

The Difference

PALM LAKE CARE TOOWOOMBA FEBRUARY - MARCH 2025



Celebration central

Boy, we've had plenty of reasons to celebrate over the past few weeks. From Christmas parties to welcoming in the New Year, ours is a community that likes to come together for some fun!



Community is everything

The benefits of living in aged care are manifold. Make the most of the opportunity with these tips

Around the grounds

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

Another year flies by when you are having so much fun! "Fun" seems to be our middle name here at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba and I am really excited for the coming year.

2024 saw us focussing on our workforce, with agency usage drastically reduced and permanent staff recruitment. This has been very successful, with the involvement of residents and positive feedback received. Palm Lake Care Toowoomba also trialled our Clinical Nurses operating on weekends. This has received resounding support and feedback from residents, families and staff. We are seeking to continue this initiative into the future.

In 2025, we will continue to focus on bedding down our teams, in readiness for the launch of the new Aged Care Strengthened Standards, with the roll-out of competency-based education for staff.

As always, we seek your feedback - the good, the bad and the ugly - so we can continue to build a positive community for all. My door is always open. I very much look forward to the journey Palm Lake Care Toowoomba is embarking in on 2025.



Palm Lake Care
Chief Operating Officer,
Patricia Heke

At Palm Lake Care, our purpose is at the heart of everything we do: to build active, engaged and inclusive care communities. It's not just a goal; it's who we are. Each of you contributes to this by sharing your stories, your laughter, and even your occasional grumbles - yes, we hear those too, and they really matter.

Our diversity as a community is what makes this such a special place. With so many unique cultures, life experiences and perspectives, every day is a chance to learn something new. It's like having a library of living stories all around us - except instead of borrowing books, we borrow conversations over cups of tea or chats in the garden, over a meal or at a group activity.

Of course, fostering an inclusive community wouldn't be possible without tolerance and respect. It's about recognising that while we may have different traditions, beliefs or footy allegiances (I won't name teams), we all share the same desire to belong, connect and feel valued.

So, as we continue into the year, let's embrace what makes each of us unique while creating more opportunities to grow and connect together. Remember, we're not just neighbours - we're a community, thriving together.

And if someone offers you pineapple on pizza, consider giving it a try. You never know - it might grow on you!



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
SueD@palllake.com.au
Service Manager Support:
Edward Townsend

Admin: Louise King and Sam Crust

Clinical Manager: Jodi Harms

Clinical Nurse: Lisa Bergan

Lifestyle Team Leader: David Solomon

Housekeeping Team Leader: Mark

Barrett

Maintenance: Phillip Holton

Chef Manager: Larry Fernando



News briefs



Always learning

A group of Palm Lake Care team members from across our seven communities have worked diligently through their Foundations of Infection Prevention & Control course recently. It's a three-month intensive course that allows them to be classified as IPC Leads. Topics include environmental hygiene, outbreak management, employee health, surveillance, epidemiology and microbiology. Congratulations to Gurkirat Singh for completing this course and helping to further strengthen our awesome team's skillset.

Animal visits: Your questions answered

We often get asked about our policies around pets coming to visit. As a general rule, animals are very welcome to visit Palm Lake Care as they can provide much appreciated support and enhance our residents' wellbeing, as long as they meet these minimum requirements:

- Animals visiting Palm Lake Care should be healthy and well behaved.
- Animals, other than cats or dogs, must be assessed for personal pet visits, on a case by-case basis.
- Animals that are not permitted onsite include unwell pets or those infested with insects, mites or internal parasites. Also heavily pregnant animals, animals that have just given birth, newborn animals, any animals legislated as restricted or dangerous, and animals subject to special safety precautions are prohibited.

Visits from animals/pets should be booked in advance, with a time and date allocated by our Service Manager or Lifestyle Team Leader. Visits should be conducted within the resident's room or in outside areas. Some additional requirements we also ask for, before an animal visits, include:

- Current vaccination and veterinary health certification.
- Bathe and check animals for fleas, lice, ticks or other parasites within the 24-hours preceding their visit.
- Agree to remain in the areas in our community designated for animal visits/access (for infection and injury control, animal hygiene and animal welfare purposes)
- Toilet the animal prior to entering our community and collect any animal waste.
- Animals are to remain leashed or caged at all times.
- Respect our visiting times and locations.

We encourage you to speak to one of our team members before organising your pet's visit and we can ensure all the requirements are met for a happy visit.



Clinical Manager, Jodi Harms

We are at the start of another great year with lots planned for the coming months. Unfortunately, we did start off 2025 with a dreaded COVID outbreak. I would like to thank everyone for their patience during this time, given the restrictions placed on us by the Public Health Unit. I do understand these were drastic restrictions, however they did pay off in the long run with our outbreak only lasting two weeks. Well done to everyone involved.

