



Admatha
CHRISTCHURCH

December 2019

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Our Home

A message from Maira and Debra

Here we are almost at Christmas again! The year has flown by with a very mild winter followed by a sensational spring so far. A welcome taste of what summer may have in store for us we hope.

Maira has returned from maternity leave and is very happy to be back. She is really enjoying catching up with the long-term residents and their families and getting to know the new residents and their families also. Mary did a fantastic job as Acting Clinical Manager whilst Maira was away and we thank her for the energy and commitment she brought to the role.

We would like to remind you that you are always very welcome to communicate any needs you and your family may have to us. Our Family Support group is held on the second Wednesday of every month is a great place to get support for families to get together and share the journey that they are on with a loved one in dementia care. Nicky is the facilitator from Workplace Support, and families have found this group very helpful especially in some of the more difficult times. Of course this is a confidential meeting for families.

Some of our residents recently enjoyed an outing to Hadstock farm to pick daffodils, and with the warmer weather we have been able to enjoy more outdoor activities with our residents. Gardening is very popular and seeing the vegies they have planted brings a lot of satisfaction. We encourage you to wander down to the new area next to the creek with a platform for feeding the ducks. We have a



wheelchair for those that may not be so mobile.

Our residents and their families are enjoying the new play area at the Rest Home for visiting families. A few families from the Lodge are bringing their children down to the Home to play as well, and we encourage everyone to enjoy special times watching the grandchildren play as all grandparents love to do.

We will be having our Christmas Family Gatherings in the next few weeks and look forward to seeing you there if you are able. Christmas day is a day that family is welcome to come and share with your loved one (although we are not able to provide Christmas lunch for visitors unfortunately), or you may wish to take your loved one home for a family gathering. Please let the RN know in advance if you would like to do that. Have a happy, safe and relaxing holiday season. We look forward to seeing you all over this time and the months to come.

You are very warmly invited to join us for our

Christmas Gathering

Home: Awa/Tai – Tuesday 10th December at 2.30pm

Lodge: Amour/Mon Ami – Wednesday 11th December at 2.30pm

Education update from Simon Hamley

Every month I have the pleasure of travelling from Nelson to Christchurch to visit the staff and residents at Admatha.

It is always a delight to visit Admatha, the staff and residents are always so friendly and welcoming. This year I have helped to provide a wide range of training for staff, including The Best Friends Approach to Dementia Care and sessions on De-Escalation skills. These sessions highlight the

compassion and caring nature of the staff at Admatha, which is always evident in care they provide. Caring for someone with dementia is not always the easiest thing to do, but its great to hear staff tell their stories of special moments they have experienced. It was great to see the changes that took place in the gardens and surroundings at Admatha this year too. I am looking forward to visiting regularly again in 2020.



On rainy days residents enjoy playing games together

Summary of 2019 EPOA Survey Results

Every year we send out a survey to the Enduring Powers of Attorney for our residents requesting feedback on the service we provide. This is an important and valuable process for us, and enables us to identify areas in which the service we provide to your loved ones may be improved.

We would like to thank those who were able to complete and return their surveys. This is much appreciated.

For the first time this year we send surveys out via email where possible, offering the option on completing the surveys online. We include the comparative response rate for your interest. Using Facebook to promote and remind EPOAs to return the survey was useful and boosted the return rate.

Please let us know if you would prefer to receive the survey electronically in future.

Specific feedback received included the following:

- 89% had not used Family support service
- 55% don't use Facebook
- 44% said they enjoyed the Facebook page

- 100% offered Hospitality when visited

Areas which included a rating of 3 out of 5 or less were Activities, Laundry services, Cleaning, Maintenance and Food.

Comments of concern generally fell within the areas above, with most concern expressed regarding the general cleanliness of bedrooms, bathrooms and communal areas. We will renew our focus on this following the survey, and are confident you will notice a return to our previous high standard following staff re-training.

Perceived pressure on the staff team during busy times was also mentioned. We assure you that our staff to resident ratios exceeds Ministry of Health guidelines due to our Small Homes layout. Unfortunately at some times of day, and as staff prioritise unforeseen need for resident hygiene care, staff will be busier than usual.

We thank you for the positive comments and compliments received about our wonderful staff.



