

# The Difference

PALM LAKE CARE TOOWOOMBA DECEMBER - JANUARY 2025



## What a ball!

It was Palm Lake Care Toowoomba's time to shine, with our annual 'Gala Ball'.

This year's dazzling event was made even more special by a host of local businesses who came together to offer their services, free of charge, to ensure our residents had the time of their lives. Wilsonton Terry White Chemmart Pharmacy provided free beauty products and three make-up artists to help our residents get dolled up to the nines. Local hairdressers Mandy, Brad and Carissa offered their services as well. St Vincent de Paul even came to the party, providing ball gowns and formal attire for those who needed a hand with their wardrobe. And, to top it all off, local photographer Kim Solomon donated her time to capture all the stellar fun and ensure the memories lived on for our residents and their families long after this night was over. It was a truly special evening and congrats must go to our very talented kitchen team who provided an incredible five-star banquet! Oh, what a night!

Turn to Pages 4-5 for more memories of our Gala Ball >>



## Company awards announced

Who are our top performing team members across the company? Find out on Page 8!

## Here, we are united

Check out what your fellow Palm Lake Care community members have been up to





# Here, you are welcome



**Palm Lake Care Toowoomba**  
Service Manager,  
Sue Daly

Wow, time continues to fly as we're all having fun! It's been an amazing time for Palm Lake Care Toowoomba over the past few months. Firstly, our community had the privilege of celebrating different cultures with a magnificent Diwali event, enjoyed by staff and residents together. Then Melbourne Cup was an amazing day, with our Fashions on Field event making the day so memorable. But this was all topped off by our inaugural Gala Ball - even making news headlines!

As previously mentioned, the Palm Lake Care Toowoomba management team have been busy with staff recruitment. The focus now is ensuring our team members have the skills and knowledge required to complete their roles effectively. I thank you all - residents, family members, friends, volunteers and of course our team - for an amazing 2024 and for your continued support. I am very much looking forward to an even more exciting 2025 together.



**Palm Lake Care**  
Chief Operating Officer,  
Trish Heke

As we approach the festive season, I would like to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to all the staff, families, volunteers and residents who make our Palm Lake Care communities so special. This year has been one of growth, resilience and shared commitment to providing exceptional care and support to those who need it most. Together, we overcome challenges, celebrate milestones and create countless moments of joy.

Christmas is a time to reflect on the blessings of the year and look forward to the opportunities ahead. It's a time for connection, kindness and spreading cheer. I am proud of the way our team has come together to ensure that every resident feels supported, valued and loved. Their dedication, compassion and professionalism are what make our communities places of warmth and comfort.

On behalf of the entire leadership team, I wish you and your families a joyful and peaceful Christmas season. May it be filled with happiness and good health, and spent in the company of those you hold dear. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

PS. This year, all seven of our Palm Lake Care communities, along with members of the greater Palm Lake Group, supported the RizeUp Christmas Appeal. We collected a mountain of beautiful presents that will be gifted to children of families in domestic violence situations who otherwise might not have a gift under their tree this Christmas. Our efforts were for smiles we will never see, but will know were there, on Christmas morning. A massive thank you to all for your generosity.

## 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: Sue Daly  
toowoombacaresm@palllake.com.au  
Service Manager Support:  
Edward Townsend  
Admin: Louise King and Sam Crust  
Clinical Manager: Jodi Harms  
Clinical Nurse: Ramandeep Dhillon and  
Lisa Bergan  
Lifestyle Team Leader: David Solomon  
Maintenance: Phillip Holton  
Chef Manager: Larry Fernando



## News briefs

### Meeting dates

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

- **December 10**
- **January 16**

Food Focus meetings will be held on these dates:

- **December 13**
- **January 10**

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



## Ho, ho, ho... hello Santa!

It was wonderful to see the big man in red stopped by Palm Lake Care Toowoomba in recent weeks ahead of his big night delivering gifts on December 25. He checked in with most of our excited residents to see if they thought they were on the 'naughty' or 'nice' list this year and - as was expected - they were all on Santa's 'nice' list! Our community has been looking and feeling festive for weeks now given the wonderful decorations we've collectively put up, and the Christmas-themed activities we've enjoyed. The countdown to December 25 is now on!