Over the coming months we will be concentrating on education for the staff on the new strengthened Aged Care Standards which come into effect mid-year. Further information will also be shared with our residents and families on what these will look like for everyone.

It is with great sadness that I advise that our Clinical Nurse, Ramandeep Dhilon, will be finishing up in her position to focus on her family business. We wish her great success with this new venture. We have commenced actively recruiting for this role and will have someone appointed in the coming weeks.

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:

- **February 20**
- **March 20**

Food Focus meetings will be held on these dates:

- **February 14**
- **March 14**

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



Elvis has entered the building

Pictured this page: What a treat it is to have Tristan James stop by (aka Elvis!). He's such an engaging performer who always gets our residents up and dancing!





Pictured this page: Christmas, around our community, was made a lot brighter with thanks to those who participated in our Christmas door decorating competition. We were pleased to hand out a host of prizes to those door-decorators who put in a wonderful effort. Some are pictured here, receiving their reward. Well done to all who participated!



Lifestyle Team's report

What a great finish to a wonderful 2024 we had here at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba in recent weeks. After our Gala Ball and a lovely Christmas party, we went on to enjoy a visit from Elvis (pictured left) and celebrate all the festivities of the New Year.

Since Christmas, we have been a little restricted in our movements due to a health outbreak. Our Lifestyle Team members have, however, ensured everyone's spirits remained high, surprising our residents with lots of delicious treats like ice cream and chocolate, for example! We have now come out of that period of restriction and we look forward to returning to all our regular planned activities. I hope to see you all back at our activities soon.

Make sure you also keep an eye on the upcoming dates for our monthly Residents' meetings and Food Focus

meetings. The dates are always included on Page 3 of this newsletter and you can also ask a team member when the next meetings are. We love receiving your thoughts and feedback at these meetings, as this ensures we can continue to improve our offering.

As always, I am also keen to hear your new ideas for Lifestyle activities. We always strive to design a Lifestyle program that is shaped around our residents' interests, passions and hobbies so please don't hold back - let me know if there's something you'd like us to investigate for the program in 2025.

David Solomon
Lifestyle Coordinator

Making the most of life in aged care



Living in an aged care community offers unique opportunities to enhance your health and wellbeing while enjoying a vibrant and supportive environment.

Here are some tips to help you make the most of everything around you in our Palm Lake Care communities:

1. Stay active: Take advantage of the activities and facilities available. Whether it's joining a gentle exercise class, gardening in the outdoor spaces, or participating in a walking group, staying active is key to maintaining strength and mobility. Movement, no matter how small, keeps your body and mind sharp.

2. Engage socially: Being part of a community means you're never alone. Make the effort to connect with others — whether it's sharing stories over morning tea, playing a board game, or attending a group activity. Building relationships not only creates joy but also reduces feelings of loneliness.

3. Nourish your body: Enjoy the nutritious and delicious meals provided for you and make sure to stay hydrated throughout the day. If you have dietary preferences or needs, share them with your local team — they're here to ensure you're well cared for.

4. Participate in activities: From trivia nights and art classes to movie screenings and musical performances, there's always something happening in your Palm Lake Care community. Trying new things not only keeps life interesting but can uncover hidden talents or spark new passions that you may not have even realised existed!

5. Prioritise mental wellness: Find and use the quiet spaces in your Palm Lake Care community to relax, or engage in activities that bring you peace, like reading, meditating or enjoying the garden. If you ever feel overwhelmed, don't hesitate to reach out — support is always available.

6. Personalise your space: Make your room feel like home by adding personal touches like cherished photos, your favourite blanket, or even a special piece of furniture from your previous family home. A familiar environment can enhance your comfort and sense of belonging.

7. Communicate your needs: Your care team is here to support you, so let them know what you need to feel happy and healthy. Whether it's a new activity suggestion to add to the Lifestyle program, adjusting your care plan, or simply having a chat, our team members always ready to listen.

Remember, an aged care community isn't just a place to live — it's a place to thrive and this is especially the case at Palm Lake Care. By embracing the opportunities around you and staying engaged, you can enjoy a fulfilling and meaningful life surrounded by people who authentically care for you. Your Palm Lake Care team is here to support you every step of the way — reach out anytime!



Your questions, our answers

Here we answer some of the most common questions we get asked about living in an aged caring community...

Q: What does living in aged care actually mean?

A: Living in an aged care community like Palm Lake Care is about more than just having support when you need it — it's about being part of a vibrant, welcoming environment where you can enjoy meaningful connections and experiences. This is your home, and everything we do is designed to help you feel comfortable, included, and empowered.

