



Leighton House
GISBORNE

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Family Newsletter

A message from Arrah and Teresa

Warmest Greetings from Arrah and Teresa!

Another year has started. We hope that everyone enjoyed their time with loved ones over the Festive Season.

We welcome Arrah back from her maternity leave. Arrah had a beautiful baby boy named Zac Mason. All residents & staff love the new addition to our Leighton House family. A big 'thank you' goes out to Prue Dequilla who was Acting Clinical Manager while Arrah was away. She did a fantastic job.

Thanks also go out to the many family members and friends who were able to attend the Family Christmas Gathering. What a wonderful time we spent together! A special mention must be made of the fabulous job the cooks did with the wide variety of yummy afternoon treats which both looked and tasted superb!

We ran two Christmas Hampers raffles over the Christmas period. One was a box of nibbles and treats, and the other was a doll kindly donated by Gay Parkes, who hand-knitted all the doll's clothing. Leighton House raised \$153.00, all of which was donated to St John's Ambulance in Gisborne. A big thank you to residents, families and staff for their support. The lucky winners were Valerie McAlister (resident) and Shali Ta Aho (family member).



We welcome Peter Goodwin as our new handyman, and new health care assistants Freda Gittens, Manarea Te Kani and Amanda Manuel. A big welcome to you all.

We have a number of un-named items in our laundry at present. If you or your family notice an item missing please see Teresa or one of our staff. Please make sure all personal items are clearly named.

We are now using Sean Shivnan pharmacy for all our pharmacy needs. Sean has kindly offered a 10% discount to Leighton House residents & staff for any over-the-counter items purchased at his pharmacy.

We look forward to spending many happy times with our residents and family members over the coming months.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please ensure that all items of value, especially hearing aids, dentures, glasses and jewellery, are fully insured.

We do not take responsibility for loss or damage which may occur.

We advise against the purchase of delicate or woollen items which may be damaged during the laundry process.



Our place in the world

Alison Hume

We are three months into the New Year. Many of us have been talking about the New Year and what we hope to achieve. Many of us have created goals for fitness – I have anyway! I have other goals too. It helps me to remember that each of us has a unique contribution to make to the world. Sometimes it is hard to discover what that is.

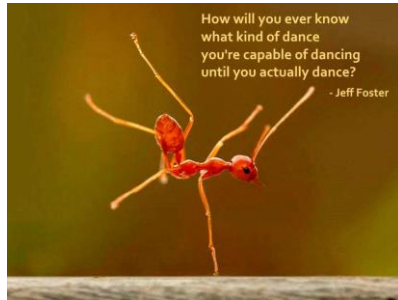
I very much like what John O’Donohue writes about this:

“Though we know one another’s names and recognise one another’s faces, we never know what destiny shapes each life. The script of individual destiny is secret; it is hidden behind and beneath the sequence of happenings that is continually unfolding for us. Each life is a mystery

that is never finally available to the mind’s light or questions. That we are here is a huge affirmation; somehow life needed us and wanted us to be. To sense and trust this primeval acceptance can open a vast spring of trust within the heart. It opens up our lives to become voyages of discovery, creativity, and compassion. No threshold need be a threat, but rather an invitation and a promise.”

Somehow life needed us. Wow what a statement. Life needs YOU. The question for us is how do we give our vitality to life? The how is each of our unique contribution. The very special music you make in the world.

So now we have welcomed in a new year. I hope the year is fresh, new and full of opportunities for you.



Weathering the Storm of Cyclone Pam

Since we were informed of the path that Cyclone Pam was going to take and that it would hit our beautiful little city of Gisborne I am sure I was not the only one whose thoughts were taken back to Cyclone Bola that hit Gisborne in 1988.

Preparation was the key to ensuring that Leighton House was ready for this event.

We swung into action for “worse case scenarios” and ensured that we would be well prepared for whatever lay ahead.

A detailed plan of action was put in place, guided by communication with Civil Defence and the DHB, as well as our own organisational policies and procedures and support from the Dementia Care NZ Management team.

All staff were made aware of our plan of action and emergency procedure and requested to be on full alert. Extra staff were allocated to shifts for the expected 24 hour duration of the

cyclone.