**Clinical Manager,**  
Jodi Harms

Hello everyone - Wow, I can't believe we have made it to the end of the year! It has been a very challenging and eventful year with multiple outbreaks, our successful reaccreditation, lots of new staff joining our team, lots of education and training being delivered for the team, the roll out of new clinical resources and some successful events and new traditions for Palm Lake Care Toowoomba.

Moving into the New Year, we will continue a focus on education and training for our staff, including going back to the basics to ensure effective care delivery for all. There will also be a continued focus for our new grad Registered Staff with programs being run throughout the year to upskill our teams.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and I look forward to the year to come.



## Top blokes

Thanks to our TOMNET friends for stopping by again and sharing some time with our very keen gentlemen. They love a chat with the boys and we always look forward to their visits.





# Lifestyle report.

Over the past few months our residents have been very busy. We held our Gala Ball that was attended by many residents, and they have stated how much they and their families loved the night. I would also like to thank all those who contributed to the planning and execution of that event. We had many contributors donate time and effort to make it the success it was.

We have also had our Christmas family lunch and a visit from Santa - some families also made 'eternal hugs' shirts and it was very emotional. We also got a sneak peek at the Toowoomba Winter Wonderland lights display via a beautiful evening walk through Queens Park.

Earlier, we held a Remembrance Day service where our choir performed for the first time. There have been several different pop-up stalls held for our residents to allow them to purchase things they may like - or to gift to others. We've also had trips in the bus to shopping centres, our local Bunnings and various lunch outings.

Arts and crafts with Kate has been a great success and continues to grow. We also enjoyed our monthly visits from the Tomnet members who spend time talking with our male residents and share a cup of tea.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I look forward to making next year even bigger and brighter again!

**David Solomon**  
Lifestyle Coordinator



**Pictured this page and right:** Our annual Gala Ball was a true spectacle and a wonderful way to start our festive season celebrations. We are so very grateful to the local businesses who pitched in and made it even more special.



**Pictured above:** What a delight it was for our residents to wander the grounds of Queens Park at night and see the gorgeous Christmas lights display. The 'Toowoomba Winter Wonderland' event was truly special.





# Seasonal mental health awareness

The holidays, while festive, can also bring a flurry of emotions and stress for many of us. It's important to navigate this season with 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 also be a source of comfort. Engage in activities that bring you joy, such as reading, crafting, or joining in one of our organised social events. These consistent routines help provide a sense of order and normalcy.

Connection is also key during the holiday season. Participate in as many of our community's holiday events as you can or enjoy leisurely chats with fellow residents. 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 instantly enhance your mood and outlook. Consider sharing stories of gratitude with friends during a coffee morning 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 team members 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. Here's to a peaceful and joyful Palm Lake Care holiday season.

## Giving the gift of you

On the topic of Christmas holiday stress, many aged care residents worry about buying just the right presents for their family members - and vice versa.

But what families don't often realise is that many of the best 'gifts' are not found on any retail shop shelf - and they aren't the most expensive ones either. Have you considered some of these ideas for gift giving:

**Handmade scrapbooks:** A scrapbook filled with photos, notes and keepsakes from the past is a beautiful way to bring your family's history to life. You can curate themed pages adorned with photos, ticket stubs or mementos to reflect special memories – think family holidays, childhood memories or important milestones. Alternatively, consider a picture frame to display a collection of items that together tell a story. Vintage photographs, concert tickets or handwritten letters are all good starting points.

**Storyworth:** This website allows users to answer questions about their past, including questions that can be submitted by friends and family members. At the end of the year, the answers are compiled into a book. These stories offer insight into family traditions, adventures and life lessons. A great gift for the older generations to give to the family's younger generations.

