

The Difference

PALM LAKE CARE TOOWOOMBA DECEMBER - JANUARY 2024



Here, we enjoy staying connected



It was such a delight to host the students of Fairholme Girls College recently.

Twenty-one students spent the morning with our residents taking part in Hoy, Bingo and Bocce, while enjoying some lovely chats. The girls are completing their Certificate III in Support Services. It's wonderful to have community visitors join us here, as it keeps our residents connected to their local community.

Memories galore, and more

We made loads of great memories this past month - check them out, inside...

Palm Lake Care's best awarded

Did you hear who won our 'Community of the Year' and 'Employee of the Year' awards?



Here, you are welcome



Palm Lake Care Toowoomba Service Manager,
Tony McKenzie

Hi everyone - Time has cruised by so fast in 2023 with so much activity distracting us here at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba that we have barely seen the months pass us. During the year, we have witnessed Elvis enter and leave the building (on a number of occasions!), enjoyed Christmas in July, Carnival of Flowers celebrations and a plethora of other activities. We have made so many new friends in 2023 and, of course, sadly said goodbye to some of our beautiful residents. For me, one of our greatest successes of 2023 has been the positive relationship Palm Lake Care Toowoomba has formed with our friends at Palm Lake Resort Toowoomba. With the use of their resort buses and their homeowner volunteers who help escort our residents most weeks, the opportunities this relationship has created for our residents has been amazing. It will be exciting to see how this develops over the next 12 months and to see what new opportunities come our way. No doubt there will be challenges we all will face in 2024, however, with our fantastic team, our residents and the families we have here in our Toowoomba community, every day will be an opportunity to improve and grow.



Palm Lake Care Chief Operating Officer,
Trish Heke

Dear Palm Lake Care family - Our CEO, Executive Team Leaders and I travelled to Adelaide last month to be part of the Aged & Community Care Providers Association (ACCPA) conference. The theme of this year's conference, 'The Age of Change', could not have been more apt. Picture this: technology meeting tradition, and societal shifts harmonising with the timeless need for compassionate care. We've glimpsed a future that's as exciting as it is demanding.

Investing time and resources to attend such events is crucial for us at Palm Lake Care. Why? Because we're committed to bringing back the very best ideas to integrate into our own tapestry of care. We're not just passively watching the age of change; we're actively weaving ourselves into it, ensuring that the changes work for us and, most importantly, for you.

From groundbreaking healthcare technology to innovative social programs, we absorbed it all. Yet, with these advancements, we're reminded that challenges still remain. Ensuring equitable access, maintaining the personal touch in an increasingly digital world and supporting our incredible staff through these transitions are mountains we're ready to climb.

Our takeaway? Change is not just coming; it's already here. Palm Lake Care is embracing it with open arms and minds ready to learn, adapt and excel. We're charting a course through these new waters with care, courage and a little bit of that "go get it" spirit. Together, we will make Palm Lake Care a place where innovation meets heart, change is synonymous with growth and the future is something we shape with intention and joy.

Palm Lake Care Toowoomba

Looking for more information about Palm Lake Care Toowoomba? Here's where you can find us:

PHONE:
07 4580 3000

STREET ADDRESS:
149 Hogg Street,
Cranley QLD 4350

EMAIL:
toowoombacaresm@palllake.com.au

WEBSITE:
palllakecare.com.au

GET SOCIAL:
Follow us on Facebook
and on Instagram
(@palllake.care)

Key local personnel

Service Manager: Tony McKenzie
toowoombacaresm@palllake.com.au
Service Manager Support:
Edward Townsend
Customer Experience: Fran van Riet
Admin: Louise King
Clinical Manager: Jodi Harms
Clinical Nurses: Pranita Tamang and
Karynne Paull
Lifestyle Team Leader: Leanne O'Rourke
Housekeeping Team Leader:
Tiann Opperman
Maintenance: Jason Schwerin
Chef Manager: Larry Fernando



News briefs



Managers' lunches are a hit

Have you heard about our regular managers' lunches? Different members of our management take turns to join different groups of residents at a lovely sit-down meal together. It gives our team the chance to better get to know the residents who call our community home, and it also gives those residents a chance to speak openly with our managers. And the food is always delicious - a credit to our kitchen team. It's a win-win for everyone!

