

Newsletter August 2011

Hello all. Well, winter has set in and already we're thinking of spring being with us soon. It has been a busy time lately with audits and the kitchen revamp (come and inspect (admire?) the kitchen on your next visit). There always seems to be something going on.

Thank you to those who filled out our March survey. It was a bit disappointing (again!) as 18 were sent out and only 7 came back. A return rate of only 36%!

Nevertheless the results were encouraging with some very nice comments made. In total we received 434 answers, of which 430 were either 'Very Satisfied' or 'N/A'. There were no 'Not Satisfied' answers. Four answers were 'Satisfied' and they all related to Activities. These answers indicate that there is a feeling that activities and outings could have a larger range and variety, and outings could be more frequent. We'll endeavour to improve on this.

MoH Audit

On June 28 we had our 'big' Ministry Of Health audit. Two auditors visited the rest home for the day and went through files, interviewed us (Sharon and Peter), staff, residents and some relatives by phone in the week prior. The results were excellent. We passed everything apart from two minor issues to do with the timing of the signing of the resident's admission contract. As it is, some of the contracts don't get signed on the day of admission which means that residents are residing at the rest home without a signed contract. Admittedly not an ideal situation, but that's just how it goes sometimes. We will however try a bit harder to get the contract signed sooner. Other than that the auditors commented on the homely atmosphere, a knowledgeable and friendly staff team and excellent record keeping. They also reported to have had very good feedback on the food at the rest home. Thank you to our staff for their efforts, and to the residents and relatives for their involvement.

Ear Wax

At times residents feel they are hard of hearing or have their ears block by wax. If the RN is unable to remove the wax (even after applying wax softening ear drops), we may ask a relative to make an appointment and take the resident to Pukekohe to have the wax removed by suctioning. Suctioning is a safer way of removing than syringing. Before the appointment, the ear wax needs to be softened by applying ear drops for a few days, so we need to know the date of the appointment in advance.

Staff

We have a new caregiver Kerry who joined us in March. Welcome on board. Kerry makes and sells wheat bags. If you'd like to order one, please contact us.

Animals and Grounds

Has any one noticed the kune kunes loosing weight? We have put them on a diet of fresh grass only with a few vegetables scraps from the kitchen. No more left over cakes and desserts! A neighbour up the road is now picking up the scraps for his pigs.

Our dog Toby had to have an operation on his front leg. It started with Toby limping occasionally and then a little swelling appeared. Antibiotics didn't work, so it had to be an operation. The vet removed a tiny grass seed that was working its way up Toby's leg. He's all fine now.



Reminders

Reminder to bring in residents' own heat packs, especially as cold weather progresses and aches begin. Hot water bottles are not allowed as they have caused bad burns in the past in some rest homes.

If any relatives/friends bring in any medications (natural or not), or alcohol, please inform the RN as, although it may seem harmless, a lot of things could react with medications residents are taking. Even too much paracetamol is harmful to the liver.

Complaint Procedure

On admission we inform people about the Complaints Procedure that we have in place. Below it is repeated it as a reminder. Remember, we see 'complaints' as a hint to improve our service. Don't hesitate to raise any issues you have with us, no matter how trivial it may seem. Small things to most of us might be bigger issues when you're 95! Often small concerns can be very easily resolved, before they have a chance to grow into something bigger.

