



Millvale House
L E V I N

Family Newsletter

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A message from Helen

As we leave behind the cold wintery months and move into spring time we reflect on all the good times we've had and changes we've seen, while also looking forward to exciting times ahead.

We have missed our wonderful Rhea during September, as she has been away visiting family and friends back home. We look forward to welcoming her back.

We had our regular mid-winter family gathering in June, with lovely food and music to share with our visiting family members and friends.

August was the time for our special afternoon tea for our wonderful volunteers who have generously given their time to visit our residents. Each volunteer was given a small token of our gratitude and a hand made thank you card with an original poem crafted by our residents and Diversional Therapy Team (see back page).

We also hand-crafted cards with an original poem to celebrate Fathers Day.

September saw us supporting the Alzheimer's Association with a 'Cuppa for a Cause' event, with Donna from the Alzheimer's Association giving an informative talk

to family and friends. Donna has offered to come back and facilitate future sessions for those who would like it.

We had a wonderful session for staff on the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers Rights facilitated by Heather Austin, an advocate from Advocacy Services, and look forward to future sessions for family and friends.

Our local Horowhenua Floral Art and Garden Club brightened our lounges as they do every year with their donation of beautiful floral arrangements. We cannot thank them enough for their thoughtfulness and kindness.

We would all like to thank Marjorie Nillo for the wonderful job she has done of managing Millvale House recently. Marj is being promoted to Regional Clinical Manager (North Island) and will be instrumental in finding Millvale House a wonderful new Clinical Manager, but in the mean time we know we are in good hands with Marjorie at the helm.

Maria and Celeste took leave to welcome new babies into their lives and we wish them hearty congratulations on their



Marjorie and Rhea

new arrivals. We welcome a number of new staff: Charlene, Jazelle, Neil, Gilieto and Amelita have joined us and we are delighted to have them on our team. Our much-loved Diversional Therapist Heather has decided to take leave of her permanent position, but will stay on as a relief Diversional Therapist for those occasions when we need a helping hand. We look forward to welcoming a new Diversional Therapist to our team soon.

An exciting development has been the purchase of the property next door. This is currently being used as a staff house, but there are long term plans for extending the facility and gardens with a larger deck for the hospital and more walking opportunities and outside space for HDU.

Overall we have made some wonderful memories and look forward to creating many to share as we move forward.

'A Spoonful of Courage'

Every day we are privileged to experience special moments with the people we care for, moments which remind us of the power of living 'in the present moment'. There may be no 'cure' for dementia, but these moments affirm that there is definitely joy, empowerment and healing. We keep a 'magic moment book' to record these in, which you are also welcome to use. We would like to share some of these special moments with you.



One of the beautiful arrangements donated by the Horowhenua Floral Art and Garden Club



Table decorations and treats at our mid-winter family gathering

While I was replacing light bulbs on the lounge one of our male residents came up to me and held the chair I was standing on. He did not leave until I had finished all the bulbs.

At one point he tried to hold me steady, as if he was afraid I might fall.

On night shift I sat down to have a cup of tea. One of our residents walked in and said to me, "Are you having a cup of tea?" "Yes," I said. He said to me, "Have you got extra?" I said "Yes. Sit down and I will make a cup for you." He sat down and I offered him cake and sandwiches. When he had finished he looked at me and said with a lovely smile, "It is good to tell people about us so that they can help us. Thank you. I'm going to bed now."

During conversation one of our female residents told me that her son was her "Power of Eternity"!

A heartwarming moment of bonding when two male residents were seated together in conversation, one holding the hand of the other.

A male resident came up to the office looking for something to eat. We told him we had nothing to offer him but hard cookies which were hard to bite. "Let me taste!" he said. After one bite he said, "Um! Better than nothing!"

We had fun and enjoyed dancing with a male resident in the lounge with him smiling and carried away by the disco music on the radio.

Every moment is a 'magic moment' for me here at Millvale House

When I told a male resident "I have finished at Millvale and I am leaving today" he said to me, "God bless you dear." It was really a blessed moment for me.

Smiles of delight from a female resident when she was playing ten pin bowling, saying "I'm lucky!" as she hit down the pins.

