



# Our Home



## A message from Maira and Debra

Well here we are almost at the end of 2020! I think a lot of people will be very happy to see the end of this year given the tumultuous time it has been.

For us, a huge positive has been the opportunity to all work together in the best interests of your loved ones in our care. It was very hard for families not to be visiting their loved ones at times but it was all for the end outcome of keeping everyone safe and healthy, so thank you so much for the sacrifices you made.

A lot has changed for everyone over the past few months. Some of you may have experienced significant change and hardship, and if so we wish you all the best going forward. Please remember we have our Family Support Group every second Wednesday of the month with Nicky, where a lot of families find great comfort, and challenges of any nature are discussed in a non-judgmental, confidential and supportive group setting.

We are looking forward to holding our traditional Christmas Gathering as usual this year. This is a lovely opportunity to celebrate with family and friends and reminisce about the Christmases that have been before. We welcome you to join us at 2.30 on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December at the Home and Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> at the Lodge.

With our usual outings limited due to restrictions, it has encouraged us to give renewed focus to activities within our facility. We have cooked up a storm in our small kitchenettes, with everyone sharing the fun of making muffins, pizzas, cheese toasties and many other delicious comfort foods. One of our residents

has her sewing machine here and memories and skills come flooding back when it's brought out. It's so lovely seeing others get involved and also remember when they were mending and making garments in days gone by. You can see the joy it brings in the faces of all involved.

Gardening is another favourite pastime, with huge thanks to Joyce our volunteer who comes in weekly to help our residents tend to the garden. We have potatoes, silverbeet, spinach, celery, strawberries and many lovely flowers. The lilies look very healthy and will hopefully be in bloom soon.

Last Christmas we were lucky to have Santa and Mrs Claus visit our residents which created much delight, as well as some lovely photo opportunities. Hopefully they won't be too busy for a visit this year as well.

Lastly we would like to thank you all for your patience with the many changes that have been necessary this year. We appreciate that you understand we are doing our best to keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy. While we continue on this unprecedented journey it is so incredibly important that we stick together and support each other to make sure we continue on our successful road.

We wish you all the very best for a happy Christmas and New Year and look forward to a less complicated 2021.

We do things differently, and it works.

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*We most warmly invite you to join us  
for our*  
**Christmas Gathering**  
*Home - Tuesday 15th December 2.30*  
*Lodge - Wednesday December 2.30*

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During lockdown Aggie's daughter brought in her old sewing machine to see if this was still an interest for her. After a lifetime of working on machines from the age of 12 in Holland, through to supervising for Lane Walker and Rudkin designs, it was a ride in the park on an old bike for Aggie. It was so moving seeing the excitement in her eyes as she set up her trusty machine, pulled out a piece of white fabric and improvised a beautiful new pillow case for her bed. The spare bobbins live in a cigar tin that belonged to her father. Reminiscence and engagement with the familiar is so very rewarding. We encourage family members to share with us special interests, hobbies and items that might bring a sense of joy and familiarity to their loved ones. Sometimes just talking about such things is enough to bring back positive memories and feelings and that special sparkle in the eyes!

## 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.

## 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.

# 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 Admatha 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 Admatha 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 Admatha, 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 Admatha 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 Admatha 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 Admatha 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.

## 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.



*Getting the spring vegies in the ground at Admatha, starting with the spuds!*



*Bringing the colour and scents of our flourishing spring garden in to brighten our home*