



**Aberleigh**  
MARLBOROUGH

# Family Newsletter

June 2016

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## A message from Maja and Susan

It is our great pleasure to extend our greetings to you in this, our mid-winter newsletter.

We would like to congratulate members of our staff team on the following achievements: Colleen Tiongson completed her Diversional Therapy qualification and is now our new Lead Diversional Therapist. In May Jerica Cayamdas, Kenith Castro and Sheril Esguerra completed an 8-month "Walking in Another's Shoes" programme which focuses on the delivery of high quality, person-centred dementia care. Last year Brom Cabredo and Eta Saunaqali graduated and four other staff are attending the course currently.

Our wonderful activities team has been having lots of fun with our residents in the first half of the year. In March we 'beat the heat' with our Mrs. Whippy activity where residents enjoyed refreshing vanilla ice cream with colourful hundreds and thousands and chocolate sprinkles.

A few of our residents were able to attend the Senior Celebration at the Blenheim Baptist Church on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Our residents were pleased to be able to be involved with this community event, go out in the van and make new friends.

St. Patrick's Day was commemorated with fun and laughter as our dementia rest home residents had an indoor parade in the facility with their green badges, hats and clothing. We also had quizzes, singing and reminiscing in the rest home and hospital homes. The facility was decorated with green balloons and residents enjoyed cupcakes with green



icing to mark this enjoyable day.

A fiddle blanket was completed through the kindness of Margaret Sadd, the daughter of our resident, Joan Loveday and residents are getting a great deal of enjoyment from it. A poster project, a "get to know us" book and a tic tac toe game project are ongoing. Residents of Matai have been enjoying a mixture of health and fitness, entertainment and relaxation. Residents have been performing meditation and exercises to keep the mind and body healthy, as well as music, singing, and dancing.

Our regular activities such as church services, darts, and happy hour are still greatly enjoyed by our residents and activities such as mini golf, word games, and balloon fun have been in high demand as winter approaches. Families are always encouraged to take part and to share these moments with their loved ones.

Please remember that you are always most welcome here at your loved one's home. We are so happy to have the pleasure of your company and to share happy times together.

*You are warmly invited to join us for our*

## **Winter Gatherings**

*Wednesday July 27th 2.00 pm Rata, Matai, Ngaio*

*Thursday July 28th 2.30 pm Totara, Kowhai, Koromiko*

## “Magic Moments” to share with you

*One of our ladies received what we thought was a lovely compliment when someone remarked that she “looks gorgeous – just like the Queen.” She replied, “How can that be? She’s got a harsh face!”*

The huge smile on a resident’s face when I sat down beside her to keep her company after her daughter left really made my day!

*A resident’s daughter walked in to the lounge today. The resident broke out in to a big smile and said “That’s my daughter!” Everyone was uplifted by this moment of recognition. Then the resident added “Yes ...” and called her by name. Her daughter was so happy.*

It was lunchtime and a resident was a little confused and standing by one of our caregivers asking him questions. He put his arm around her and started singing. She joined in at the appropriate time with the correct words to the song.

*Three residents and I were seated around a table together. Another*

*resident was struggling with her zipper not far away from us. One of the ladies called over to her “Can I help you with that?” She brought her top over and the helpful resident spent several minutes very patiently showing her how to engage the zipper. It was a lovely interaction.*

A resident was unsettled on return from an outing. His daughter brought him out to the lounge and got out her guitar. The music worked wonders. He sang several songs, often solo, and gave historical background to them. It was so good to see him fully involved with his musical/spiritual self.

*I was taking a resident to the lounge when the RN asked if she could give medication to him. He took his medication and asked me, “Is she a doctor, hope it’s not too late to ask that?” That moment made us both laugh.*



Proud staff members display their achievements



Gardening is a pleasure not necessarily confined to the outdoors

## Falls prevention programme

A major project in our current business plan has been a falls prevention programme which we have implemented at Aberleigh.

A number of minimization interventions have been put in place as part of this project, which was launched in 2015 and has now been running for a year. These include the appointment of a Falls Coordinator, ‘falls mapping’ implementation, increasing staff awareness around falls minimisation through education, and maintaining a Vitamin D supplement register.

Falls Mapping is a graphic representation of the floorplan of Aberleigh, with colour coded

‘mapping’ indicating precisely where and when each fall occurs, as well as the identity of the resident concerned. This enables us to identify the areas, times of day and people at greatest risk, and implement preventative strategies such as environmental improvements, closer monitoring and diversion.

The Aberleigh team has been working closely under the guidance of the Falls Coordinator to achieve the goal of preventing major falls while minimizing minor ones. Reductions of over 50% in both categories of falls has been noted, and we hope to continue to see improvement in this important area of care.