Pen pal program helps us make new (little) friends

Have you heard that Palm Lake Care Toowoomba has linked arms with Freckles Kindy and Learning Centre to take part in a pen pal program? Each month, we write a letter to the kindy children and they respond with photos and a letter back to our residents. The first lot of letters delivered by these friendly educators were kindly accepted by our Susan.



Pictured right: Deception Bay's Fay Tupai was recently named Palm Lake Care's 'Employee of the Year'. Congrats to Fay!



CSO news: A time of learning, growth - and congrats to our winners!

Here at the Palm Lake Care Central Support Office, we were thrilled with the result of our recent end of year company workshop - an event that truly epitomised the spirit of resilience and collaboration across our whole Palm Lake Care community. "A Time of Learning and Growth" was this year's workshop theme, centered on resilience — a quality that resonates deeply within each of us, particularly in these times of rapid change. Our focus was on equipping our leaders and their teams with the tools necessary for emotional and physical wellbeing. Initiatives like providing healthy snacks, promoting active work habits and encouraging mindfulness are steps we're taking at CSO to foster a supportive and harmonious culture.

It was also a privilege to acknowledge our most outstanding staff. Our annual awards are a testament to the dedication and passion of our teams. Each awardee embodies the values that make Palm Lake Care a community of care and excellence. Here are our big winners:

- Emerging Leaders:** Christie Webb (Bargara) and Kelly Roberts (Dec. Bay)
- Leading Culture through Clinical Excellence:** Tina LeClaire (Bethania)
- Leading Culture through Operational Excellence:** Caroline Bosnic (MWP)
- Leading Culture through Hospitality Services:** Larry Fernando (Toowoomba)
- Leading Culture through Lifestyle Services:** Leona Counsell (MWP)
- Palm Lake Care Community of the Year:** Mt Warren Park

The 'Employee of the Year' from each community, chosen by their residents and fellow local team members, also went head to head for the overall title. Congratulations to Geena Carroll (Bargara), Julie Bresolin (Caloundra), Uzma Naved (Beachmere), Sharon Sharples (Bethania), Zilda Texeira (Mt Warren Park) and Michelle Ormes (Toowoomba) but special congratulations to Fay Tupai (Deception Bay, pictured above) for going on to secure our company's overall 'Employee of the Year' title. Well done, Fay!

Meeting dates, for your diary

Communication is at the heart of all that we do. Here are the next few Residents' Meeting dates so you can plan ahead:

- December 22, 10.30am, in the Theatre.
- January 19, 10.30am, in the Theatre.

No RSVP is required. We look forward to seeing you there!



Around the grounds

Pictured above and below: In case you missed it, we just celebrated a birthday! Our award-winning community just marked its third anniversary. Check out some of the memories from our birthday party, when we had Elvis (aka Tristan) perform for us. Happy birthday to us! Hip, hip, HOORAY!



Above: The Qld Police Pipes and Drums Band performed for us ahead of Remembrance Day. What a treat!



Meet a team member

THE SUCCESS OF PALM LAKE CARE BETHANIA COMES DOWN TO OUR DEDICATED TEAM. LIKE INTEGRAL LINKS IN A VERY IMPORTANT CHAIN, EVERYONE'S ROLE HERE MAKES A DIFFERENCE, WHICH IS WHY WE'D LOVE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO MICHELLE AND MARG...

Meet two of our Lifestyle Team members - Michelle and Marg. Michelle (pictured above, on the left) has been a Lifestyle Assistant for two years at Palm Lake Care. Michelle attends all our bus outings, greater community activities and events, cooking club and community barbecues. Michelle says she loves her position and is a proactive team member.

Marg (pictured above, on the right) has been with Palm Lake Care Toowoomba for nearly three years. She began her career as a personal carer before deciding she would like to join the Lifestyle Team. Marg also says she loves her position and enjoys her career in the dementia support community.

Both ladies are valued team members here at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba and will be known around the community for their big smiles and warm personalities.



