



Millvale House  
M I R A M A R

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# Family Newsletter

## Warm greetings from Vulori

What a summer we have had! We hope you have all enjoyed spending time with your whanau over the Christmas break and are feeling recharged and energised for this year.

We would especially like to extend our warm welcome to our new families. We look forward to getting to know you over the coming months.

Christmas was celebrated with great joy and festivity. We organised a special Christmas gathering here at Millvale House which was enjoyed by many of our staff and families alike. We would like to thank all our families who came to celebrate with us at our Christmas Family Gathering, and also to those who came and spent their Christmas Day with us.

We would like to thank the Fijian Sunday School Association Wellington for sharing their time and talent singing Christmas carols along with our residents. This group of young children and a few adults joyfully sang well known carols which were enjoyed by all. The group also brought small beautifully wrapped gifts for our residents.

A few changes, in terms of staff, at Millvale House have occurred. Last year we saw a few staff complete their Registered Nurse Training and they are now working as Registered Nurses in different hospitals in Wellington. We are very proud of them, and were sorry to see



them go.

Being a small team here at Millvale Miramar we strive each day to provide the homely- based love and care to all our residents. This is one of the core values we take pride in.

A regular part of everyday life here at Millvale House are the different activities that are organized for our residents by our trained Diversional Therapist. If you would like to add anything more to our activities list please feel free to talk to our Diversional Therapist or to any one of our staff. All suggestions are welcome.

Our gardens have been looking stunning over the summer, filled with vibrant colour. Gardening is one of the most popular activities amongst our residents, and they are doing a great job taking care of nature's amazing gift to us.

Please remember that we warmly encourage you to pop in and share any ideas or concerns with us at any time.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please ensure that all items of value, especially hearing aids, dentures, glasses and jewellery, are fully insured. Unfortunately we do not take responsibility for loss or damage which may occur.

We advise against the purchase of delicate or woollen items which may be damaged during the laundry process.



## Representational Child Therapy



A person with dementia interacting with their new representational child is intensely moving

At times you may see residents with dolls or soft toys. The use of these 'representational children' is a recognised form of therapy for certain carefully selected residents.

Representational Child Therapy was first researched in 1985 at Queen Elizabeth Psychiatric Hospital in Toronto by Isabel Milton and Judith McPhail. In 1983 Representational Child Therapy was established by Judy Cooper in the Dementia Unit of Parklands Hospital, Christchurch, with the dignity and respect of clients being paramount.

In some of our rest homes/hospitals the therapy is led by the diversional therapy team, with the support of the diversional therapy team leader, registered nurses and caregiving teams. All staff have a full understanding of and commitment to the therapy, and family members are consulted and give their consent prior to the therapy being made available to a resident.

The introduction of this recognised therapy for certain residents means that at times you may see residents with dolls or soft toys. The use of

these 'representational children' has significant potential benefits to the resident concerned. These benefits may include:

- A minimisation of distress, improvement in social interactions and raised self-esteem
- Isolated residents becoming involved in other activities and therapies
- Uncommunicative residents communicating more readily
- Reduction of repetitive speech and behaviours of concern
- Medication being reduced
- Restlessness at night decreased
- Mobility encouraged
- Communication becoming easier for relatives, who visit more often as a result.

If you have any questions or concerns relating to Representational Child Therapy, or feel your loved one might benefit from this, please speak to our Diversional Therapy or Registered Nurse team.



Residents and visitors love the splash of vibrant colour provided by our snapdragons

## A hand picked team

Occasionally family members and visitors express surprise at the age and multicultural makeup of our staff team.

Each member of our team has been hand-picked with great care. Many are registered nurses in their own country, with the courage and initiative to start a new life far from home and family. Every staff member is chosen because they have what we call 'knack' in working with people

with dementia. They know how to love and care for someone as if that person is their very best friend, and they are passionate about working in this way. Our staff are loving, capable and experienced. We are enormously proud to have such committed and professional people working with us. Their cultural diversity, energy and dedication enriches us all.

## A message from Andrew Sheard

I write to you today as I wrestle with the events that happened in Christchurch recently. My thoughts are with those that have been affected so personally. I feel very sad and sometimes I am finding it a bit hard to go to sleep at night.