**Digital frames:** A modern twist on a classic present, a digital frame shares hundreds of photos in a rotating display. Certain frames allow you to preload a selection of family snapshots, while others can be added to remotely (via cloud technology or even email) for a display that constantly changes as your family does. If a picture tells a thousand words, we can't think of a better way to keep your memories alive. Google Skylight Frames for a great option.

**Furniture with meaning:** Passing down a cherished piece at this time of the year can have great significance. Whether it's a rocking chair that's been used by generations or a coffee table where family game nights took place, these pieces allow memories to live on – even when the walls around them change. Make sure the recipient knows the story behind the piece – you could even inscribe dates or a short message on the underside of the furniture piece.

**Sentimental jewellery:** As some of our most treasured possessions, jewellery can carry deep nostalgia – especially when the piece has been passed down through the generations. That necklace or watch that has been gathering dust in your nightstand could become a cherished gift for your child or grandchild. Again, make sure the story/history of the piece is captured and goes to the piece's new owner as well.

Beyond all this, the holiday season is about presence - not always presents. Make sure you remember that, too.



*Pictured above:* We are proud of our multicultural team and so excited to share different international cultural days with them and our residents. Diwali is the annual Hindu 'Festival of Lights' and the celebration gave us a chance to enjoy a lovely event filled with colourful traditional costumes, music and dancing.



*Pictured above and below:* What a wonderful idea our "Eternal hugs" shirts were! We coated our residents' arms (and/or their family members' arms) in bright fabric paint and they were then required to give their special person a super big, squeeze hug! The paint left an 'eternal hug' printed on the hug-recipient's shirt. A lovely keepsake gift!





# Here, we are united

**Pictured right:** Palm Lake Care's 2024 Employee of the Year award went to Lyn Ferguson who works in Hotel Services at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba. What an achievement - well done, Lyn!



**Overall Palm Lake Care Employee of the Year:**

Lyn Ferguson, Hotel Services at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba

**Leading Culture Support Services Excellence Award:**

Palm Lake Care Bargara

**Leading Culture Customer Services Excellence Award:**

Palm Lake Care Deception Bay

**Leading Culture Dining Experience Award:**

Larry Fernando of Palm Lake Care Toowoomba

**Leading Culture Lifestyle Services Excellence Award:**

Leona Counsell of Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park

**Emerging Leader Award:**

Yari Ottoboni of Palm Lake Care Bargara  
Hayley Alagiah of the Customer Experience Team

**Leading Culture Operational Excellence Award:**

Caroline Bosnic of Palm Lake Care Bethania  
Vanessa Gawith of Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park

## The Central Support team

At the end of each year, we host an annual company awards event that aims to showcase the best performing team members and teams from across our seven Palm Lake Care communities.

The 2024 awards have just been run - and won - with a stellar cast of winners announced. But when you think about it, the 'real' winners are our residents who are the ones who benefit from the dedication, loyalty and care that this talent pool provides daily. We congratulate these people and teams and are so grateful that they choose to call Palm Lake Care their (work) family!

**Bargara Staff Member of the Year:**  
Yari Ottoboni, Service Manager Support

**Beachmere Staff Member of the Year:**  
Laura Joyce, Personal Carer

**Bethania Staff Member of the Year:**  
Jamie Romana, Hotel Services

**Caloundra Staff Member of the Year:**  
Elissa Carter, Personal Care Support

**Deception Bay Staff Member of the Year:**  
Tania Bell, Administration Officer

**Mt Warren Park Staff Member of the Year:**  
Zilda De Camargo Teixeira, Personal Carer

**Toowoomba Staff Member of the Year:**  
Lyn Ferguson, Hotel Services

Palm Lake Care spans seven individual communities across South-East Queensland. Given the thousands of residents and team members who call Palm Lake Care their own, there's always so much going on! In our new regular series, let us connect you with your fellow communities and take a peek at what's been making news around the grounds...

