



Millvale House
LEVIN

Our Home

A message from Nicki and Maria

Summer is here and this means one of the most wonderful times of the year is fast approaching – Christmas! The team of Millvale House Levin welcomes you to join us as we enjoy being out and about in the warm weather, wearing lighter clothes, hats and sunglasses and of course sunscreen to provide protection from the sun.

For most of this year, we have experienced living in the “new normal” where social distancing and hand hygiene has been embedded into every single task we do. We are very thankful for the staff who have been vigilant in ensuring that our residents and themselves remain safe during this time. We would also like to thank families for your patience and understanding amidst of all the changes we had to make to ensure the safety of everyone in our home.

We would like to warmly welcome our new Clinical Manager, Nicola Bridge. Nicki comes with extensive experience as a Clinical Manager in a large aged care facility with different levels of care. She brings passion, experience and expertise to her role of taking care of our beloved residents and making sure that the staff continue to provide the best quality of care. Let us all join in congratulating her and we wish her the best in her new role.

We would also like to extend our congratulations on the birth of a healthy baby to our Registered Nurse, Anu. Anu is currently enjoying her time off work taking care of her baby, and Ginny has happily returned to work with us while Anu is on leave.

Our home has been well maintained over the past winter months. The walls have a fresh coat of paint. The gardens are filled with beautiful blooms heralding



the start of spring. In addition, our cooks have been enjoying cooking up delicious food after our oven was replaced with a more efficient one. We have also welcomed a wonderful new cook, Fiona, to our staff family.

Our regular activities have been taking place within the limitations of social distancing rules. Our residents have been enjoying colouring, movie watching, ball games, church services and singing activities. We have celebrated Father’s Day as well as a special Cultural Diversity celebration over the past few months.

Now Christmas is coming and everyone is excited. Nothing can beat the presence of our family or friends celebrating this joyous season with us. It is always touching to see the spark in the eyes of the residents and their families as they get to spend this special time together. As we slowly approach December, our family of residents and staff participate in traditional activities related to Christmas. It is the time of hand-making different decorations, sing-alongs, putting up the Christmas tree, and making Christmas cards for our residents and also for their loved ones. We look forward to welcoming volunteers to come in our home to sing Christmas carols.

We are all looking forward to a special afternoon with you all at our upcoming Christmas Family Gathering on the 12th December 2020.

Merry Christmas to you all!

We do things differently, and it works.

November 2020

A Christmas message

Andrew Sheard, Managing Director

Sitting down to write my Christmas message I find myself, as always, reflecting on the year past and the year to come. As I do so now, approaching the end of 2020, I find myself lost for words. What is there to be said about the year we have just lived through? Where to begin? And with the world as we knew it rocked to its foundations, who is to say what the year ahead may bring?

Positioned at this fulcrum between past and future reminds me that right now, we are in the present. Whatever challenges and crises the past year has presented, this has always been the case. And in each present moment, we have been ok. We have survived. More than that, we have learned and grown stronger together.

No-one explains the concept of living in the present moment more clearly than Eckhart Tolle. "Nothing ever happened in the past; it happened in the Now. Nothing will ever happen in the future; it will happen in the Now." We don't have to worry about getting through a whole unknown scary future. All we have to do is live the present moment, right here, right now, as each moment unfolds.

How do you do that? Eckhart has advice on this too. "Accept — then act. Whatever the present moment contains, accept it as if you had chosen it. Always work with it, not against it."

In our rest homes as we have been navigating the unfamiliar and turbulent waters of COVID-19, this is what we have been doing. Working with the situation step by step, day by day. We have made some mistakes along the way, and we have learned from them and done things differently next time. With the understanding, support and patience of you, our residents and families, we have kept our facilities safe. We have been incredibly lucky, and we have also had great leadership and good guidance.

What of our staff teams – those gentle, loving, courageous people who left their own families and the safety of their bubbles time after time to come to work and care for our residents? I am in awe of each and every one of them.

As I write this, at a time when leave application are normally flooding in for the longed-for trips back home to celebrate Christmas with their families, my desk is bare. I can only imagine how hard this Christmas will be for many of our staff, so far away from home and loved ones.

My Christmas message to you all this year is one of gratitude, love, kindness and hope.

In this moment, right now, I wish you joy.