## Using my time wisely

It gives Jim and me great pleasure to provide the resources enabling our managers to provide an excellent service to our residents and their families. We love to meet with our managers frequently and to see their growth and development. They are very well supported by our organisational team who are always just a phone call away, if there is any problem at all. We have delegated the day to day running of Aberleigh to Susan and Maja. They are the front face of Aberleigh. They are the people residents and their families love to meet often, have a chat to, and talk with if there is a problem or information to be sought.

I would love to know all residents and their families as I used to when our organisation was smaller. Now this is not possible logistically, and neither would it be helpful to the managers we have so carefully chosen. They need the trust and freedom to 'own' the home they run.

I believe my time is better employed facilitating programmes that guide our staff in providing care that clearly reflects our vision and values. I spend time with every new staff member,

## Conversations that count

Knowing what is important to each resident takes the guess work out of how best to care for each person as the end of life approaches. The Advanced Care Planning Cooperative of New Zealand has developed an Advance Care Plan (ACP) document for use by those who are cognitively able. A person with a diagnosis of dementia may not be able to complete this. Instead, a Medical Care Guidance Plan can be completed on their behalf by their GP. It is important that the family have input into this.

We have developed a "Thinking about your loved one's quality of life" questionnaire to encourage conversations with residents and their

## Alison Hume

talking about our vision and values, our expectations of and our commitment to them. A little later on, after they have been working with us for a little while, I again spend time with them, running a programme (in conjunction with Simon, our education co-ordinator) called "Best Friends Approach to Care". This is a simple, practical and effective application of our vision and values in day to day interaction and care. This close formative engagement with each member of our staff is the way I can have the greatest impact not only on each staff member, but also indirectly on each resident and his/her family on a moment by moment basis.

We very much want every resident to be loved and accepted as their true self. Aberleigh is their home, and home is, as Maya Angelou says, "the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned."

Our residents have a wonderful simplicity and compassion about them as they head towards the source of their being. If we pay attention, they offer us many moments of grace.

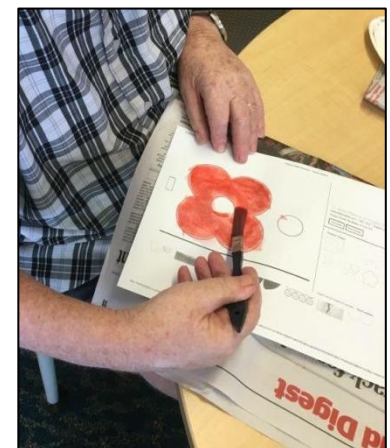
What lovely work we do! Thank you.



Even relatively simple artwork activities require skill and concentration

loved ones about what matters most to them in terms of their care and treatment at the end of their life. This document will be offered for discussion at your next multi-disciplinary meeting. It is also helpful in providing clarity around the services the facility offers as well as access to GP or emergency services. Upon return of the document it is important that we have a conversation to ensure we interpret the choices as intended.

Our registered nurses give a gift of acceptance, understanding and reassurance by sitting quietly listening, empowering families to identify what really matters most to their loved one at the close of life.



## Improving the service we provide

In early 2015 we launched a campaign focusing on caring for residents' personal belongings. This covered all items of value which are vulnerable to being lost, broken or damaged, especially during our laundry process.

A series of posters was displayed in the staff areas of the rest home as a reminder to caregivers that lost and damaged belongings can have serious consequences.

Over the past year we have been monitoring the occurrence of damaged belongings in each of our facilities, particularly with reference to the damage prevention poster campaign. We are delighted to report that the total number of lost or damaged items has dropped significantly due to the increased awareness. Damage in general has dropped 28% and damage to dentures in particular has plummeted by a massive 80%. Shrink clothing is also less frequent, with staff taking more care with identifying woollens, sorting washing and ensuring special instructions relating to delicate garments are followed.

We have also raised a Quality Improvement in response to some suggestions put forward at a recent meeting with family members. A

question was raised regarding the possibility of having television in the lounge of our dementia rest homes. The families felt television provided a useful prompt for conversation, and would help fill in the time between tea and bedtime.

We would like to remind families that they are most welcome to provide personal TVs for their loved ones' bedrooms. We will be happy to assist with installing these.

However, we continue to be of the view that live television can have negative effects on people who have dementia, as they have difficulty differentiating between reality and what is taking place on the television screen.

It is also easy for television to become a 'passive activity', at the expense of social interaction.

Please remember that you are always most welcome to bring forward any suggestions or concerns you may have to our management team.



Simple, familiar tasks give an ongoing sense of value and purpose

## Family Support Group

Having a family member with dementia can be hard, and it is often helpful to share your thoughts and feeling with others.

A family support group is available to families on every second Thursday of the month, independently facilitated by Rod Tyney. There are currently no dates scheduled, but if you are interested in attending please let us know as we would love to start this service up again.

We believe these sessions are valuable in providing a safe, confidential environment where family members can share experiences and support one another on this challenging journey. Discussions are informal and confidential, and take place in a loving and supportive environment.