



Millvale House
LEVIN

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Our Home

A message from Maria and Katherine

It is hard to believe that we are already well into the New Year and that summer is almost over. The past year has been a busy and happy one for us here at Millvale House Levin and we are all excited to see what's in store for us during 2020.

We had a delightful Christmas gathering with our residents and their families and friends. As usual this very special celebration provided an opportunity to get to know one another better, along with good food, music, conversation, reminiscence and laughter. Our cook prepared a delicious array of pies and pastries for afternoon tea. It was indeed an occasion full of smiles.

As we ended 2019, there were notable changes to our team of Registered Nurses. Bernie and Anu moved on to a different path in their nursing careers. In their place we have welcomed two lovely new nurses, Honey and Anjana, who are settling happily into our staff family. Moreover, Katherine Gomez, the Clinical Manager at nearby Millvale House Waikanae, has committed to helping oversee our facility whilst we wait for just the right person to lead our team on a permanent basis. During this period our clinical team has the additional support of Arah Cartagena, our National Clinical Manager, and also Megan Sendall, our Clinical Advisor. Both of these highly experienced senior members of the upper management team bring a high level of skill and experience to the mentoring and support of our permanent registered nursing team.

Our building has been well maintained the past year, with the painter Tom paying a visit recently to give the outside decks a good scrub and spruce-up for the enjoyment of our residents and their families. Our gardens remain colourful as plants and flowers are still in full bloom.



Many of our residents enjoy the activities included in our daily programme, such as ball games, listening to music, church services and movie watching, as well as enjoying visits from family members and especially visiting children and animals.

Many residents particularly love spending time out in the garden on these glorious summer days. Often those with advanced dementia most appreciate quiet times with familiar friends, while the routine activities of daily living such as mealtimes and personal care provided by their carers and the registered nursing team provide many opportunities for interaction and closeness.

We would like to express our appreciation for the trust you place in us, and for the opportunity to provide loving care to your family member. We would also like to express our thanks to our wonderful staff team who work so hard in providing the best care possible for our residents.

May this year be safe, happy and full of love for all of us.

Dealing with the heat of summer

As we continue through the warmer months some families express concern regarding the comfort and welfare of our residents on very hot days.

An article published in the NZACA's Insight magazine in August 2018 acknowledged that indoor temperatures in aged care homes could have a dramatic impact on the wellbeing of residents, particularly those with dementia, according to research out of Australia.

The World Health Organisation suggests that older people should not be exposed to temperatures lower than 20 degrees, while the International Organisation for Standardisation recommends maximum temperatures not exceed 26 degrees.

The study noted that it was interesting that residents felt comfortable over a wider range of temperatures than staff members.

It has been suggested that we consider installing air conditioning in our rest homes for use in the warmer months. This has in fact been done at some of our rest homes, but is not an unqualified success and has itself led to complaints. People experience temperatures differently, and older people in particular tend to feel extremes of cold more than those of heat. Temperatures which active younger people find distressingly hot are not experienced as such by everyone, especially those who are not mobile.

We have complaints of 'drafts' from residents who do not enjoy the sensation of cool air indoors. Everyone has different preferences. People of our residents' generation are not usually used to air conditioning, as this was not common in family homes of their era. They are accustomed to being hot in summer and cool in winter. It is generally not harmful for them to experience seasonality in this way, and may even provide opportunities for conversation and reminiscence.

Our care staff, under the guidance of our Registered Nursing team, are aware of the effects of hot weather on the elderly and of the importance of ensuring that this is appropriately managed. Measures for doing so include the following:

- Take residents out into the garden area and let them enjoy the shade under the trees
- Ensure residents are wearing loose, light clothing
- Keep doors and windows open, especially door to the outside garden area
- Keep fluid rounds regular, and encourage residents to drink often
- Keep fans on and air circulating as much as possible

Rest assured that we will do all we can to keep our residents happy and comfortable during the summer months.



Vegus visits us fortnightly through the Canine Friends volunteer service

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!



Residents enjoy the focus, creativity and sense of achievement a craft activity brings

Our amazing staff team

Reflecting on the blank page before me I see faces pass across it like a slideshow: the faces of our staff.

Real faces of real people I work alongside, chat with, and pass by each day.

Some of them are so young it astonishes me. Some are older.

Some are Kiwis, some from other countries close by, and some from far across the world.

Every single one of the faces I see is smiling.

One of the things that brings me most pleasure in my role is receiving positive feedback from residents and family members about our staff. At least once a week a letter, a card or a returned survey is received by our admin team praising them. "Do you know how wonderful your staff team is?" I am often asked. In fact no-one knows it better than Jim and I do. Why? Because we are around and about a lot, and our job is to notice things.

It's the job of the facility manager to be the boss, the 'face' of the rest home, the contact person for family members, and to know each and every resident individually. It's their job to lead the staff team, to recognise their achievements, to mentor, coach and guide them. It's

Andrew Sheard

their job to ask them to do things, and to thank them when they do.

A long time ago I was the Operations Manager of not one but two facilities, and I miss the close contact with staff that brought.

Most of all, I miss it being my job to say "Thank you." Thank you for taking the time to explain that this is a lemon soufflé dessert and will taste delicious. Thank you for stopping work for a minute or two to join a game of balloon catch. Thank you for pausing to sit down and listen – really listen. Thank you for sharing a joke and laughing together. Thank you for keeping our home bright and shining. Thank you for singing when you work. Thank you for bringing your own home, your culture and your family to work with you, invisible but always present. Thank you for your warmth, your care, and your generosity in sharing your time, energy and love.

Our staff are awesome and I am privileged to work alongside them.

Thank you for letting us know that you appreciate them too.



Some of the delicious food prepared by our cooks for the Christmas family gathering

An invitation to our Facebook page: "Millvale Levin"

Have you visited our Facebook page yet? If not, we warmly invite you to pay a visit and 'like' the page by clicking the button below the bannerhead. Any future posts will then come straight to your newsfeed.

In response to family suggestions we have a strong focus on using the Facebook page to provide fresh, topical stories and photos about life in our home. Stories include outings, cooking and baking, gardening,

special occasions, staff changes and other items of interest.

With permission, we use photos of residents and family members to honour them and the energy and love they bring to our home.

We love receiving comments on the posts to keep the page fun and interactive.

It's your forum, so please come on board and join us!



Concerns and complaints: your gift to us

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. Your concerns and complaints provides the opportunity for us to pass on this feedback to all our staff and take corrective action when needed, as part of our ongoing quality improvement programme.

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

Caring for possessions

Occasionally we have incidents of treasured jewellery, especially rings, going missing. We would like to remind you of the importance of taking residents' rings away home with you.

It is important to stress that we cannot be responsible for any loss of property, and that this is very likely to occur, especially in an environment where people with dementia are cared for.

If a resident has a strong sentimental attachment to a particular ring, we suggest that you consider substituting an inexpensive copy for the original,

Please ensure that any complaint is made directly to either Maria or Katherine. If they are not available then the complaint can be made in writing on a complaint form to ensure that it goes through the correct investigation and resolution process. Complaints forms are readily available in the entrance foyer. If you have trouble finding one, please ask a member of staff.

Advocacy Services (0800 555 050) are 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.

which can then be kept safely by your family.

We require all clothing to be named upon admission, and any new items to be clearly marked before they arrive. Names or initials written with laundry pen onto existing clothing labels are not sufficient. Commercially printed labels either sewn on or ironed on will significantly reduce the likelihood of clothing being misplaced.

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



Taking part in traditional homely activities like decorating the Christmas tree bring us all happiness

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