Playing with the big beach ball with a female resident who kicked the ball and it hit a male resident on the behind as he was bending over. With barely concealed delight she exclaimed: "That was a good shot!"

Reading out interesting facts to a female resident I told her, "We start losing around 7,000 brain cells a day once we turn 35. They can never be replaced." She looked surprised, then smiled and said "Then there's no hope for us!"

Noticing that a female resident had something down her top, I asked her what it was. Pulling out a spoon she said, "That's my courage!" Sometimes I think we all need a spoonful of courage!

Planning for excellence

As we move towards the end of the year a number of significant projects forming part of our annual business plan are now well underway.

These include important initiatives such as falls prevention and a reduction in staff and resident incidents and injuries.

We have a significant focus on medication, comparing the use of antipsychotics both within our facilities and hopefully with comparable external agencies. Our aim is to continually strive to achieve the best balance for each resident, with the least possible medication our constant objective.

As always, our activities programme is high on our list of priorities, with a renewed focus on familiar, homely activities which are age-appropriate

and lead to a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Staff education has taken place recently in falls prevention, protection and prevention of pressure areas, and abuse and neglect.

In addition, a new role of BPSD (Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia) Advisor has been created to provide a specialised 'go-to' person for any concerns or challenges relating to residents. Helen McLeane is our BPSB Advisor at Millvale.

An organisational continence specialist is also soon to be appointed to assist our staff team in the continuing quest to maintain continence and enhance the personal dignity and quality of life of our residents.



One of our handmade cards for Fathers' Day

Summer's on the menu!

With daylight saving comes summer and the re-introduction of our summer menu.

As well as taking the dietary requirements of our residents into account, the menu devised by our dietician changes with the seasons. The hearty soups, stews and hot puddings that provide warmth and comfort in winter give way to lighter, more summery seasonal fare featuring fish, pasta, chicken, cold meats and salads, sandwiches, savouries and quiches.

Desserts remain a highlight of every meal, with ice cream and fresh fruit

salads, mousses, jelly whip and crumbles being among the favourites. Fresh home baking is always on offer for morning and afternoon tea.

Please remember that there is an open invitation for you to join your loved one for a meal.



Artwork with an Autumn theme

Courses for families

If you are new to Millvale House you may not be aware of the two short courses we run for family members, Orientation for Families and Sharing the Journey.

These courses are a free, fun and supportive way of introducing you to many of the practical aspects of having a family member in residential care, and of understanding more about the dementia journey. People who attend the courses find them both enjoyable and enriching.

Please pop in and speak with Rhea to find out more about the courses and register your interest!

A special request

Our organizational accounts team in Nelson has asked us to bring your attention to the importance of giving the resident's name as a reference for any payment, whether on an account or an Automatic Payment.

If any other name is given, such as the person making the payment or the EPOA, for example, it can take time to identify which resident the payment applies to, and there is greater potential for confusion and mistakes. Thank you for your assistance with this.

Heading away?

Please remember that if for any reason you are heading away, it is essential to leave our RN with contact details (whether a cell phone, close family member or email address) so that we can reach you if we need to for any reason.

It will also give you peace of mind while you are away, knowing that we are able to notify you immediately if anything unexpected should occur.



Celebrating a birthday with a traditional Kiwi pavlova



An elegant afternoon tea

Our Thanks to You

A poem for our volunteers
by Helen McLeane and our
Millvale residents

Thank you for the gift of time,
You've given us so often,
The kindness of your voice and
care
Has helped our journey soften.

Your smiling face, the words you
share,
Can touch our hearts and minds,
And while we may not often say,
We love that you are kind.

You share your joy, your song, or
words,
Or maybe just a smile,
And on a day when life seems
hard
You stop and stay awhile.

There are no words to capture
and value what you do.
Today is just a little chance
To show our thanks to you.

At times our lives are busy,
Or we seem far away,
But always know you've left a
mark
And on our heart it stays.

Please know how much you
mean to us,
And trust these words we say,
You've made a difference in our
lives.
A gift we can't repay.

We wish you love and happiness,
And joy in all you do,
Our world has been a better place
Because it's shared with you.

