

Quarterly Update

news from Vincentian Home and Hospital
July 2011



Morning tea with the Mayor

As I mentioned in the previous Quarterly News myself and my partner Paul were away in South America for the month of June and left the home in the highly capable hands of Helen Green, Clinical Manager. This was an especially busy time for Helen as she was also without Lucila Bernardo, our senior Registered Nurse. Lucila had gone to the United States to see her son graduate from medical school and spend time with friends and family in America and Canada. It seems hard to believe that the next issue of Quarterly News will be looking towards preparations for Christmas!

QUALITY ACTIVITIES

A vital part of our quality control programme is planning and assessing meal menus. Every two years we employ an independent registered dietician to audit our menus and kitchen policies and procedures. The audit was undertaken in April by Carole Gibb. Carole has worked as a dietician for more than 25 years with her most recent position being as a community dietician for a PHO where she set up the Dietician Service. She has provided services to aged care facilities in the past and has now returned to this. Her comprehensive audit report covering our menu and meal service policies and procedures was produced following two visits to the home. The report was extremely complimentary of the operations and practices in the day to day food preparation and the resulting high quality of the meals we serve.

The kitchen prepares and serves three meals, morning and afternoon tea as well as supper each day and because this is so much a part of the routine its role is easily taken for granted. This audit shows just how important are Josephine, our cook, and her regular team as well as those who we rely on to step in at short notice.

Also in April our General Practitioner visited and gave all residents who agreed to have one, a flu vaccination. It was a very hectic morning getting around to everyone and recording the details in each resident's medical file.

Vincentian also offers all staff a free flu vaccination. Each year a clinic is held on site for these to be administered. It is pleasing to report that a high percentage of staff took up the offer this year.

In-service training for the staff at Vincentian is an important part of standards and knowledge improvement. It is overseen by the Quality Co-ordinator, Clare Maddock, and the Clinical Manager, Helen Green. Both Clare and Helen have had a busy time lately with six training sessions in June alone. These sessions covered a broad array of topics including fire safety procedures, infection control measures and management of challenging behaviour. We were also fortunate to have a daughter of one of our residents come and speak to the staff about her experiences from having her mother in care. In addition Helen is currently supervising two of our caregivers who are studying for their National certificate in Aged Care.

We have been fortunate lately that our physiotherapist, Louise, has agreed to increase her hours at Vincentian and when possible, is visiting twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This has been much appreciated by the residents.

WAY OF LIFE

Cathy, our occupational therapist, spends each Thursday afternoon with individual residents planning, assessing and updating each persons recreational activities care plan. This monthly one-on-one meeting is to ensure the activities are appropriate to each person's level of physical and cognitive abilities. It is also a time where Cathy can get to know each individual's history, interests and their likes and dislikes.

While Cathy is occupied with individual resident meetings we arrange a Thursday afternoon movie slot for the rest of the group. The curtains are pulled, the lights dimmed and the lounge turned into a cinema. With an endless supply of movies from the "Fatso" rental company, residents are treated to a variety of genres including musicals, history, National Geographic and classics.

April was a busy month for special events with Easter and Anzac Day. But the absolute best was the Royal Wedding afternoon tea. Under Cathy's guidance our residents made lemon curd tarts and jam tarts while the kitchen staff provided cucumber sandwiches and tiny scones with jam and cream.

These were all stacked on tiered cake plates and tea was served in the finest china loaned by friends and relatives. Residents in floral hats, fascinators or bow ties provided the finishing touches to the elegance of the celebration.



We were fortunate with the last of autumn's fine weather to take a planned outdoor trip to the cable car lookout and experience the stunning views over the city.

Bill Hinkley, Vincentian financial administrator, was an engaging speaker and gave a great Power Point presentation with photographs of England, France and Italy taken on a recent holiday.

We had some wonderful musical visitors in May and a perfect day out for lunch at MacDonald's. Ursula and Alan entertained with a wonderful show of ballroom dancing involving a couple of the more daring residents, as well as Rock'n'Roll Ricky with his well known hit songs and some more dancing. A rather cloudy day with a few spits of rain didn't stop the keener residents from heading off to Lyall Bay armed with three loaves of stale bread to feed the seagulls.

