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In this issue:

- Greetings from Teesha and Jan
- Free online course on dementia
- Visiting our Website and Facebook page
- The benefits of hip protectors
- A hand-picked team
- A word from Alison Hume
- Concerns and complaints: your gift to us
- Caring for possessions

Family Newsletter

Warm greetings from Teesha and Jan

We extend our warmest greeting to you in this our first newsletter for 2014!

We are delighted to welcome everyone. This is the home of your loved ones and we love to see you as their family or special friend. We are looking forward to another exciting, fruitful year ahead, full of happy times, fun, laughter, warmth and closeness.

Our focus this year is to help families to be involved more in their loved ones' care. Our priority is for families to know how warmly we welcome you to Millvale Miramar, and how committed we are to share in your special knowledge and understanding of your loved one. Together we are a team with the same goal: to ensure that your loved one feels happy, valued, secure and loved.

We congratulate Jasprit Kaur on her appointment to the position of Home Manager of Kaibigan Home, in place of Jan Labagala who has transferred to a role at our new facility in Paraparaumu, Millvale Lodge Lindale.

We welcome Jana Rivera, our new trainee diversional therapist. Jana brings energy, humour, passion and creativity to her role. She is enjoying getting to know our residents and family members well, so that the individual interests and preferences of each resident can be reflected in our activities programme. Jana is currently studying towards becoming a fully qualified diversional therapist.

It has been a busy and enjoyable few months for residents, who have enjoyed taking part in a wide variety of activities including piano with Joanne every Saturday, van outings, visits from the SPCA, regular church services, indoor bowls and ball and balloon games, fruit tasting and hand and foot massage.



As always, homely activities play a very important place in our daily lives. These simple, familiar activities include baking twice a week, gardening and watering the plants, sock sorting, towel folding, and clearing the dishes and wiping the benches after meals.

It is wonderful to see the enjoyment residents gain from taking part in the daily activities of family life here in their home.

Feedback from our residents is that the most popular activity is baking, with massage following closely behind – we all love to feel pampered!

A residents' picnic in January has also been a highlight of our year so far.

Our popular and informative family programmes Orientation for Families and Sharing the Journey will be held this year and we look forward to meeting families who have not attended yet.

Dates are as follows:

Orientation for Families: 8, 15, 22 April 2014 (Tuesdays) 3.30-4.30 PM.

Sharing the Journey: 13, 20, 27 May 2014 (Tuesdays) 3.30-4.30 PM. In the Staff Room

We look forward to sharing many special times with you during the course of 2014.

Free online course on dementia



A busy activities table

The University of Tasmania's first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), Understanding Dementia, is an 11-week online course that builds upon the latest in international research on dementia. It's free and anyone can register by following this link: <http://www.utas.edu.au/wicking/wca/mooc/eoi>.

Have you ever wanted to go on a tour through the brain? See how everything works? The difference between Alzheimers and dementia? Well, the university of Tasmania offers a free on-line course on Understanding Dementia. The course content is easy to understand and is open to anybody and everybody from family members to care staff, RNs and managers.

You have the opportunity to plant YOUR thought trees in the Understanding Community Garden – this is where your ideas and thoughts are planted.

How would you answer ...

- My quality of life is enhanced by ...
- How would I like to be told a diagnosis of dementia? ...
- If I had dementia I might show my frustration by ...
- If I had dementia I would want the people caring for me to ...

The course is broken down into 3 sections:

- The Brain – how it works (and you go on an interactive tour!)
- Different stages of dementia and the behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of dementia
- Palliative care and therapies

Our staff who have completed the course highly recommend it. It has helped them understand our residents better, and has reignited their passion for the work they do.

Visiting our website and Facebook page

Our recent EPOA Survey revealed that while many families visit our website when they are first investigating care options, few people are aware of our Facebook page or visit it on a regular basis

We have made some exciting changes to our website recently, and warmly invite you to hop online at www.dementiacarenz.co.nz and explore! It has been restructured, updated and made much more user-friendly, now including video clips of staff and a 'live' link to our Facebook page.