Q: Will I still have my independence?

A: Absolutely! Independence is important, and we encourage you to live your life on your terms. You're free to make your own choices about how you spend your day, what activities you join, and how you personalise your space.

Q: What does being part of a community involve?

A: Being in a Palm Lake Care community means there are endless opportunities to connect, whether that's group activities, enjoying a quiet cuppa with a neighbour, or sharing a laugh at one of our events. You decide how involved you want to be — there's no pressure, just plenty of options.

Q: Will I feel like I belong here?

A: We work hard to create an inclusive, welcoming environment where everyone feels valued. Our purpose is to

build active, engaged, and inclusive care communities, and we're always looking for ways to help you feel at home.

Q: How does PLC help me stay active and engaged?

A: From exercise programs and creative workshops to movie nights and trivia, there's something for everyone. We also love hearing new ideas—if there's something you're passionate about, let us know!

Q: What kind of support will I have?

A: Our team is here to provide personalised care that supports your needs while respecting your independence. We're always here to lend a helping hand, have a chat, or just share a smile.

Q: How will this community respect my individuality?

A: Your traditions, preferences and personality are celebrated here. We understand that everyone is unique, and we make it a priority to honour what makes you, you.

Q: Can I make suggestions or share ideas?

A: Absolutely! We love hearing from residents. Whether it's a new activity idea or a way to improve our community, your input helps us make Palm Lake Care even better.

Q: What makes living in aged care a positive experience?

A: It's the people, the connections and the opportunities to live life fully and meaningfully. At Palm Lake Care, you'll find a supportive community where you're not just living — you're thriving.

Here, we are united

The Central Support team

It's no secret that people are at the heart of what we do here at Palm Lake Care so it should not come as a surprise that we take a lot of time and put a lot of effort into recruiting just the right people for our company's key roles. We're delighted to introduce to you one of the newest faces in our Central Support Office's team, Katie Cooley, who is our new Operations Manager.

With more than 25 years' experience in the aged care sector, Katie Cooley has dedicated her career to supporting aged care communities right across Australia.

Her journey began with the provision of pharmacy services and medication management solutions before transitioning into operational roles with aged care providers. Having worked across both not-for-profit and profitable organisations, Katie brings a deep understanding of the sector's challenges and opportunities while also bringing experience and passion to our seven Palm Lake Care aged caring communities.

"I'm deeply passionate about making a real difference in the lives of older Australians — ensuring they receive the dignity, respect and high-quality care they deserve," Katie says.

"Every resident has a story that matters, and I am committed to working alongside our teams to create an environment where they feel valued, supported and at home."



Pictured above: Palm Lake Care's new Operations Manager, Katie Cooley.

Katie says she is excited to join Palm Lake Care and collaborate with teams that share a commitment to excellence in care and resident experience.

She says our organisation's dedication to quality care and continuous improvement truly inspires her.

During her initial weeks at Palm Lake Care, Katie's focus will be on meeting our teams to understand the unique strengths of each community and service offering, while working together to support our Service Managers in enhancing workforce capability to ensure the best care for our residents.

"I have to thank everyone for such a warm welcome so far," Katie smiles. "I look forward to visiting our seven communities, getting to know everyone and also working together with the teams to make a meaningful impact."

"An exciting journey lies ahead at Palm Lake Care, and I'm thrilled to be part of it."

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...

Deception Bay

As we journey through life, friendships and family love grow more important.

Just like sunshine on a cloudy day, warm relationships can lift spirits. Regular chats, laughter and hugs can chase away the any loneliness and fill hearts with joy. It's why, at Deception Bay, the team fills their Lifestyle calendar with as many opportunities as possible for neighbourhood friends to gather and family to stop by. The Christmas/New Year period gave them plenty of great opportunities to gather, and they've continued that spirit in earnest already in 2025 with their recent Australia Day festivities (pictured).

We love it when family members stop by across all seven of our communities, so make sure you set up regular opportunities to foster connections with your loved ones. And if you can't physically catch up, you're always as close as a phone/video call. When families and caregivers unite to nurture these relationships, they create a vibrant tapestry of love, laughter and belonging for seniors. By believing in the magic of connection and celebrating the simple moments, we ensure that our treasured elders enjoy every colourful day to the fullest.



Mt Warren Park



Who says you can't make a difference in your local community when you live in aged care?

In mid-January, the Mt Warren Park Lifestyle Team packed up a busload of eager residents and off they headed to Bethania Community Centre to volunteer some time to an organisation called Kids4Kids Foundation. This charitable organisation was started in 2017 by a (then) 9-year-old local boy name Samuel, who saw a need to help fellow classmates who were struggling through domestic violence situations and had none of the 'tools' they needed for an education. The group packs donated essential stationery items into school bags for these disadvantaged children.

