



Our Home

A message from Paula and Rhea

Welcome everyone to our Millvale Lodge family Newsletter!

It's surprising that we are close to ending the year and welcoming a new one in a few weeks. Even more astounding is the fact that we are in our third year of living with the COVID-19 pandemic. It has changed all our lives, especially those in aged residential homes.

We are re-establishing routines in our home. We have resumed some of the home activities we used to organise before. One of these is the Christmas Family Gathering, and we are determined to make this comeback memorable! We hope you will join us and share this special afternoon together.

Most of our staff have not been able to take well-deserved time off and travel home for over two years now. Finally this year we have been able to approve leave for staff to return home and be reunited with their loved ones, recharging their emotional energy and bring them back with bright eyes and smiling faces.

We have been able to soften the impact of nationwide staffing shortages through intensive recruitment locally and abroad. Almost all of our new care staff are overseas-trained nurses who are supported to become NZ Registered Nurses in time to come.

We would like to thank all those EPOAs who took the time to complete and return our recent survey. Your feedback is invaluable and so much appreciated. We will be collating the responses and raising Quality Improvements to address any issues identified. Please remember that any specific concerns which may arise from day to day should be addressed personally with us as soon as possible.

We have recently been reflecting on how grateful we are to continue to work in this industry. The unswerving loyalty and positivity of our staff team, the kindness and understanding of families, and most of



all, the joy of working with our residents here in their home is an inspiration and a privilege. It teaches us what really matters.

In closing, we would like to share a few examples of the 'magic moments' that brighten our days.

- A respite resident who was a history teacher delighted staff with his knowledge. He would ask which part of the world a staff member came from and then talk about historical points. At 94 years old, he shared tips on how to live long (the secret was royal jelly!) Close to his discharge, he told staff how grateful he was for their care and offered to return the favour to any staff member who came to Wellington by preparing a feast to share. He did return to the home bringing the food he promised.
- It was a beautiful day. Staff took residents for a van drive along the beach when one of them who keeps to himself started talking and identified Kapiti Island. It was surprising to hear him as he hardly speaks.
- It was a Saturday when a few family members came with their guitars. One of our female residents suddenly stood up and started to dance. It was wonderful to watch her enjoy the music and interact.
- Back in June we had the TV on so everyone could see the Queen's Jubilee celebration. One of our female resident's face lit up as she saw the Queen on TV. She was so happy and it really seemed to brighten her day.

Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year to you all.

We do things differently, and it works.

*We most warmly invite you to join us
for our*
Christmas Gathering
on Friday 16 December at 2pm



*We love sharing the beautiful
environment of the Nikau Valley with our
families now that summer's here!*



*Harvesting lemons out in our
garden*

Happy Christmas from Andrew Sheard

I always look forward to this time of year in our homes. The sounds of kids' chitter chatter as they visit their relatives, and the faces of residents, staff and families alike lighting up as they greet each other or prepare some food or a Christmas tree for celebrations.

It is a time to focus on the people we love and care for most, and often that helps to put the worries and issues of the past year into perspective.

It is always a special time for my family as well. The sense of wonder, excitement and anticipation from our children makes the stresses of getting everything done at this time of year so worthwhile.

We've recently finished working on a new website and we'd love you to have a look. We're really proud of how it's looking as it reflects what's important to us – the people we care for, their families, our staff, the special times we have together, and most of all the freedom to be ourselves within the home. These are the things that make residents and their whānau feel truly at home.

We would like to thank all the residents and families who gave their permission for us to use their photos or the photos of their loved ones. We think the photos on the website reflect the people who make our homes special and we are very grateful that we're able to use them.

Please do let us know what you think and if there is anything else you'd like to see on the website, which you will find at <https://www.dementiacarenz.co.nz/>

As this is our last newsletter of the year. I would like to pay tribute to our staff teams.

I'm sure you will have heard the issues we have had in aged care with staff shortages in particular over the past year or so. This, combined with resident and staff illness from COVID-19 and other causes, has made it an incredibly challenging year.

We are very fortunate to have such great and loyal teams that have helped us to navigate through these challenges and continue to provide such loving care to residents.

Thank you all for your patience with COVID-19 closures and restrictions. We know it has been difficult with COVID-19 cases and our homes being closed at times while we have managed those cases.

It is not easy balancing the need to reduce transmission of COVID-19 with the need for you to see your loved one and their need to see you. We really appreciate you respecting our decisions around this and helping to keep our home as safe as possible.

All of these challenges make celebrating this time of year even more special and important.

I wish each and every one of you a very happy Christmas.