



Our Home



Warmest Greetings from our Leighton Team!

Nau mai haere mai i te whānau o Leighton House panui

Welcome everyone to our Leighton House family Newsletter

Greetings to whānau, friends and community!

We are already halfway through the year, Team Leighton!

Looking back, I can see how far we have come together in what we have achieved, in what we have learnt, and in what we still have to learn together.

We are excited to welcome new faces to our team Leighton. We extend a warm welcome to Jasneet Kaur, who has joined us as home assistant and kitchen assistant. Jasneet has come from working in customer care and was looking for change of career. We hope you have found your true home with us here at Leighton, Jasneet.

We are also very delighted to welcome Lynne Hare to join our activity team as an activities coordinator. Lynne has years of experience in a similar role and we are excited to have her passion and energy on board!

We would like to most warmly congratulate Arnie Ayag for obtaining her NZ registration in Nursing. Arnie has been an asset to our team as a senior caregiver and RN support, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside her as her role with Leighton House evolves.

We would also like to formally introduce Felenida Talplacido, who is one of our overseas Registered Nurse support staff. Having joined us in March as a caregiver, Felenida has quickly become a respected and integral member of our team. With Preet now away on maternity leave, Felenida has stepped up into the role of Weekend Manager, and will be assisting

Arnie with operational and practical support while Preet is away.

As winter approaches we are very aware how our valuable and vulnerable residents can be affected by the winter season. The RN team has contacted families about the Flu and Covid-19 vaccinations available, and we would like to thank those residents and families who have signed the consent forms. With as many residents, visitors and staff as possible fully vaccinated, the chances of an outbreak over the winter months are significantly reduced.

Our diversional therapy team has implemented a few new activities into our programme and created a new initiative around celebrating residents' uniqueness and talents. It is wonderful to get to know and appreciate one another more fully in this way.

We had a very special Easter celebration this year with our traditional Easter raffles drawn on Easter Monday and we would like to congratulate the winners of these. We also celebrated ANZAC day with a beautiful morning tea organised by our cooks and diversional therapy team.

Our renovations to the Admin and East communal shower room are now completed, and we are now moving on to complete the communal bathroom renovations in the River Wing.

We'd like to thank those who joined us for our mid-winter family gatherings earlier this month. These are a great opportunity to enjoy a lovely afternoon tea while spending time with loved ones and strengthening relationships, old and new.

As always, we extend an open invitation for you to visit your loved one here as often as possible, and remind you that you're most welcome to join them for a meal at any time. We wish you all the very best for everything the second half of 2023 may hold for you and your loved ones.

We do things differently, and it works.

June 2023

Greetings from Andrew Sheard

I'm enjoying the crisp wintry days as I go around our homes at the moment. The cool weather makes the hearty lunchtime soup on our winter menu smell all the better. Please do join your loved one for a meal or even just a cup of tea when you come in to visit.

We have run focus groups at several of our homes over the past month or so. These sessions are great for providing us with some feedback on what we are doing well and what we can improve on. This is something we did regularly before COVID-19 so it is great to have these sessions back up and running.

Involving residents and their whānau in care is a priority for us. The conversations we have guide us in the development of policies, the delivery of care and the monitoring of care. Family are our partners in care and we value your input very much.

We have received some great feedback and very useful suggestions so thank you to everyone who has been involved in these groups.

Do take care of yourself over winter. The early mornings are darker now and it is getting dark in the late afternoon. It is a time to quieten, to take note of the beauty that surrounds us. It is everywhere.

When I am outside at night I like to look at the moon and the stars. In the first light of day I am amazed to see some jonquils already. Going outside, noticing the ever-changing landscape outside changes the way I feel in a positive way.

Ngā manaakitanga

Andrew Sheard



The joy of singing together at choir practice



Enjoying a special morning tea together on ANZAC day



Expressing creativity in a craft session



Enjoying a spot of balloon badminton

Celebrating our wonderful nurses



Celebrating International Pet Day with visiting furry friends



Colin McNea getting stuck into a good baking session



Residents enjoying Poi during an Age Concern morning tea at library.

All around the world, 12th May is the day we celebrate our dedicated and hardworking Registered Nurses. They work hard, guide, supervise, inspire and mentor the care team; approach each day with love and compassion; liaise with and support our families; and put their all into keeping our residents and community safe and healthy.

People who dedicate their professional life to this are characterised by their compassion, patience, sympathy for and empathy towards the people they serve. In our modern times, they also need to be highly knowledgeable and professional in their work. Nurses working at our nine rest homes undoubtedly demonstrate all of the above traits, and more.

