



Millvale House  
L E V I N

June 2014

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# Family Newsletter

## A message from Rhea and Joe

Greetings to you all from Millvale House Levin!

It has now been almost 5 months since Joe joined us here, and we are well settled into our new routines. As always it has been a busy and happy few months – things never seem to stay the same for long, and it is exciting to feel that we are always growing in a positive direction!

We have had a few staff changes recently, and it is exciting to welcome new faces and fresh energy to our staff team.

Our sensory garden is currently undergoing more progress. Though it has taken a while to come into shape, a new door and window have just been put in place for easy access to the new garden. Next in line will be to shift the security door beyond the newly-installed door so residents can wander into the garden and go for a walk. This will mean that Aroha Nui will have a circular walking path in the garden for a continuous stroll, which will be welcomed by those of our residents who like to keep active.

More building work is underway for the coming months which will involve slight changes to Aroha Nui with the aim of



lightening the lounge and creating a sense of more space.

Recently we have replaced our old commode chairs with new ones. We have also purchased a number of brand new beds.

Of course we can't forget to mention our latest addition to the Millvale House Levin family. We have two lovely little budgies who have come to make their home with us. They recently moved into their new spacious flight cage and are filling the home with their happy chatter on a daily basis. The cage enables them to be transported between homes for our residents to enjoy. The birds will soon be residing in our sensory garden.



*You are warmly invited to join us for our*

**Winter Gathering**

*Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2.30-3.30 p.m.*

## Enjoying special times together

As always we strive to meet peoples' needs at a very individual and meaningful level here in Levin.

The run up to Easter saw us having craft sessions where we made pretty window decorations that captured the sunlight. Some residents helped us to make lovely little baskets in which to present the eggs at Easter time.

St Patrick's Day involved plenty of Irish music, a visit from our very own leprechaun, books with beautiful photography from Ireland and poetry from Irish poets.

Lots of poppies were made for Anzac Day and our diversional therapist Brigid brought in an army uniform and helmet which was a great source of interest and conversation.

We recently had a very special occasion when one of our residents celebrated his 63<sup>rd</sup> Wedding

Anniversary with his lovely wife and daughters. The good china was brought out for the occasion and staff and family were very moved by the beautiful verse written by the gentleman for his wife on their special day.

Preparation for Mother's Day saw some of the gentlemen help to plant flowers in colourful pots for the women. The ladies were delighted to receive these and a little handmade book of poetry on the day, while also having a lovely afternoon tea.

Some of our ladies have started to knit little squares that we hope to sew together to make some lovely blankets when completed. Every day and every activity is an opportunity to learn something new about each other and the wonderful skills and knowledge we all have from living full and meaningful lives.

## Podiatry service strongly recommended

Caring for our residents' feet is more specialised than you may first think. The risks of infection and pain caused by incorrect technique and the importance of assessment by a professional are important issues to consider in relation to the feet of our residents.

For this reason our facilities have accessed specialised podiatry services to assist staff to care for residents' feet.

There are many benefits to making use of a specialist podiatry service. The following services are provided:

- General toenail care
- Treatment of painful or problem toes
- Removal of corns or calluses
- Overall assessment of foot health, especially with regard to circulation and nerve function

- Specialised care of "at risk" feet, e.g. diabetic care.

This specialised care is arranged for residents, and the account passed on to the resident (with the exception of diabetic foot care). Generally podiatrists see our residents every six weeks. We believe that this is well worth the extra fee, as many elderly people suffer from painful or problematic feet.

If you choose not to make use of this service, we cannot take responsibility for cutting residents' toenails. This will need to be organised by the family, and we will request that a disclaimer is signed and kept on the resident's file to that effect.

Please discuss this with the registered nurse if this is the case.



Our residents enjoyed participating in preparations for Mothers' Day



Mothers' Day: a special occasion when all our ladies feel valued and appreciated

## Being a friend

I am greatly privileged to facilitate some of our education sessions on the Best Friends Approach to Care – our flagship programme that underpins our vision and values. Every member of our team participates in the course soon after joining us.

