



Millvale House  
W A I K A N A E

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17 Millvale Street  
P.O. Box 397  
Waikanae  
5250

Phone/Fax:  
04 904 4340

E-mail:  
[om@millvale.co.nz](mailto:om@millvale.co.nz)

Web:  
[www.millvalewaikanae.co.nz](http://www.millvalewaikanae.co.nz)

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# Family Newsletter

## A message from Roxanne and Ben

As we move into mid-winter, the year has been a busy and happy one here at Millvale House. Our new residents have settled very well, and it seems as if Millvale has always been their home. We feel like a family as we watch our residents converse with each other and stroll in the garden like old friends.

We are enormously proud of our wonderful staff team and the skills and empathy they bring to the work they do. We would like to thank you for your positive comments about our staff team and your appreciation of all they do

Six new staff members have joined us so far this year. Billy, Rose Ann, Lorie and Joan have joined our care staff team, while Jamelyn and Elizabeth have joined us as kitchen aids.

Our Diversional Therapy team has been very creative in working with our residents to ensure that our home is decorated appropriately for the season as well as the special celebrations we share with you and your loved ones. Many residents enjoy participating in these craft activities, whether actively or by simply enjoying being present as part of the group, with visiting families also warmly included. For every celebration we have had different themes: Hearts were everywhere around our home during Valentines Day; Green was our theme colour when we celebrated St. Patrick's Day; Easter eggs decorated our notice boards over Easter, and lastly to celebrate the brave on ANZAC day, we



had red poppies on the walls of our home.

We would like to invite you to our upcoming Winter Family Gathering on 16<sup>th</sup> July from 2:30-3:30. There will be a special afternoon tea as well as live entertainment.

Currently we are improving our courtyard garden, and have now progressed to planting some vegetables. We have spring onions, parsley, and Italian parsley which we use as garnishes for our residents' meals. We are also planning to plant flowers in this area. As you may have noticed, we have four new plant pots at the entrance which are currently planted with pansies. Please if there are any suggestions you would like to make regarding this project, do not hesitate to share your ideas with us.

Now that winter is almost here, please keep safe and warm. Always remember that you are always welcome to join us for a hot meal or for morning or afternoon tea with your loved ones.

Your visits are always our pleasure.

*You are warmly invited to join us for our*

**Winter Gathering**

*Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2.00-3.00 p.m.*

## “Magic Moments” to share with you



Simple, nutritious home cooking is a feature of our lives here at Millvale

A resident's grandson recently sang at the Sydney Opera House in "The Messiah". He sang a couple of songs for us in the lounge, an amazing experience for everyone. Residents emerged one by one from their rooms to listen. I left the knitting we were doing as an activity on the table to get the camera to capture this special moment. I looked over at the table and a resident had picked up the knitting and done a couple of rows! Two magic moments simultaneously.

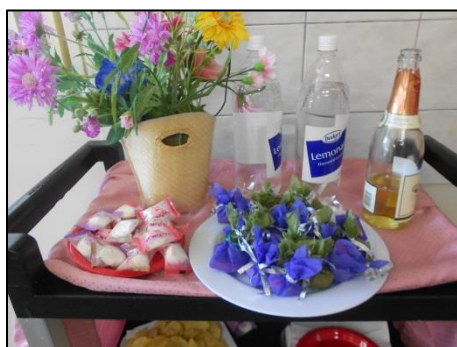
*A resident's daughter walked in to the lounge today. The resident broke out in to a big smile and said "That's my daughter!" Everyone was uplifted by this moment of recognition. Then the resident added "Yes ..." and called her by name. Her daughter was so happy.*

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.*



Fresh flowers and a wee gift on Mothers' Day

## Falls prevention programme

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

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 Millvale, 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 Millvale 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 Millvale to Roxanne and Ben. They are the front face of Millvale House. 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 Advance 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. Millvale 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.



Taking pleasure in the simple task of planting seedlings in the raised garden

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.



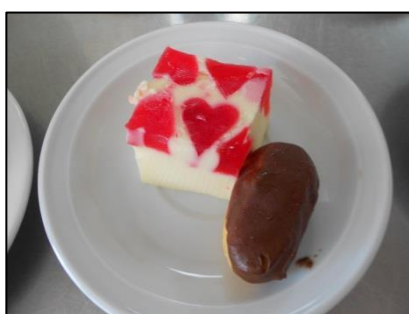
A beautifully decorated Pavlova is a feast for the eyes as well as the taste buds



*Gifts of love ...*



*... in your hands for safekeeping.*



Made with love on Valentine's Day

## 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%. Shrunken 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 received some suggestions at a recent meeting with family members which we will be considering through our Quality

## Family Support Group

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

Every second Wednesday of the month at 1pm we hold a support group meeting for the families of residents at Millvale. Family members who attend find these sessions very useful and enjoy having a safe, confidential environment where we can share our experiences and support one another on this challenging journey. Speaking with others about the complex issues of having a family

Improvement process in the near future, as follows:

- Provide a brief written summary of MDT meetings to the EPOA for distribution to other family members
- Include more interaction with children and animals as part of the activities programme
- Provide assistance for short neighbourhood wheelchair outings around local streets
- Introduction of 'seated exercise' programme
- More variety in selection of music.
- Family newsletter:
  - Section introducing staff members – one or two each issue, with photos
  - Advance notice of any planned changes in the facility

Please remember that your suggestions and comments are always most welcome.

member with dementia can be an enormously valuable and liberating experience.

The meetings are facilitated by Sally Perris who has been counselling for 15 years and enjoys teaching the art of wellbeing. Discussions are informal and confidential, and take place in a loving and supportive environment. Feedback we receive about the meetings is very positive. Come along and join us – afternoon tea is provided.