Nursing is not a job, but a vocation. Working as an aged care Nurse is giving of yourself, heart and soul, working with others in a role that truly means something and makes a difference to the world, person by person and day by day. It is an important life pursuit.

On 12th May, we took the time to acknowledge all of the work our Nurses do throughout our homes, and say a genuine thank you.

To celebrate and show our gratitude, our homes held afternoon tea for our nurses and staff where they enjoyed a lovely cake and some home-cooked food and drinks. This was an opportunity to recognize our Nurses' unconditional services and letting them know that they are an integral part of our DCNZ team. It was their time, and also our chance to express our deep appreciation for all they do and are.

In addition, the directors and senior clinical team arranged a Zoom session to meet with the nurses and Level 4 RN support staff across all our homes to personally express their thanks and appreciation for all they do.

The history behind the 12th May Nurses Day celebration

International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world every May 12th, the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth.

Florence Nightingale was a celebrated English social reformer, statistician, and founder of modern nursing. She became well known for taking care of the wounded soldiers during the Crimean War, dubbed "The Lady with the Lamp" because of her habit of making rounds at night.

On this day, we felt privileged to thank all our incredible "Ladies of the Lamp" right across the DCNZ homes: for the hard work, dedication and the invaluable role they play in the lives of our residents and their whānau, each and every day.

Urmee Rahman and Arrah Bagtang, Regional Clinical Managers

The importance of being different



Off on a neighbourhood walk

Aged care sector update

We were pleased to get some additional Government funding to start to address the pay gap between Registered Nurses in aged care homes and nurses working in hospitals. However, there is still a significant difference and pay equity for our nurses has not yet been achieved.

We are still many nurses short across the aged care sector and we are doing everything we can to manage working towards recruiting, training and retaining new nurses to lead our clinical care teams. We have been fortunate to be able to recruit Caregivers who have been Registered Nurses overseas which has helped us to fill this skill shortage. Many of these Caregivers will be able to become Registered Nurses in New Zealand over time, and we are committed to supporting them through this process.

You will have seen a number of new staff starting over the first half of this year.

Following the Pay Equity Settlement of 2017, a fair pay agreement is also being negotiated with the goal of providing Caregivers with a pay increase. There is still some way to go in this process but we are hoping for an agreement to make Caregiving a fairly-paid career path.

As this is an election year these issues will be under more scrutiny than usual. We are hoping for good outcomes.

Several times a year I facilitate sessions with our staff about cultural awareness and respecting diversity. Much time is spent discussing Māori and Pacific Island culture, as well as staff sharing information about their own culture. I am always struck by how people become more animated and alive when talking about their own culture. I shouldn't be surprised of course, because our culture is at the very core of our being. I encourage staff in these sessions to remind themselves how proud they are of their own culture when they meet a resident or colleague from a different culture.

Despite this pride in our individuality, some of us spend our time trying to 'fit in', trying to be the same as others, perhaps from a fear of being ridiculed. When I was young, which is a long time ago I agree, it was extremely important NOT to fit in, but to be as different as possible. It was common for the clothes, hairstyles and behaviour to be as unique as we could make them. Thinking about this and the sessions I help run has led me to wonder about the importance of difference.

Human beings need to accept and respect the differences in others. This is particularly important when providing care for our residents, whose differences become more apparent as they are living in a communal setting. Accepting our own differences is an important part of this process, as accepting ourselves is a way of learning to accept others. And as we all know, loving ourselves (which can sometimes be the hardest thing of all) is a vital step in truly loving other people.

We live in a world where on one hand differences in gender, sexuality and culture are celebrated and encouraged, but on the other hand war and conflicts based on cultural differences are common events. Isn't being different from each other what makes life so interesting? For us all to be the same gender, height, colour, age and culture would be dull beyond belief.

It's interesting to consider why humankind seems to have such an innately negative view of differences. We feel suspicious of difference. We are often threatened by difference.

This can be true of the behaviour of some of our residents who have dementia. Sometimes the actions of our residents may seem 'different', unexpected or irrational. Yet if we look more deeply into the reasons underlying the behaviour in the mind of the resident and seek to understand why it is happening, this can result in an 'aha' moment of real connection.

This is at the core of our foundation 'Best Friends Approach to Care' training. This teaches us to look not for the ways in which we differ from one another, but the ways in which we are the same. Once we feel that sense of shared humanity, it sets us free to celebrate the differences in culture, appearance, attitudes and behaviour that make each one of us so unique and precious.

Simon Hamley, Education Coordinator