We always begin session two by talking about our own best friends. Each member of the group is invited to share what their best friend offers them or what special quality he or she has. People share the things they most treasure about the special people in their lives, such as: she is always there for me ... he accepts me no matter what ... I can talk with her about anything ... he knows much about me and sometimes knows what I need without me having to ask ... she forgives my mistakes ... he makes me laugh.

We then go on to talk together about how we can be like a very best friend to our residents. To do this we are totally accepting of our residents, being there for them no matter what. It was Thomas Merton who said: "The beginning of love is the will to let those we love be perfectly themselves."

Lately I have found myself thinking about the importance of friends in my

life. I have a few thoughts to share with you.

The German root of the word friendship means "place of high safety". We feel very safe when with a wonderful friend. We feel warmth and love when with a friend. Friends soften our world and they help us to open the door to our souls.

To be a true friend to another, we must be exactly who we are. We need to attend to our own inner growth. When we do this, we bloom and there is much to share.

Have you ever had a friend say "You don't seem quite yourself today" or "You acted out of character today"? We human beings are constantly growing and changing, breaking patterns of how we used to be. As friends it is necessary to work at our love for each other so that we know each other more fully as the days go by.

I disappoint myself and others often but I keep on trying to make sure my presence is a gift of love.

Being a friend is a most wonderful thing.

*Alison Hume*



## Looking after winter woollies

Occasionally, no matter how much care is taken, a woollen jersey or cardigan slips through to the laundry and shrinks beyond recognition.

This is upsetting for all concerned, especially the family member who has hand-knitted or chosen the gift with love.

All care is taken in laundering clothes. However, woollen clothing may be

safer hand washed by family. When buying new woollen clothing please buy machine washable items.

We would prefer you supply non woollen clothing that is easily washed.



## Communicating with families



A home made stained glass window commemorates Anzac Day

Communication with one other is very important, especially when it involves residents in our care – your loved ones. We are often asked how our communication system works. There are two main reasons for a registered nurse (RN) contacting family. One is open disclosure after an incident has occurred, and the other is to impart information regarding a resident's change in condition.

We are committed to providing safe, quality health care to our residents. Sometimes, despite our best efforts, there will be times when a resident sustains an injury, is harmed, or an error occurs. In these instances, it is important to ensure that full and open disclosure to families occurs. The RN

will contact the resident's EPOA (Personal Health and Welfare) to inform them of the incident. It is then the EPOA's responsibility to inform other family members.

Multi-disciplinary team meetings with families occur one month after admission and every 6 months thereafter to fully inform you of your loved ones general condition and care. Again, an invitation to this meeting will be given to the resident's EPOA. The EPOA can extend the invitation to other family members if they wish.

In addition, you are always welcome to come to us with any concerns that may arise from day to day.

## EPOA Family Survey

Thank you for taking time to complete the EPOA surveys this year.

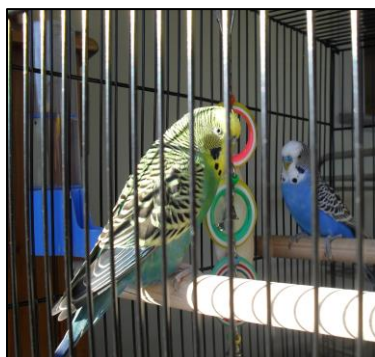
Disappointingly, only 25% of surveys were returned to us this year. With such a small number of returns it is hard to get an accurate picture of how we are doing in your eyes. However, 86% of respondents said that they would recommend this facility to a friend. 89% felt we had a friendly atmosphere and that the staff were approachable.

There were no areas in which we failed to meet expectations.

We would like to reassure you that we take all comments extremely seriously, and raise Quality Improvements where

appropriate. We would like to remind families if at any time they would like to make suggestions on how we can improve our service, our manager is always available, or if you prefer to write your suggestion down we have what we call 'Quality Improvement Forms' which we use to make changes to the way we do things.

Please remember that this survey is anonymous. If you have something you are really unhappy about, it is important that you come and discuss it with a manager so that we can address it.



Our residents are helping choose names for the two newest members of our Millvale 'family'.

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