



IT'S THE SEASON OF LOVE

With Valentine's Day on the horizon, we look at why creating gifts for your loved ones has benefits all 'round

MOVING WITH PURPOSE

2026 might just be the year you make your move - for myriad health benefits

AROUND THE GROUNDS

Catch up with what your Palm Lake Care neighbours are doing here and also further afield

Welcome



Palm Lake Care
Bargara

SERVICE MANAGER,
GENE DEMOS

Happy New Year to everyone in our Palm Lake Care Bargara community! As we step into 2026, I'd like to take a moment to wish our residents, families, and staff a year filled with good health, happiness, and plenty of smiles. I'd also like to extend a very warm welcome to our new residents who have recently joined us – whether you are newly settled or still finding your way, we're so glad to have you as part of our home.

This time of year is always a chance to reflect and reset, and as we move forward together, our focus remains on continuing to improve the service and care we provide. We are committed to listening, learning, and making positive changes where they matter most. Your feedback – whether it's a suggestion, a concern, or something you feel we're doing well – is incredibly important and helps guide us in the right direction.

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, I encourage you to remember how important kindness, connection, and care are in everything we do.



Palm Lake Care
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
DAN AITCHISON

After a very busy 2025 that saw our teams diligently focussed on transitioning into the new Aged Care Act's strengthened Aged Care Standards, we all enjoyed the earned celebrations that the festive season delivered. I feel I can speak for all seven of our care communities when I say that there's a wonderful new energy about the company right now, as we kick off a bright new year with gusto.

With the learnings of 2025 firmly bedded down, 2026 already feels like it will be a year of expansion and growth. We've seen this with the recommencement of admissions across our communities. Our company made a conscious decision to halt new admissions in the second half of last year so we could put laser focus on the roll out of the strengthened Aged Care Standards across our sites. With that transition successful, we've been welcoming many new faces right across our group. I encourage our longer-term residents to make sure they stop and say hello to any new faces they happen upon in the hallways of their community. It's been wonderful to watch the new residents get to know our staff and form friendships with their neighbours along the way.

From a growth perspective, our staff will continue to receive valuable training and education right throughout 2026. Our team of Clinical Practice and Risk Advisors (who operate out of our Palm Lake Care Central Support Office, within our Clinical Governance Team) have commenced the roll out of new staff education in all our communities, starting with Toowoomba and Caloundra. Staff there have received skills training and knowledge updates to ensure the delivery of good practice, which ultimately ensures great care and service outcomes.

On the topic of expansion, and in some very exciting news for our company, we'll also break ground on our eighth Palm Lake Care community in the coming months. Palm Lake Care Forster, in New South Wales, will be our first aged caring community outside of South-East Queensland. We look forward to supporting the local community at Forster with this brand new community.



Palm Lake Care Bargara

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

PHONE:
07 4331 0000

STREET ADDRESS:
55 Wearing Road,
Bargara QLD 4670

EMAIL:
bargaracarefm@palllake.com.au

WEBSITE:
palllakecare.com.au

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

Key local personnel

SERVICE MANAGER
Gene Demos
GeneD@palllake.com.au

SERVICE MANAGER SUPPORT
Yari Ottoboni

CLINICAL MANAGER
Joleen Barratt

HOUSEKEEPING TEAM LEADER
Currently recruiting

LIFESTYLE TEAM LEADER
Currently recruiting

CHEF MANAGER
Currently recruiting

MAINTENANCE
John Doolan



News briefs

Clinical Manager's note

This month we've been celebrating Memory Month, honouring the stories, experiences and treasured moments shared by our residents, staff and families. The response has been extraordinary. We've received beautiful memories that reflect not only the lives lived within our community, but also the deep connections that continue to grow here every day.



These moments – a favourite song, a shared laugh, a quiet cup of tea, a story told for the hundredth time – remind us why we do what we do. In aged care, it is often the smallest interactions that hold the greatest meaning. They ground us, guide us and reinforce the importance of slowing down long enough to truly see the person in front of us.

As we continue building a strong, connected Palm Lake Care community, Memory Month reinforces our commitment to changing the way aged care is delivered. Together, we are shaping a culture that honours dignity, celebrates individuality, and places our most valuable community members at the heart of everything we do.

Clinical Manager
Joleen Barratt

Lend a hand?

