



Millvale House
M I R A M A R

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Family Newsletter

Warm greetings from Tracy and Jan

Winter is definitely upon us and we hope you are all managing to keep warm and well during the cooler months. The mountain views at this time of year are inspiring with the numerous heavy falls of snow which remind me of skiing in my first year here in New Zealand.

However, winter brings increased health risks to our residents, and we would like to remind you that if you are unwell, it is best to delay your visit until you feel better. We strive to safeguard our residents from the coughs and colds that can be harder to shake off as you become older.

Our annual flu vaccinations have been completed, with all residents offered the opportunity to be immunised. Our staff team was also encouraged to take advantage of our free vaccination service, which is important in keeping our team healthy during the winter months.

We are looking forward with anticipation to the coming months with many exciting events planned, our winter menu in place, crisp clear days and cosy evenings tucked safely away from our Wellington wind.

We welcome Tracy Tionson to our team here at Millvale House Miramar as our new Clinical Manager. Tracy graduated



with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in the Philippines in 2008. Prior to coming to New Zealand, she had 3 years experience in Medical-Surgical nursing. She finished her Competency Assessment Programme bridging course at UCOL in October 2012 and joined Aberleigh Rest Home in Blenheim as a Registered Nurse. She brings a wealth of clinical experience and understanding of our philosophy of care to her new position with us. We wish her everything of the very best.

We warmly invite you to attend our Mid-Winter Family Gathering on 11 June 2014 at 2.30 PM with an entertainer and a delicious afternoon tea. This is a very special opportunity to spend time with your loved one in their home and to chat informally with staff and other family members.



You are warmly invited to join us for our

Winter Gathering

Wednesday 11th June 2.30-3.30 p.m.

Enjoying special times together



Residents enjoy a painting activity

At Millvale House Miramar, we continue to support our residents to participate in activities they enjoy doing such as matching card games, puzzles, art and craft and many more. These activities encourage interactions among our residents and our carers. They offer a positive and enjoyable opportunity for socialising, providing an opportunity to interact in an informal and relaxed atmosphere.

Special celebrations are also a great success and much enjoyed by residents and visitors. We had fun on Mothers' Day and Easter Sunday with many enjoying the Easter Egg hunt that was participated in by our residents with the help of the staff.

Our staff would like to share some special magic moments with you:

"We have a male resident who walks

around most of the day and only sits for a few minutes. Recently he was able to join not just once but four times in group activities. His happy face as he participated in the activity made my heart smile."

"I was giving a hand massage to a resident who rarely joins in this type of activity. Out of the blue she blurted out, "It feels good to have a hand massage, no one has ever done this for me before. Thank you kind lady for this."

"A male resident was sitting quietly in the foyer. I sat beside him and asked how he was. He replied, "I am great, the cupcake we baked was very yummy. Would you like to have a piece?"

These small things bring us all great joy.

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.



Every level of participation in a creative activity is valued

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



Simple, familiar tasks give an ongoing sense of value and purpose

Communication with one another 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 about giving full information 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 (Enduring Power of Attorney for 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

I thank you for taking time to complete the EPOA surveys this year. We are happy to report an increase in the number of surveys returned with 11 out of the 22 surveys being returned. This was pleasing as it provides us with an overview of how we are doing in your eyes.

82% of respondents said that they would recommend this facility to a friend. 98% felt we had a friendly atmosphere and that the staff were approachable.

On analysis of the results we found that we did not meet families' expectations in the following areas:

- EPOA Survey Question 13: Some respondents do not feel comfortable approaching a diversional therapist regarding activities their loved one is involved in.
- EPOA Survey Question 14: Some respondents were not entirely happy with the work carried out by the diversional therapy team for their loved one.
- EPOA Survey Question 22: Some

respondents thought their relative didn't feel safe at this facility.

- EPOA Survey Question 25: Some respondents felt the likes, dislikes, cultural preferences and special dietary needs of their relative needed to be taken more into account.

Four quality improvements have been raised as a result of this survey. We are now working to improve on these aspects of our service.

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.



A male resident takes pride in precisely matching the corners of a towel he is folding