Meet your neighbour

WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE TO YOU ONE OF OUR LOVELY RESIDENTS, LYDIA. VERY MUSICALLY INCLINED, LYDIA IS PICTURED, ABOVE, WITH ONE OF OUR FAVOURITE ENTERTAINERS, TRISTAN/ELVIS...

My name is Lydia and I am from the Fijian islands. I am part Fijian and part Swedish. I grew up in Fiji where I met my husband, Clarence. We married in 1954, on New Year's Eve. We went on to have eight children: four girls and four boys. Clarence worked as a publishing director and we moved quite a bit. We had the opportunity of living in various countries such as Nauru, Solomon Islands and New Zealand. We lived an exceptionally good life and gave our children nothing but love. My children all grew up to be quite musical.

I, myself, loved playing sports when I was younger - I played hockey when I was 15 and was fortunate enough to qualify for the representative side to play for my country of Fiji. I remember playing against a New Zealand men's team - it was a friendly game, it was a lot of fun.

Nowadays, I enjoy playing the piano each day to a group of my friends. It is lovely to know that I can make people happy just listening to my music. I also play the guitar each Friday at Happy Hour.

I love my room; I have a large display cabinet filled with an enormous collection of shells that I have collected from around the world.

I love living here at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba. I feel at home and at ease. I always say I have come here to live, and that is exactly what I am doing!

Your questions, our answers

We often get asked similar questions by residents and family right across our group of Palm Lake Care communities so we thought we'd answer some of the more common ones revolving around the roles of our staff.

Who should I talk to if I have a health concern or need medical attention? For any health concerns, your primary point of contact is our nursing staff. Our Registered Nurses (RNs) are on duty 24/7 to address your medical needs, administer medications and coordinate with your doctors to ensure you receive comprehensive care. For less urgent questions, our Enrolled Nurses (ENs) and Care Assistants are also trained to help you with daily health monitoring.

I'm not sure who to ask about the activities scheduled for the week. Who organises these? Our Lifestyle Coordinator is the go-to person for all things fun and recreational. They're responsible for planning and overseeing our events calendar, which includes a variety of activities designed to suit all interests and abilities. Feel free to approach them, or anyone on the Lifestyle Team, for information on upcoming events, to provide feedback, or to suggest new activities.

Sometimes I need help with personal tasks. Who is responsible for assisting with these? Our Care Assistants are here to support you with personal care needs, such as bathing, dressing and grooming. They are trained to provide support with respect for your dignity and preferences.

I have specific dietary needs. How does Palm Lake Care ensure that my meals are suitable for me? Our kitchen staff are well-informed about the nutritional needs of our residents and they are skilled in preparing a variety of meals that cater to specific health conditions and preferences. If you have any special dietary restrictions or requests, please discuss them with our nursing staff. They will communicate your needs to the kitchen team to ensure your meals are not only nutritious and safe for you but also enjoyable. Our aim is to provide you with a dining experience that supports your health and wellbeing without compromising on taste.

The tap in my room is leaking. Who should I report maintenance issues to? Our maintenance team is on hand to resolve any issues with your living space or the community's amenities. For urgent problems, please report to any staff member, who will then pass on the message immediately. For non-urgent maintenance requests, you can either inform a staff member or put in a request at reception.

I'm feeling a bit down lately. Is there someone I can talk to for emotional support? We're here to support your emotional wellbeing in addition to your physical health. If you're feeling down, we encourage you to speak with one of our RNs. They are equipped to listen and provide initial

Navigating the festive season

The holidays, while festive, can also bring a flurry of emotions and stress.

It's important to navigate this season with care, especially within our close-knit community here at Palm Lake Care. First and foremost, it's vital to recognise and honour your feelings. It's perfectly normal to experience a range of emotions during this time and giving voice to these feelings can be incredibly cathartic. Don't hesitate to talk to a staff member, a friend, or reach out to loved ones for support when you need it.

Establishing a daily routine can be a source of comfort. Engage in activities that bring you joy, such as reading, crafting or joining one of our organised social events. These consistent routines help provide a sense of order and normalcy. Connection is also key during the holidays. Participate in our community's holiday events or enjoy leisurely chats with your neighbours. If you're inclined to use technology, a video chat can bridge the distance between you and your family.