It is always wonderful to have youngsters visiting and in June the crèche children brought play-dough and joined with the residents in making weird and wonderful creatures - a great way to interact.



A June highlight was a visit to the Mayor's Office. Residents were able to spend an enjoyable time chatting with Her Worship Celia Wade-Brown and discussing how she was enjoying her job and the challenges she faces. A delicious morning tea was provided we gave her some of our homemade lemon curd in return.

SPIRITUAL

In April we were extremely fortunate to have Father Frank Maguire visit the home to say Sunday Mass. It is a pleasure for all of us, staff and residents, to have Father Maguire join our team.

It was with sadness that we recently said farewell to three of our very long term elderly residents.

Mani Bhana had been with us since 2001 and passed away peacefully early in June following a long illness.

Margaret Harold had been at Vincentian since 2003 and had recently celebrated her 96th birthday with family and friends. Margaret always liked to wear a beret and enjoyed one-on-one chats with anyone.

Finally, we all said our goodbyes to Da Van Luyn who moved into the original rest home at Vincentian in 2001. Da was 95 years of age, she was a strong character and well known to everyone.



Rest in Peace Mani, Margaret and Da



HEALTH AND SAFETY

In our last issue of Update we featured the preparations that are in place should a natural disaster occur. We have since had feedback from several aged care facilities in Christchurch following the earthquake. Their experience has prompted us to add a few items to the emergency supplies.

Our building passed it's 'warrant of fitness' in March without any concerns being raised by the building assessors. After Christchurch this is reassuring for residents and staff alike.

STAFF NEWS

There have been few staffing changes over the past three months and we have been fortunate enough to have so many staff on the roster that an extra caregiver has often been available to help on the evening shift. We did however lose our hospital level cleaner, Danny Leota. Danny was a very quiet conscientious worker who was popular with the residents. He has moved to the south island to take up a position in the mussel farming industry and we wish him all the best. In his place we welcome back Mubarak Mukhtar who had previously worked at Vincentian in the kitchen.

AMENITIES IMPROVEMENTS

For some time now it has been apparent that the home is in need of a “face lift”. A proposal that a general refurbishment project be considered was taken to the Board of Directors. In April it was agreed that the firm of architects who have a working knowledge of Vincentian be approached to provide recommendations for such a project.

Over the succeeding months there have been many meetings with the architects. Builders, painters and carpet layers, have since been to view the home. In July the architect’s proposal was presented to the Board of Directors which agreed to consider the feasibility of refurbishment.

Although the project is in its early stages I wish to alert potential and current residents, families and friends of its existence. As the project aims to re-carpet and paint the older wings and common areas of the facility, there will be some disruption from time to time.

We also envision replacing all of the furniture in the older rooms which will mean finding temporary accommodation for residents while their rooms are being refurbished. The intention is to divide up the main lounge into curtained spaces as a short term place to stay. At this stage we are anticipating a two week turnaround for rooms to be readied to move back into. This would be a good opportunity for family members to do a bit of a spring clean and take home any items of clothing or furniture excess to need!

The main downstairs lounge will also be fully re-decorated and the dining room will get new timber look vinyl flooring. The conservatory area will be made into a more welcoming area for residents and families with a kitchenette. New carpet and thick curtains will help keep it nice and warm. As this will be the easiest area for the builders and carpet layers to refurbish it will be done first starting on Monday 1st August

I would like to reassure all residents, family and friends that as the project proceeds care will not be compromised in any way and you will be kept fully informed. I am confident that the refurbishment will be to everyone’s benefit.

This project has been made possible by the gift of a substantial legacy from one of our previous residents, Patricia O’Connor. Pat was at Vincentian from May 2005 until her death in November 2010. She had close ties to the Catholic Church all her life and had been a secretary in the Archdiocese of Wellington for 40 years. Our thanks go to Pat for her generosity and thoughtfulness.

In addition to this development, a separate building project, previously on hold, has been re-activated. It involves extending two of the smaller rest home rooms by adding sun room space. This should not disturb our residents.



In memory of Patricia O'Connor 1921-2010