say what the year ahead may bring?

Positioned at this fulcrum between past and future reminds me that right now, we are in the present. Whatever challenges and crises the past year has presented, this has always been the case. And in each present moment, we have been ok. We have survived. More than that, we have learned and grown stronger together.

No-one explains the concept of living in the present moment more clearly than Eckhart Tolle. "Nothing ever happened in the past; it happened in the Now. Nothing will ever happen in the future; it will happen in the Now." We don't have to worry about getting through a whole unknown scary future. All we have to do is live the present moment, right here, right now, as each moment unfolds.

How do you do that? Eckhart has advice on this too. "Accept — then act. Whatever the present moment contains, accept it as if you had chosen it. Always work with it, not against it."

In our rest homes as we have been navigating the unfamiliar and turbulent waters of COVID-19, this is what we have been doing. Working with the situation step by step, day by day. We have made some mistakes along the way, and we have learned from them and done things differently next time. With the understanding, support and patience of you, our residents and families, we have kept our facilities safe. We have been incredibly lucky, and we have also had great leadership and good guidance.

What of our staff teams – those gentle, loving, courageous people who left their own families and the safety of their bubbles time after time to come to work and care for our residents? I am in awe of each and every one of them.

As I write this, at a time when leave applications are normally flooding in for the longed-for trips back home to celebrate Christmas with their families, my desk is bare. I can only imagine how hard this Christmas will be for many of our staff, so far away from home and loved ones.

My Christmas message to you all this year is one of gratitude, love, kindness and hope.

In this moment, right now, I wish you joy.



"Celebrating our Uniqueness": showing off the beautiful Korowai we made together as part of this community project



*We are excited to host our
Family Christmas Gathering*

15th December 2020 2pm - 4pm

Please RSVP to Teresa or MJ.



Our cook Hannah Pride making her famous hot cheesy buns that residents love having with their soup.

A year of learning

Simon Hamley, Education Coordinator

Looking back on 2020, it has clearly been an unusual year, full of unexpected changes to our lives – donning masks, scanning QR codes and listening to Ashley Bloomfield! Despite this, it was heartening to see all of our great staff at Leighton cope so very well during the pandemic situation. Many of them may have been afraid and apprehensive, but I can see that through this experience they have become more resilient and have grown as people.

The varying NZ alert levels meant that for several months of the year I was unable to visit Leighton to meet with staff and provide training. Like much of the country, we managed to connect 'virtually' using Skype or Zoom, and this gave me the opportunity to provide some education remotely. I much prefer to meet with a group with staff here at Leighton, as it is great to hear their stories and discuss issues, so I was delighted to be able to travel around the country again more recently.

One of the best things I get to do when I visit Leighton is a training course called 'The Best Friends Approach to Care'. This takes place over three different sessions and is a time when we can reflect on our experiences and develop our empathy skills and learn to 'walk in the shoes' of the residents we are caring for. We often don't notice the personal growth in ourselves, as it can happen slowly over time, but all of the staff I meet at Leighton have developed skills and knowledge through their work. Some are at the beginning of that journey of growth and some are further on. There are always new things to learn and discover (even for someone of my age) and I am already looking forward to spending 2021 visiting Leighton and spending time with the staff, meeting new staff and catching up with those I already know.

Christmas is my favourite time of year, as it is a time when we think of family and how much they mean to us. I hope you have a chance to connect with your family during this time and share some special moments, whether they are near or far away.



As part of our "Walk Down Memory Lane" project Josie Markie brought along a doll's pram and dolls and spoke about their history



Vera Ashton celebrating her 101st Birthday. Congratulations Vera!

Endings and beginnings

Arah Cartagena, National Clinical Manager

2020 has been a year like no other. COVID-19 greatly changed our lives. Around the world, people are battling the pandemic and the other challenges that come with it - grief, loneliness, uncertainty, and loss.

Usually special occasions are celebrated with happiness and good cheer: a joyful celebration of the year that has passed. However, this year, some of us may have ambiguous feelings and thoughts toward it. It may be hard to celebrate and continue festivities amidst the uncertain landscape of these times.

Special seasonal occasions mean many things to different people. Some people are eager to welcome Christmas because with everything going on, they need something to look forward to, and sticking to traditions will help them achieve a feeling of normalcy. Others are more than ready to welcome the New Year because it has a promise of a fresh start and better things to come. And some view seasonal occasions as a welcome period of respite where they can unwind, relax, and celebrate the exciting year that is about to end.

The last two months of 2020 could be unpredictable, and there could be surprises, both good and bad, ahead of us. Leaving 2020 might not close a chapter for us. It could be a continuation of what is already happening, as much as we may not want that to materialize.

All of these thoughts and feelings surrounding the Christmas season amidst the pandemic help me realize that we can hope for the best for our future, but we can only ever focus and act on what is happening today, in our present.

Every day, we go through our routines and do our best to take care of ourselves and the people around us. Perhaps this is the best way we can embody the Christmas spirit, by being mindful of others, by doing our part in keeping our surroundings safe, and by being kind and considerate to the people around us and offering help when we can. We live each day with hope and being open to the joy around us. As this year draws to a close, let us welcome the new year with hope for the future while living mindfully in the present.



A very special celebration on Christina King's 90th birthday



Dorothy Sparrow 'baking up a storm' with friends