Thankfully as of 3pm on the 16/03/15, as I write this report, it has been an eventful but incident-free day.

A big ‘thank you’ goes to all our staff for staying calm and positive, working as normal with smiles in place and reassuring words for our residents, and making this day just like any other. The extra staff that came on to support their team mates and give a helping hand were also greatly appreciated.

- Teresa McGregor



Father Keane reads news of the approaching cyclone in the Herald



Our courtyard at Leighton House during the storm

The 'Invisible Miracle' of diversional therapy

When we think of Diversional Therapy, we may have visions of baking activities, outings, sing-alongs, craft and creativity. We imagine small groups of people sitting round a table, actively engaged in interaction with one another as well as with the facilitating person. And that's the way it often is for many of our residents.

However, when people are very unwell, nearing the end of life or have dementia, things are frequently quite different. The role of the Diversional Therapist is harder to define, as it can be far more difficult to engage people in group activities. The magic moments that make a day so special are harder to come by, and are more likely to occur on a one-to-one basis. It takes time, patience, concentration and a huge amount of empathy to establish a meaningful connection. Diversional Therapy staff become very skilled at modifying activities to meet individual needs every day, and often many times within a day.

That makes those magic moments, when they do come, even more special. For example hearing a resident repeat your name; the sound of a rusty chuckle; a brittle soprano singing the words of 'Jingle Bells'; unexpected applause from a member of the 'audience' on the other side of the room, whom you thought was fast asleep; the sharing of memories; being offered a biscuit still warm from the oven, because it is so delicious that the person wants to share it.

Jane Verity, an Australian Occupational Therapist working extensively in the area of dementia care, talks about Universal Emotional Needs. These are:

1. To feel needed and useful
2. To have the opportunity to care
3. To love and be loved
4. To have self-esteem boosted
5. To have the power to choose

The fulfillment of these needs is inherent in the planning for Activities Programmes for people who have dementia. Our Diversional Therapy staff receive regular education and coaching to assist them in applying these basic human needs within their activities. These become even more of a priority, and increasingly meaningful, in a setting with people with dementia, due to the frailty, compromised health and reduced cognitive capability of residents.

To a casual observer, perhaps busy themselves with personal cares or cleaning, it may seem that the Diversional Therapist is doing very little, or even nothing at all. However, every shared activity is precious and meaningful, even simply sitting, chatting with a resident while holding their hand, or looking out the window watching the birds at the bird-feeder. When working with someone who is very unwell, nearing the end of life or with advanced dementia, almost everything counts as an activity and is usually inspired to meet one or more of the above Universal Emotional Needs.

The small miracles our diversional therapy staff achieve are hard to come by, and the process is demanding, emotionally draining, exhausting, exciting, uplifting ... and, to the rest of us, at times almost invisible.



Our two Christmas Hampers.

Our diversional therapists helped residents make beautiful bookmarks as Christmas gifts



Santa visited Leighton House residents

We are on Facebook! Visit our website at

www.dementiacarenz.co.nz

to link to our Facebook page. 'Like' us and receive regular updates on our activities, news and views and links of interest!



Concerns and complaints: When things don't go according to plan

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 provide 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 / complaints box.

Please ensure that any verbal complaint is made directly to either Teresa or Arrah. 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.



One of our decorative table centrepieces

EPOA Satisfaction Survey Flu vaccination

It's survey time again!

Please look out for our annual survey arriving in your letterbox soon. We ask that you make a point of setting some time aside to complete and return this important document.

The survey invites your feedback on every aspect of the service we provide, and is of vital importance to us in improving our care.

This is your opportunity to be actively involved in the care partnership and help to make life as good as it can possibly be for our residents and families.

The results of the survey will be published in the next newsletter.

As the evenings grow cooler we ask you to begin thinking about the annual influenza vaccination which is offered free of charge to all residents.

We strongly advise EPOAs to take advantage of this to protect their loved one from the serious effects of the dangerous strains of influenza which are prevalent every winter.

Last year we had a death in our organisation as a result of influenza. There is a very clear correlation between those residents who struggle with persistent ill health over winter, and those who did not have the flu vaccine.

Please choose to vaccinate this winter, and help your loved one stay well!



Part of the delicious Christmas Family Gathering afternoon tea prepared by Goretti and Robyn