## Beachmere



Staying connected to their community is important to our Beachmere residents.

So when Halloween rolled around, the residents decided they'd like to invite the local children to stop by for some 'trick or treat' goodies. Rest assured our visitors were all offered a treat - no tricks! The residents had a great time, smiling and talking with the visiting children who all came in costume. Some of our cheeky residents even scored a bag of Halloween lollies for themselves!

## Bethania

It's definitely the season for festivities - and we've seen it all at Palm Lake Care Bethania over the past few weeks!

From Melbourne Cup day 'Fashions on the Field' and more, to ghoulish costumes for Halloween, to the bright and wonderful Diwali cultural celebration, to all our various Christmas festivities, it's been a fun ride! One thing that we know for sure at Bethania is that their Lifestyle team brings the fun!





# Here, we are united

Palm Lake Care spans seven individual communities across South-East Queensland. Given the thousands of residents and team members who call Palm Lake Care their own, there's always so much going on! In our new regular series, let us connect you with your fellow communities and take a peek at what's been making news around the grounds...

## Bargara

Life is filled with great stories and one emerged during Bargara's commemorations for Remembrance Day last month.

At the November 11 Remembrance service, Palm Lake Care had two gentlemen gathered among the crowd who it turns out were both Warrant Officers at the Royal Australian Air Force base at Amberley back in the day. Pictured below, they are Barry Dahl (seated) and Don Jones. The pair hadn't seen each other their whole lives until recently when Don moved into our community. What a lovely and timely reunion.

Mavis Blackwood, who is 102 years old, helped lay the wreath at our service. Back in World War II, Mavis served in the Australian Royal Woman's Navy as a Wireless Telegraphist. She was also a Cryptographer and a Braille Translator.



## Caloundra



**Hip, hip, hooray to our friends at Palm Lake Care Caloundra on marking their second birthday!**

If there's one location that doesn't do things by halves it's our Caloundra community. Recently celebrating their 2nd birthday, the Caloundra team used the opportunity to stage a Gatsby Gala Event that Jay Gatsby himself would have been impressed with. The finest of food, 1920s-style fashion, bubbly refreshments and a host of excited residents combined to create an atmosphere that will be remembered for a long time to come. Two foundation residents and a handful of foundation team members were on hand to cut the official birthday cake. And to top off a wonderful event, team member Alissa Carter was announced as Employee of the Year for Palm Lake Care Caloundra! So many reasons to celebrate!

## Mt Warren Park

**Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park residents are a charitable bunch.**

They have fundraised for many different charities over the years and most recently held a community fundraiser in the lead-up to a visit from Harmony Hooves Healing Hearts. This organisation provides animal rescue and rehoming services while also using their animals for animal therapy and aged care/hospital visits. They even offer goat yoga sessions!

Harmony Hooves brought their delightful animals along to Mt Warren Park's recent Grandparent's Day and were so very grateful for the donation our residents provided them. It's just another way that our Palm Lake Care people stay connected to their local community. The additional reward is knowing that they are continuing to play a valuable role in society. Well done, MWP!



## Deception Bay



**At Deception Bay, we're lucky to have such an engaged and proud multicultural team.**

It was our contingent of Nepalese staff members who decided to bring some of their homeland culture to Deception Bay via their regular 'Fantasy Cruise' Happy Hour series.

The wonderful Nepalese staff shared their traditional music, dance and vibrant customs while also allowing residents to sample some authentic and delicious Nepalese dishes. We heard that the dancing was especially memorable!

We are so grateful to all our staff for sharing their beautiful and diverse cultures with us. Our residents love learning and these types of themed days allow them to reminisce about their exciting past travel adventures as well.



# Important information

## Meet our Central Support team

**Chief Executive Officer:**

Dan Aitchison

**Chief Operating Officer:**

Trish Heke

**Operations Support Lead:**

Eleanor Morgan

**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!