There is much fulfilment in taking part in familiar activities within our home

*We most warmly invite you to join us
for our*

Christmas Gathering

*from 2.00-3.00 pm on
Saturday 12 December 2020*



The simple task of making a bed brings pleasure and a sense of purpose

A year of learning

Simon Hamley, Education Coordinator

Looking back on 2020, it has clearly been an unusual year, full of unexpected changes to our lives – donning masks, scanning QR codes and listening to Ashley Bloomfield! Despite this, it was heartening to see all of our great staff at Millvale House cope so very well during the pandemic situation. Many of them may have been afraid and apprehensive, but I can see that through this experience they have become more resilient and have grown as people.

The varying NZ alert levels meant that for several months of the year I was unable to visit Millvale House to meet with staff and provide training. Like much of the country, we managed to connect 'virtually' using Skype or Zoom, and this gave me the opportunity to provide some education remotely. I much prefer to meet with a group with staff here at Millvale House, as it is great to hear their stories and discuss issues, so I was delighted to be able to travel around the country again more recently.

One of the best things I get to do when I visit Millvale House is a training course called 'The Best Friends Approach to Care'. This takes place over three different sessions and is a time when we can reflect on our experiences and develop our empathy skills and learn to 'walk in the shoes' of the residents we are caring for. We often don't notice the personal growth in ourselves, as it can happen slowly over time, but all of the staff I meet at Millvale House have developed skills and knowledge through their work. Some are at the beginning of that journey of growth and some are further on. There are always new things to learn and discover (even for someone of my age) and I am already looking forward to spending 2021 visiting Millvale House and spending time with the staff, meeting new staff and catching up with those I already know.

Christmas is my favourite time of year, as it is a time when we think of family and how much they mean to us. I hope you have a chance to connect with your family during this time and share some special moments, whether they are near or far away.

Magic Moments

I was walking with one of the residents holding her hand when suddenly she kissed me from behind and said "Thank you."

When one resident is restless, singing her "you are my sunshine" always calms her down. She always smiles when I tell her that she has beautiful eyes. And she does.

During a van outing, a resident always comments about the beautiful weather and says "good driver" every time to our facility driver.

So lovely to see our cook perched on the edge of a chair in the lounge chatting with the residents about what was for dinner (silverside with mustard sauce). One gentleman's eyes in particular lit up. "I love silverside!" he told us. "What time is it? I can't wait!"

While residents were waiting on their turn to vote, a staff member asking one resident if he had decided who to vote for. The resident shouted, "Yes. National! National all the way!" Another resident replied "Really?? That could be a wasted vote". The first resident said, "As long as I get my lolly, it isn't a wasted vote" – laughing at his joke but went on to whisper to staff, "I bet Labour is more of a wasted vote!"

It was a staff's member's birthday and I wished her a happy birthday in front of the residents and asked her how old she was. She replied that she was 21 years old, laughed and went on her way. As the door closed behind her, a resident asked me, "did she say she was 21? Plus GST?" and we both had a good laugh together.

Endings and beginnings

Arah Cartagena, National Clinical Manager

2020 has been a year like no other. COVID-19 greatly changed our lives. Around the world, people are battling the pandemic and the other challenges that come with it - grief, loneliness, uncertainty, and loss.

Usually special occasions are celebrated with happiness and good cheer: a joyful celebration of the year that has passed. However, this year, some of us may have ambiguous feelings and thoughts toward it. It may be hard to celebrate and continue festivities amidst the uncertain landscape of these times.

Special seasonal occasions mean many things to different people. Some people are eager to welcome Christmas because with everything going on, they need something to look forward to, and sticking to traditions will help them achieve a feeling of normalcy. Others are more than ready to welcome the New Year because it has a promise of a fresh start and better things to come. And some view seasonal occasions as a welcome period of respite where they can unwind, relax, and celebrate the exciting year that is about to end.

The last two months of 2020 could be unpredictable, and there could be surprises, both good and bad, ahead of us. Leaving 2020 might not close a chapter for us. It could be a continuation of what is already happening, as much as we may not want that to materialize.

All of these thoughts and feelings surrounding the Christmas season amidst the pandemic help me realize that we can hope for the best for our future, but we can only ever focus and act on what is happening today, in our present.

Every day, we go through our routines and do our best to take care of ourselves and the people around us. Perhaps this is the best way we can embody the Christmas spirit, by being mindful of others, by doing our part in keeping our surroundings safe, and by being kind and considerate to the people around us and offering help when we can. We live each day with hope and being open to the joy around us. As this year draws to a close, let us welcome the new year with hope for the future while living mindfully in the present.



Folding clean, fresh laundry together is soothing and companionable



Relaxing over a jigsaw puzzle