

Aberleigh Rest
Home, Blenheim

Tasman Rest Home
& Dementia Care,
Nelson

Millvale House,
Levin

Millvale House,
Miramar

Millvale House,
Waikanae

Avonlea Dementia
Care, Christchurch

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Stories of Healing

There may be no 'cure' for dementia, but working 'in the moment' with our residents has taught us that there is definitely healing.

Simon's story

As I was walking through one of the lounges at Aberleigh a woman called me over. She was quite animated and indicated that I should sit down. She pointed to the doll I was holding and said: "Is he yours?" I replied that he was not mine but that I was looking after him for somebody. She said "He's lovely isn't he?" I said "Yes he is. Would you like to hold him?"

Her eyes were fixed on the doll and were alive with anticipation. "Ooh, could I? Do you think it would be alright?" I told her I would be more than happy for her to hold him.

I handed her the doll and she began to stroke his head and speak to him in quiet, soothing tones. I don't believe she took her eyes from him for one minute. She held him carefully, as a mother would hold a baby, and began to rock him gently.

About 5 minutes later she looked up at

me apologetically and said "I'm so sorry, I've been holding him for ages. You should take him back now." I said there was no hurry and she seemed delighted to enjoy some more time with him.

She finally handed him back to me and thanked me for letting her hold him. "It was a pleasure," I replied.

At no point during our time together did she say that she thought the 'doll' was a baby or whether she had recognised it as a doll. This didn't really matter, because the comfort and joy that she had gained from the experience were profound and satisfying for her.

Representational Child Therapy is one of the most powerful and rewarding therapies that can be offered to someone living with dementia. And it will bring a tear to your eye.

Kim's story

One lovely afternoon at Admatha we were all seated in the lounge enjoying music. Suddenly a male resident started swinging his hands around. I stood up and joined him, moving our hands from one side to the other, and up and down.

After we had been doing this for a while another male resident took my attention. He also raised his hand up. I asked if he would like to have something. He shook his head. I asked if he would also like to dance and he nodded 'yes', so there we were,

swinging our hands all about. And then one of the men started singing:

"My Bonnie lies over the ocean
My Bonnie lies over the sea
Bring back, oh bring back
Oh bring back my Bonnie to me!"

I was so touched by his singing. I had never heard or seen him do such a thing before or after. It was a wonderful moment for all of us.

Extending our service at Aberleigh and Avonlea

Extensive renovations for Aberleigh in Blenheim

An extensive project is currently in progress at Aberleigh Rest Home in Blenheim.

We are in the process of building on some additional bedrooms and upgrading an area of the current rest home. This will improve the environment for our residents and also enable us to provide hospital care for more of our residents. This means that residents will be able to stay on at Aberleigh as their care needs change, and is consistent with our goal of providing continuity of care at our facilities.

Work on the first phase of the project is well underway. Once the first stage is complete we will be moving on to the redevelopment of the Ngaio wing. The significant upgrade we have planned will require the existing wing to be completely taken down and rebuilt. The residents who currently live in the Ngaio wing will move into the beautiful new wing, Koromiko, which will become their new home.

With the provision of hospital level care, there is now a registered nurse on duty at Aberleigh 24 hours a day seven days a week.

When the alterations at Aberleigh are complete, one of the services we will be able to provide is a dedicated respite bed where people can book respite care in advance.

We will be celebrating the completion of the renovations with a formal opening in May this year.

Hospital level care for Avonlea in Christchurch

We have recently undertaken a special audit to enable us to provide hospital level care at Avonlea. This will be in addition to the dementia rest home care we currently provide.

Hospital level care will be provided in the small home we call Mahal. Mahal will be a very special little home with just 10 people receiving hospital care in it. It is a very warm, homely, comfortable place to be.

There will now be a registered nurse on duty 24 hours a day seven days a week.

The addition of hospital level care to our services at Avonlea brings us a step further to our goal of providing a complete continuum of care. This means that when our residents become more frail they will be able to stay on at Avonlea. It is important that residents can stay here in the place they call home, with the people who know them well and who know just how to care for them. It brings a measure of comfort to residents and their families knowing that they will not have to move.

The new level of care will be delivered with the same loving care and uncompromising standards which have earned Avonlea 4 year Ministry of Health Audit Certification.

We look forward to welcoming our first hospital level residents and their families to our Avonlea community within the next few weeks.



Building work in progress at Aberleigh.



Part of the garden viewed from the hospital wing at Avonlea

“Come into my World”

Over many years we have used the principles from the book “Best Friends Approach to Dementia Care” by David Troxell and Virginia Bell as our guide for educating our staff about the special care our residents require and deserve, in accordance with our Vision and Values.