The 600 back-to-school packs that our residents helped assemble in January were given to local school chaplains for distribution to those school families in need. Our residents loved helping out with the packing of thousands of stationery items and it was certainly an eye-opener for them to see how many people in our community need assistance with these basic essentials.

"My residents are passionate about helping the disadvantaged in our local community," Lifestyle Team leader Leona says. "When I told them about this particular charity, they jumped at the chance to volunteer. The residents love that they are still able to contribute to their local community in ways like this."

Leona says Kids4Kids was incredibly happy to have our residents along to help. The group is looking forward to going back and helping Kids4Kids again later this year.

Here, we are united

Bargara

The Palm Lake Care Bargara Lifestyle Team is always presenting vibrant entertainers and engaging activities to their residents and these past few months have been no exception.

We especially love it when our Palm Lake Resort 'cousins' stop by. Palm Lake Resort Bargara's "Palm Lake Singers" is a choir formed by the resort's homeowners. The choir's male members have formed a separate choir group called "The Barnacles". Pictured below, The Barnacles stopped by to see their Palm Lake Care Bargara friends recently to sing sea shanties - and they were very good! Bargara also hosted a (literally) vibrant 1960s/70s day that took the whole community back in time! Among the day's activities, the residents tie-dyed some t-shirts and enjoyed an afternoon 'hippy party'. What fun!



Beachmere

Our Palm Lake Care Beachmere community has seen an exciting new leadership team appointed for 2025.

While they say change is as good as a holiday, lucky for our beautiful waterfront community at Beachmere, every day is a holiday when you live on the edge of Moreton Bay! In exciting news for this community, however, Joanne Brown has just been appointed the new Service Manager in



2025. While new in this role, Joanne's journey with Palm Lake Care stretches more than 12 months. Pictured above, she has previous career experience in clinical and quality assurance and is looking forward to using those skills in this exciting career promotion.

Beachmere has also welcomed Sandeep Vaid as the newly appointed Service Manager Support. Sandeep has a pretty amazing track record. He trained under Gordon Ramsay, so the residents are encouraged to have a chat with him about his incredible life experiences in the culinary world before his move into the aged care sector.

We've also seen Jasdeep Kaur recently appointed Beachmere's Clinical Manager and finally, Chef Manager Neil Galpin (who had worked at Palm Lake Care Beachmere since its official opening), has also resigned and we welcome Thorvaldur Bragason — known as 'Toddi'.

Palm Lake Care really benefits from its large network of seven communities stretching the length of South-East Queensland. When we do have unexpected changes to our teams, there's always someone from across the group to jump in and lend a qualified hand. For example, Caroline Bosnic (Palm Lake Care Bethania's Service Manager) stepped in when Beachmere's Service Manager role was vacated and the recruitment process was underway, ensuring a seamless transition for residents. We really are lucky to be able to call on our vast and experienced Palm Lake Care network and the greater Palm Lake Group's almost 50 years of operational experience.

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Bethania

Palm Lake Care Bethania offers a wonderful opportunity for the gentlemen of their community to come together for some important male bonding time.

Male-only social groups for senior men provide essential emotional, mental and physical health benefits. As men age, they may struggle with social isolation due to retirement, loss of friends or changes in family dynamics. Gathering in male-only spaces allows them to bond over shared experiences, hobbies and interests in a relaxed and comfortable setting. This was especially the case during the Bethania boys' recent bus trip to Yatala Pies. According to the Team members who went along for the ride, the bus was full of laughter, there were many car stories told and everyone enjoyed listening to the trucks roll down the M1. Groups like this offer a sense of camaraderie to reduce any loneliness. Additionally, these gatherings allow men to support each other, share advice and find purpose, ultimately enhancing their quality of life as they age.



Caloundra



The Palm Lake Care Caloundra team knows just how important it is for our dedicated team members to engage in a fun and social way with our residents, as well as in their normal professional manner.

So, when Australia Day rolled around this year, there was no doubting that our team members would be keen to battle it out with residents (and each other!) in some very fun, Aussie-themed games. The thong-throwing championship was a hotly contested event, as you can see by the photos above. The team also joined their residents for a delicious alfresco barbecue on the day, giving them a chance to chat socially with our residents while they shared a meal. Australia Day provided everyone at Palm Lake Care Caloundra with the perfect excuse to come together for fun, while celebrating the incredible working relationships we have across our care community.

Important information

Meet our Central Support team

Chief Executive Officer:
Dan Aitchison

Chief Operating Officer:
Patricia Heke

Operations Manager:
Katie Cooley

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!



Here we make a difference

PALM LAKE CARE TOOWOOMBA

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