



Millvale House  
M I R A M A R

December 2019

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# Our Home

## Warm greetings from Richard & Nannette

Spring is most definitely in the air in Wellington and Millvale House is opening the doors wide and letting the sun shine in!

We have had a wonderful couple of months here in the home with much activity, entertainment and a very happy buzz about the place.

It has been a great pleasure having Richard Thuruthen, our new Clinical Manager lead the team. Richard has been working closely with all staff members and his knowledge and experience has had a very positive impact on the team. We were also pleased to appoint Amrinder (Amy) into our RN team and Molly and Manpreet into our caregiving team.

In August we underwent our Certification Audit. The auditors spent two or so days on site and spoke with most staff, and some residents and family members. We were thrilled with the outcome of the report and delighted to let you know that we have received the maximum 4 years' certification. Special mention was made of our incredible caregivers and diversional therapy team, the level of care and planning and the genuine love and care they saw towards our residents. We want to thank everyone who prepared for and participated in the audit.

We have also had the pleasure of celebrating our annual Cultural Day, Labour Day and most recently a beautiful afternoon tea for our very special volunteers, who come into our home and provide entertainment, activities and



comfort to our residents.

Our team strives to continue to provide an environment that reflects the vision and values that we stand for as an organisation. With full occupancy, we have extra staff on the floor and lots of people visiting and working with us to provide the very best care for our residents. On a weekly basis we see our doctors team and physiotherapist, and every month we see our regular dietician, podiatrist and our lovely new hairdresser Sue, who started with us in September.

As we now look toward Christmas and the New Year, we reflect on a busy and productive year in the home. We are proud of our work and what we have achieved this year and feel privileged to support and care for all of our residents and families.

We look forward to our family celebration in December and continuing to provide a warm, loving and friendly environment heading into 2020.

Aroha nui to all and a very merry Christmas.



*You are very warmly invited to join us for our  
Christmas Gathering*

*Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December from 2.00pm – 3.00pm*

## Education update from Simon Hamley

Every month I have the pleasure of making the short trip from Nelson to Wellington to visit the staff and residents at Millvale House Miramar.

They are always so friendly, welcoming and hospitable. In this past year I have helped to provide a wide range of training for staff, including The Best Friends Approach to Dementias Care, which is a course where we develop our empathy skills, and also training in De-escalation, to help staff respond effectively to a resident who is becoming anxious and unsettled.



We are lucky to have a variety of musical performers come to entertain our residents

Caring for residents with dementia is not always easy, though when I meet with staff during these sessions, their compassion and caring nature shines through, and I enjoy listening to them talk about special moments they have experienced with residents.

I am looking forward to visiting Millvale House Miramar regularly again in 2020.

## 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.

Miramar had 7 respondents

- 100% had not used the Family support service
- 66% do not use Facebook
- 16% said they did enjoy the Facebook page

- 100% said they were offered hospitality when they visited

The only area which had a rating of 3 out of 5 or less was maintenance.

Other comments related to activities, dustiness in some areas of the home, occasional smells in the home, and maintenance. One medical issue was raised and we encourage any EOA with medical concerns to contact us personally as soon as these arise, so that we can personally discuss these important and sensitive matters with you and ensure they are resolved to your complete satisfaction.

Quality Improvements have been raised in respect of negative comments received.

We welcome further feedback in respect of these or any other concerns you may have, now or at any stage in the future.

We thank you for the positive comments and compliments received, especially in regard to the friendliness of the staff and warm welcome extended when visiting.



Sitting down to do some baking together

## Visiting a person with dementia

As the Christmas season approaches, we would like to 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 in the moment

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 disagreeing 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 part of their dementia experience.

### 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 fond memories 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 for help if needed. They will be able to divert the person gently when you leave.

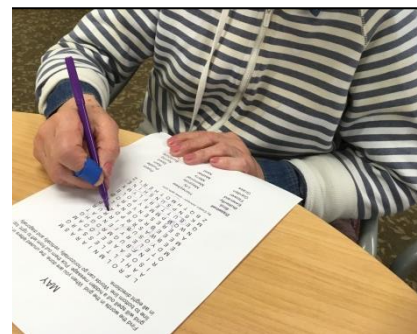
### 9. 'Look after you'

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 celebrated our lovely volunteers with a special afternoon tea



Enjoying the challenge of a word search

## 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 from 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.

## 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 are delighted to welcome Richard Thuruthen to the role of Clinical Manager



Pet therapy is a highlight with our residents

**If you would like to receive our newsletter via email, please email your name and email address to [amyd@dementiacarenz.co.nz](mailto: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](mailto:vicky@dementiacarenz.co.nz)