This training has served us well in offering sound knowledge as well as enabling the development of excellent interpersonal skills for our staff.

In recent years we have wanted to take this training a step further. As a result a new course, “Come Into My World”, has been created. Its aim is to refresh and renew the tried and trusted techniques of “Best Friends”,

as well as adding some validation therapy principles originally developed by Naomi Feil. Our hope is that this will enhance our ability to understand and empathise with our residents.

The course consists of three sessions: developing empathy, communication and activities. Each session will review “Best Friends” techniques and incorporate validation techniques into these important areas.

We look forward to the mutual benefits this new course will bring to both staff and residents.



Sharing a special moment with a resident during the recent farm visit at Avonlea, Christchurch

Focus on diversional therapy

Once again this year we plan to hold three education days for our diversional therapy staff around the country.

The first of these took place in February in Christchurch, with seven enthusiastic participants attending.

The day is facilitated by Lee Andrews, Senior Occupational Therapist. This year’s objectives for the training include:

1. Team building and effective communication
2. Increased understanding of dementia and behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia

3. Activities – shared ideas and planning a meaningful programme
4. Increased confidence in our role as diversional therapists
5. FUN!

The same programme will be facilitated with staff from our Blenheim and Nelson facilities, and from our three North Island facilities.

At the end of these days, staff take away with them a wealth of shared ideas, inspiration, theory and practice to apply within their day to day role.



Gilbert Apperley of Aberleigh Rest Home in Blenheim shows off his bumper crop of silverbeet

Exciting Development for Kapiti Coast

We are excited to announce that we will be opening a lodge in the country for people with dementia in Kapiti later this year.

Development will soon be starting on the site previously used by the Whitireia Polytech at Lindale.

The existing building will be substantially redesigned and extended to create a purpose-built care facility in a country environment.

Like our other 7 dementia care facilities, Millvale Lodge Lindale will be run on the 'small homes' principle. The facility will be divided into 3 small homes. Each home will be completely self-contained, so that the residents experience a small cosy home with a calm supportive atmosphere. Residents will also be encouraged to take part in the running of their home if they wish, as continuing with accustomed roles has been found to assist people in maintaining a sense of purpose and value.

Millvale Lodge Lindale will be a unique place for people to come: a place where there is some freedom and space to maintain fitness, see the stars and the trees, interact with animals and create a sense of home.

Homely kitchenettes will be part of the open plan lounge-dining areas, just as in a typical New Zealand family home. They will include all the facilities one would enjoy at home, provided in a safe way: hot water to make a cup of tea, and a sink for the normal activities of washing up and drying the dishes. There will be an oven, and plenty of bench space for cooking activities.

The architectural design will maximise

indoor-outdoor flow, with residents free to wander safely through the 4 hectare park-like surroundings without feeling confined. There will be farm animals, fruit trees and a vegetable garden which residents will be encouraged to help tend.

As in all our facilities, the emphasis will be on taking part in the normal activities of everyday life. The grandkids will enjoy visiting, with plenty of space to kick a football about and a children's playground where Nana or Granddad can watch them play.

A sheltered picnic spot, accessed by a wheelchair-accessible pathway, will provide a safe destination for afternoon tea, or a walk with a visiting family dog.

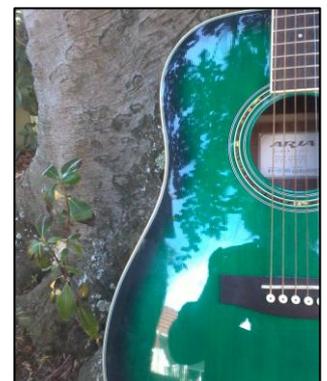
The nature of the environment will be soothing, peaceful and enjoyable for residents and their visitors. We have found that our small homes, exceptional quality of care and genuine empathy support each resident to participate in life more fully. At Millvale Lodge, the country environment and large grounds will extend the opportunities open to us to give each person their greatest chance of being physically healthy and emotionally the best they can be.

We plan to cater for most levels of care at Lindale, giving people the continuity of remaining in the place they call home with people who know them well as their care needs change.

Building work at Millvale Lodge Lindale will commence in April, with early beds available in the spring.



The joy of simple things: flowers brighten the garden at Millvale House Levin



The magic of music: a resident's treasured guitar, Admatha Dementia Care, Christchurch.

We promise we will give your loved one the very best of care.
We promise we will cherish, nurture and love your special person.
We will be honest, open and trustworthy.

– Alison Hume and Jim Haines, Directors