Our annual trip to pick daffodils at Hadstock Farm is one of the highlights of the year

Visiting a person with dementia

As the Christmas season approaches, we remind you that although visiting a person with dementia can sometimes be a difficult experience, it doesn't have to be so hard. These strategies may help to ensure the best outcomes for your visit.

1. Be aware of common characteristics of the dementia type your loved one has

Being educated may help to relieve any feelings of anxiety that may exist for you.

Be prepared to 'go along' with stories positively, rather than arguing with the person if their story doesn't seem logical or relevant.

Remember that the person may be at another time and place in their mind, and confused about who you are. As hard as this can be to accept, remember that their 'happiness in the moment' is what is important. Keep in mind that their unusual or 'out of character' comments or actions are a symptom of their dementia.

2. Be self aware

What we are feeling and thinking is often more apparent to the person with dementia than any words we may use. Be in a positive frame of mind when visiting, and be prepared to laugh together!

3. Go at the person's pace

People with dementia often need more time to respond. Use slow and gentle motions and make sure you have the person's attention. Sit at eye level with the person, using good eye contact.

4. Communicate with staff

Try calling before your visit. This is a good way to gauge how the person is doing, what time they are most alert and to check they haven't gone out with staff.

5. Arm yourself with a 'visiting kit' of ideas and activities

6. Reminiscing is one of the most valuable and meaningful activities for a person with dementia, as often their long term memory remains intact. Bringing the family photographs can trigger memory, which in turn empowers and validates the individual.

7. Learn to be comfortable with silence and changes of mood

Dementia can cause abrupt changes of mood and difficulty in communicating. Allow time, and be patient.

8. Develop an 'end-of-visit routine'

Try to leave at meal times as the person is naturally interested in another activity. Ask a staff member or carer for help. They will be able to divert the person gently when you leave.

9. 'Look after you'

Ensure that you have support to help you process your feelings about the changes you are experiencing, and to arm you with knowledge about what to expect.

Join a dementia awareness group, or contact your local Alzheimer's organisation.



We are so privileged to see the friendships and special moments our residents share



We love when our homes are filled with the delicious scent of our residents' baking

Happy Christmas from Andrew Sheard

Christmas is a busy time for me, but also manages to be a time of reflection. As I share my time between my work and home 'families', I often find myself pausing and smiling as I consider the special magic of this time, highlighted by the joy and excitement I see reflected on the faces of those around me.

There is a special energy at Christmas time, and young and old look forward to its arrival. We have to remind our staff that October is really too soon to begin the traditional Christmas craft activities with our residents, and that the Christmas tree shouldn't be up and decorated until December is at least partly underway!

There is no doubt that Christmas means different things to different people, and that this changes as we journey through our lives. My littlest daughter is still caught up in the wonder and excitement without fully understanding why. To the older children, the magic of Santa is as much a reality as the deeper mysteries and true meaning of the day. As for my

eldest, there is a special pride in being old and wise enough to join the grownups in maintaining the belief in Santa and his reindeer for the little ones.

All of these 'evolutionary life stages' of Christmas time – as well as others yet to come – are contained within the life stories of our residents, and in the many past Christmases they have experienced over the years. There is a special light in their eyes as the first baubles go up on the tree, and as they accept their gift for an often very hot and uncomfortable Santa Claus on Christmas morning. Often we do not know what colourful and fragile fragments of Christmases past are surfacing for them, or where their particular joy in the season lies.

One thing is certain: for residents, staff and families alike, though detailed memories may no longer be accessible, the magic of Christmas will never be lost.

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



Looking out at the rows of Tulips at Hadstock Farm

Naming gifts

Please remember that all new items need to be clearly marked with the owner's name before they arrive.

This is especially important at Christmas time, when many lovingly chosen new items are given as gifts by family members.

We discourage expensive woollen items, which are easily damaged in the wash. Please select easy care clothing wherever possible.

Outing reminder

If you intend to take your loved one home for the day or afternoon over the Christmas period please discuss this with a Registered Nurse so that medication and comfort requirements can be arranged.

For safety reasons outings of this nature first need to be discussed and approved by the EPOA.



We had a wonderful celebration for Bea Henzel's 104th birthday

If you would like to receive our newsletter via email, please email your name and email address to amyd@dementiacarenz.co.nz.

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