I have four children and I need to stay full of hope. We are going on bike rides and walks, swimming and reading stories at bedtime. We are noticing and talking about the wind in our hair, the leaves that are changing colour, the smiles on people's faces, the warmth of cuddles, the special words that are whispered at bedtimes. There is so much love and beauty in the world. We are focusing on all these wonderful things.

As carers for people who are needing a little bit of extra help in their lives, this seemed like the time to go back to our Vision and Values once again. We try hard to ensure they are embedded into the way we do things. Our vision and values say we work towards:

*Accepting all people with kindness and love*

*Providing peace, comfort and joy  
Establishing trusting relationships based on respect and acceptance  
Promoting inclusion and the rights and values of each person  
Celebrating unity in diversity*

We don't always achieve this, but by endeavouring to uphold these values we have the potential to enrich each person, the community and the world.

We are immensely privileged to provide care for people and to provide employment for people from different countries, cultures, religions and sexual orientations.

We are asking our teams to talk with us if there are any instances of prejudice; anything that just feels uncomfortable.

We ask you, our residents, family and friends to come to us, also, if we could do better in this regard. This is important to us.

I speak directly to each and every one of you: You are valued. You are loved. You are supported.



Residents enjoy taking care of our raised gardens

## The benefits of hip protectors

Hip protectors are a product designed to reduce the risk of serious hip injury as a result of a fall. They work by absorbing the impact as well as diverting impact away from the hip joint into the surrounding soft tissue. While there is no guarantee that wearing hip protectors will protect the wearer against sustaining a severe injury, research has shown that they can reduce the risk of sustaining a hip fracture by as much as 84%.

This is good news for our residents who, because of their age and dementia diagnosis, are at a higher risk of falling. For this reason families are usually asked whether they would like to purchase Hip Saver hip protectors for their loved one. We encourage you to consider the benefits of providing hip protectors for your loved one as a means to reduce their risk of serious injury.



The Fijian Sunday School Association came and entertained us with Christmas Carols

**Millvale House Miramar has a Facebook page!**

We warmly welcome visits, 'likes', questions and ideas from the families and friends of our residents.

Find us by Googling: *Millvale House Miramar Facebook*



## Concerns and complaints: When things don't go according to plan

As we strive each day to provide the very best possible care to our residents, it can sometimes be hard to identify where changes are required to improve upon the service that we provide.

We would like to say a special thank you to each and every one of you for providing us with feedback, either positive or negative. We really appreciate your honesty and the time it takes to let us know when things have not gone quite the way you would wish. As part of our ongoing quality improvement programme, your concerns and complaints provide the opportunity for us to pass on this feedback to our staff and take corrective action when needed.

Please remember that our door is always open. You are welcome to pop in for a cup of tea and a chat.

Suggestions to improve our service are always welcome, either verbally or in writing. If you wish to make a complaint about something you are unhappy with, a Complaint Form should be used. The completed form can be given to any staff member, or put in our suggestions/complaints box.

Please ensure that any verbal complaint is made directly to either Vulori or Sharon. If they are not available then the complaint should be made in writing on a complaint form to ensure that it goes through the correct investigation and resolution process.

Advocacy Services (0800 555 050) is available to assist you, if required.

We always welcome your ideas and concerns, and your loved one will never be disadvantaged by anything you may share with us.



We love celebrating Christmas here in our home

## The importance of flu vaccination

As summer draws to an end we ask you to begin thinking about the annual influenza vaccination which is offered free of charge to all residents.

We strongly advise EPOAs to take advantage of this to protect their loved one from the serious effects of the dangerous strains of influenza which are prevalent every winter.

There is a very clear correlation between those residents who struggle with persistent ill health over winter, and those who did not have the flu vaccine.

Please choose to vaccinate this winter, and help your loved one stay well!

**Second Point of Contact:** Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, there may be a need for a second point of contact to discuss an issue with. Vicky Jones, our Operations Management Leader, is available Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. to discuss any issues of concern. (03) 347 7724 x 2 or [vicky@dementiacarenz.co.nz](mailto:vicky@dementiacarenz.co.nz)

**Admissions and Funding Navigator:** Deidre Hickey, our Admissions and Funding Navigator, is available to help you through the unfamiliar and sometimes confusing admission and subsidy application process. Deidre can be contacted at [deidre@dementiacarenz.co.nz](mailto:deidre@dementiacarenz.co.nz).