Complaint Procedure

1. *The form to be used to document complaints is kept in the top lounge. If the complainant does not wish to document the complaint, a caregiver shall document the complaint for management recognising the complainant's right to confidentiality. A short explanation of the complaint will be included also.*
2. *Reportable complaints may include:*
 - *Unsafe acts or service*
 - *Unexpected, harmful incidents to residents*
 - *A service not up to standard*
 - *A service which is late or forgotten*
 - *Any other resident or relative complaint*
 - *Staff member complaint*
 - *Visiting health professional complaint*
3. *A complaint form is completed by the staff member, resident or relative who:*
 - *is involved in the complaint*
 - *witnesses the complaint, or*
 - *to whom the complaint was reported to*
4. *The complaint form is completed as soon as practicable after the complaint occurs, but before the staff member goes off duty. Residents and relatives will have access to complaint form for completion in privacy and at their convenience.*
5. *The complaint form is given to the Manager, who considers the complaint and instigates any immediate action necessary. Follow up or feedback shall be provided to the complainant as soon as reasonably possible, but not longer than **five working days**. The complainant shall be contacted in writing with an explanation that substantially addresses the complaint within **10 working days** of receipt of the complaint.*
6. *Staff and resident's confidentiality will be maintained throughout the procedure.*
7. *If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint investigation and subsequent action taken by management, they should be informed of their right to access an independent advocate, who can be provided through the Advocacy service **0800 555 050***
8. *The complainant is also be informed of their right to forward the complaint to the Ministry of Health if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint procedure.*

Enduring Power of Attorney and Mental Incapacity

We have been asking relatives to provide us with copies of their Enduring Power of Attorney (EPOA) and if they don't have one, to make arrangements to get one. The reason we ask is to do with the decision whether to give medical treatment to a resident or not, and who has the right to make a decision regarding this when a resident him or her self is incapable of making a rational decision. When a resident is mentally incompetent, family members sometimes disagree on what they think is the best treatment, or what they think the resident would have wanted to happen. Things can become very difficult. It is in these situations an EPOA is important as it is a record of which person(s) the resident wishes to act on behalf of him or her.

Below is an explanation of what is involved.

Normally, a resident cannot be given, or refused, medical treatment against their will.

There are two exceptions to this:

- (a) If a doctor/GP has assessed a resident as being mentally incompetent of making a rational decision, then the doctor/GP has the authority to decide on treatment,
OR
- (b) If a resident has nominated an EPOA (for Personal Care and Welfare and Property), and it has been activated, then the EPOA has authority to decide on treatment. An EPOA becomes active when a doctor/GP declares that the resident is mentally incompetent.

A doctor/GP does a mental assessment by completing a 'Health Practitioners Certificate of Mental Capacity/Incapacity' form. This form contains questions that ascertain a person's mental capability.

It is important that residents appoint an EPOA when they are still well and able to make informed decisions. So if they do become mentally incompetent, all that needs to be done is the last step in the EPOA process: activation of it. This is the reason we ask an EPOA be appointed. It is the resident's resolution as to who should be making decisions for them if they become mentally incompetent.

Activities

Hello to you all. The weather has certainly put a hold on our outings and trips out on the bus! We had a very successful outing to a cafe in Pokeno, funded by residents from their fundraising efforts earlier this year.

We have had Ricky the Entertainer here both in April and June and due to come back on the 22nd of August. He brings his ipod, guitar and speaker and sings all the old 'Crooner' songs such as Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra. We even had some of our residents up dancing!

Our trip to the avocado orchard in March went very well, we had a beautiful sunny day. The orchard owners gave a very informative talk, a yummy lunch and had avocados and goodies to buy. We had a tour of the garden and fed their horses some apples. Everyone had such a lovely time.



Enjoying a sunny day on our visit to the avocado orchard

We have planted some strawberry plants in our raised bed garden, so are looking forward to some strawberries in the spring.

Mid Winter Christmas dinner was on Friday 15th July with some winter flower arrangements for each table made by residents.

In the upstairs lounge we have a 'Crafts for Sale' table of crafts made by the residents. Make sure you go and have a browse on your next visit.

Sharon has a contact who is willing to give residents a foot bath or neck and shoulder rub at \$25 for half hour if anyone is interested.

We plan to have a movie day showing Mamma Mia some time in August.

The residents are making cup cakes to sell to fundraise for the SPCA Cupcake Day 29th August. If you are visiting the rest home on 11th, 12th, 18th or 19th August, please come and buy some cupcakes.

We are planning to include some resident profiles in future newsletters. It is interesting to know what residents did when they were younger and what their achievements have been. Of course residents can refuse and next of kin will be involved too. We think it will be very interesting reading up about some of the residents' oldest memories.

Corinne