The Facebook page can be accessed by clicking on the link at the top right

of the website. Our Facebook page is current, topical and updated on an almost daily basis. By 'liking' our page you will ensure that our postings will come directly through to your own Facebook home page for you to enjoy.

Our page has regular contributions from our team, ensuring that updates cover a variety of subjects including staff and facility news, activities, magic moments, and links to informative articles about dementia.

We would love you to leave us a message on our page, or comment on any posting you find of special interest!



The benefits of hip protectors

Hip protectors are a product designed to reduce the risk of serious hip injury as a result of a fall. They work by absorbing the impact as well as diverting impact away from the hip joint into the surrounding soft tissue. While there is no guarantee that wearing hip protectors will protect the wearer against sustaining a severe injury, research has shown that they can reduce the risk of sustaining a hip fracture by as much as 84%.

This is good news for our residents who, because of their age and dementia diagnosis, are at higher risk of falling. For this reason families are usually asked whether they would like to purchase Hip Saver hip protectors for their loved one. We encourage you to consider the benefits of providing hip protectors for your loved one as a means to reduce their risk of serious injury.



Elegant, colourful, tasty and fun: our garden picnic

A hand picked team

Occasionally family members and visitors express surprise at the age and multicultural makeup of our staff team.

Each member of our team has been hand-picked with great care. Many are registered nurses in their own country, with the courage and initiative to start a new life far from home and family. Every staff member is chosen because they have what we call 'knack' in working with people

with dementia. They know how to love and care for someone as if that person is their very best friend, and they are passionate about working in this way. Our staff are loving, capable and experienced. We are enormously proud to have such committed and professional people working with us. Their cultural diversity, energy and dedication enriches us all.

A word from Alison Hume

Howard Thurman once said: "Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

I regularly meet with members of our team talking about our vision and values and facilitating sessions on how to be with each person we care for as if each person is our best friend. At these sessions we share stories of rich moments we have seen residents have. We sit around the table and the staff I am with light up as they tell their stories.

We have a special book in the staff room that we use so that we can share these very special moments we

witness. When I look at this book I am blown away by the amazing things that just happen. At the end of each story the staff member who writes the story usually writes how they feel. The book is full of comments such as "it was an amazing moment for me", "seeing this made me cry", "Wow", "I was so touched when this happened", "we laughed together". This work that we do is very fulfilling and enriching for each one of us.

We are very fortunate to be doing such meaningful work. It is indeed a great privilege to be caring for the people who live here. We love what we do!



Two gentlemen enjoy a game of dominoes before tea

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.

Suggestions to improve our service should be made on a Quality Improvement Form. If you wish to make a complaint about something you are unhappy with, a Complaint Form should be used. The completed form can be given to any staff member, or put in our suggestions box.

Please ensure that any verbal complaint is made directly to either Jan or Teesha. If they are not available then the complaint should be made in writing on a complaint form to ensure that it goes through the correct investigation and resolution process.

Advocacy Services (0800 555 050) is 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.



Delicious finger food at our Christmas family gathering

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.

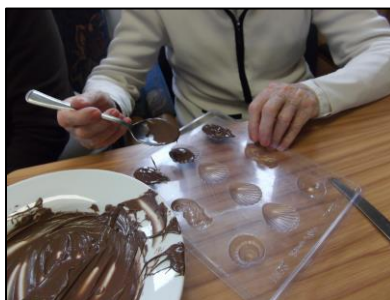
It is important to stress that we cannot be responsible for any loss of property, and that this is very likely to occur, especially in an environment where people with dementia are cared for.

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

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.



Chocolate making: a favourite activity

We promise we will give your loved one the very best of care.
 We promise we will appreciate, respect and love your special person.
 We will be honest, open and trustworthy.
 This is the work we have chosen to do.

– Alison Hume and Jim Haines, Directors