Gratitude can also be a powerful tool for mental wellness. Reflecting on the aspects of your life that you're thankful for can enhance your mood and outlook. Consider sharing stories of gratitude with friends during a coffee or in a casual setting.

If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed by the festive rush, remember that setting boundaries is healthy. It's okay to choose which activities you want to participate in and which you might skip this year. Our dedicated staff are always here to support your mental wellbeing. Should you find the season challenging, we encourage you to reach out for the support you need.

support and they can facilitate a referral for further assistance from a psychologist or counsellor in the community. Our RNs have strong connections with local mental health professionals and can arrange for you to receive the compassionate care you need. It's important to take care of your emotional health just as you would your physical health, and our team is here to support you every step of the way.

I would like to discuss my care plan. Who is responsible for this? Your care plan is managed by our RNs who coordinate with the entire care team, including therapists and support staff, to ensure that your individual needs and preferences are reflected in your personalised plan. No appointment is necessary - simply speak with an RN at any time, who can schedule an appointment with our Clinical Nurse if required.

Around the grounds

Pictured left and below: Melbourne Cup gave us good reason to dress up and gather for the race that stops a... care community!



Clinical Manager, Jodi Harms

This month has been another month of continued education and training on upskilling our clinical and care teams. We have changed the focus of our training over the past few months by using case-based scenarios and 'mock' incidents, with resident involvement. The feedback from staff and residents on these new training and learning opportunities is very positive.

This month we had Rashila Baidhya commence in the Clinical Coordinator Compliance role who will be assisting in reviewing and driving clinical and operational systems at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba. Unfortunately, Tameika who commenced in the Clinical Nurse role last month has decided to leave Toowoomba so recruitment is underway for her replacement.

I had the pleasure again this month of dining with some of our new and existing residents at our monthly managers lunch and, as always, the meal was spectacular and the company even more so. I look forward to the upcoming festive season and all that it brings.



Important information

Meet our Central Support team

Chief Executive Officer:
Dan Aitchison

Chief Operating Officer:
Trish Heke

Operations Manager:
Simone Ross

Clinical Governance Manager:
Melissa Ostrouhoff

Support Services Manager:
Steve Wheeler

Customer Experience Manager:
Blake Johnston

We love your feedback!

We highly value all types of resident and family feedback - it enables us to continually improve our already high standards. There are so many ways you can provide feedback but the easiest way is to complete a feedback form. Blank forms are available from our Reception desk and, once complete, can be submitted in the Feedback Box, also found at Reception. Our Service Managers are also available to chat at any time. Their door is always open.

What should I do in an emergency?

FIRE: Spotted a fire? Let a staff member know and press the alarm, if I can.

EXITS: I need to remember my closest way out. Leave things behind and get out quickly.

CRISIS: If something else happens, I'll stay calm. I'll help my neighbours if it's safe to.

PREPARE: I'll remind myself of safe places and the best way to leave, if needed.

Note to self: If I'm unsure, I'll ask a staff member.

Volunteers are the best people

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to stop by and support our community. You might like to help our Lifestyle Team facilitate their regular group activities? Or you might like to spend some one-on-one time with our lovely residents? Many love to share a cuppa and a chat! Maybe you have a specific skill you can share? If you'd like to volunteer in our community, and enjoy the reward that comes with it, simply contact our team via the details on Page 2. You can also go to our website and click on "Join us".

Care is a noble profession

If you've been looking for a career that is meaningful and rewarding, maybe aged care is for you? We have an ever-changing list of vacancies across a variety of positions, from housekeeping and admin to carers and grounds staff. To find out what vacancies are currently available in each of our Palm Lake Care locations, go to our website and click on "Join us". We look forward to welcoming you to our team.

Your meals, your choice

At Palm Lake Care, your choices shape our menu. Our dedicated chefs create meals that not only nourish but also cater to your tastes. Through our Food Focus Group meetings, your feedback directly influences our culinary direction. We value your voice, ensuring that your dining experience is truly tailored to our residents' preferences. Share your thoughts and savour the difference!