One of the most rewarding roles across our seven communities is that of the volunteer. We have a small, yet mightily, band of volunteers who stop by to spend time with our residents and support our Lifestyle Team with the facilitation of activities, but we are always on the hunt to find more volunteer helpers, as our residents simply love interacting with them. If this sounds like a role for you, our contact details are on Page 2.

Get social

Are you on social media? We are, too! You can find Palm Lake Care on Facebook and also Instagram. Make sure you like and follow our social media profiles to see even more news from all seven of our communities (and counting!).
Facebook: @palllakecare
Instagram: @palllake.care

Meeting dates, for your diary

We are pleased to announce the upcoming Residents' Meeting dates, where everyone is welcome to join in and share thoughts, ideas and feedback. Our Residents' Meetings are scheduled for:

- February 12
- March 12
- April 9

These meetings are an excellent way to stay connected and informed about what's happening at Bargara.



Our resident lovebirds celebrate this Valentine's Day

Kel and Ngari's love story began at a small-town dance in Mount Morgan, where a chance meeting quickly turned into a whirlwind courtship. Before long, they were married in Maryborough, starting a journey that has now spanned an incredible 61 years together.

Anyone who knows Kel and Ngari will agree – their relationship is built on trust and respect, but has always been defined by plenty of humour and laughter. They would also agree that a love like theirs is the special kind that only grows richer with time.

They kick off at 10.30am but please confirm the time before arrival.

Our upcoming Food Focus Meetings will be held on:

- February 18
- March 11
- April 8

We look forward to hearing your valuable input as we continue to work together to make our Palm Lake Care Bargara community an even better place.

Merry Christmas!

Pictured this page: On December 10, we celebrated our Christmas party. The event was a joyful celebration filled with festive cheer, Christmas carols, and plenty of fun and laughter shared by everyone. The room came alive with music and smiles as people sang along and enjoyed the warm holiday atmosphere.

The highlight of the day was an unexpected appearance by the Grinch, who quickly stole the show with antics that had everyone laughing. It was a memorable event that perfectly captured the spirit of the season and brought everyone together in true holiday style.



Elvis is in the building

Pictured left, below: Our Elvis birthday party was a rock 'n' roll celebration to remember, when we honoured his 91st birthday in true King of Rock style. The room was buzzing with energy, filled with classic Elvis hits, dancing, and plenty of smiles all around. From the music to the atmosphere, everything captured the spirit, charm, and timeless appeal of Elvis. It was a fun-filled event that had everyone tapping their feet, singing along, and celebrating an icon whose legacy still gets the party going. Thank you – thank you very much.



Giddy-up for the Cup

Pictured right, below: Melbourne Cup Day brought our community together with fashion, food and friendly competition.





The love of creating

This time of year reminds us of love in its many forms – not just the grand gestures, but the small, meaningful moments. And there’s no better act of love than creating by hand.

The stroke of a brush. The threading of a needle. The folding of paper to create something new. When you make something by hand, each movement – however small – becomes an act of love. Not only for the person you may be creating it for, but for yourself, and for the joy of creating, too.

And it turns out, the creative process loves us right back. Hands-on activities have long been linked to improved wellbeing among seniors. Studies show that engaging in creative pursuits can help reduce stress, support cognitive function and lift mood. But beyond the health benefits, making things offers an even greater gift – a sense of purpose and identity.

For many Palm Lake Care residents, when they look back on the decades that led them here, a love of creating is a common thread. Sewing, knitting, drawing and repairing – not to mention gardening, building and cooking – were once everyday parts of life, often done for loved ones or the simple satisfaction of doing something well. Returning to these activities can trigger memories, restore confidence and provide comfort through familiar movements and routines.

There is also a strong social element to creating together. Group craft sessions, gardening clubs or shared projects encourage connection without pressure. Conversation flows naturally, stories are shared and friendships form. For those who prefer quiet company, creating side by side can feel just as meaningful.

At Palm Lake Care, creative activities are designed to be inclusive and flexible. Residents are encouraged to take part in ways that suit their interests, energy levels and abilities. There’s no expectation to produce something perfect – only to enjoy the experience.

As the year unfolds, perhaps the most meaningful act of self-love isn’t about change at all. It’s about continuing to create – to use your hands, express yourself and find joy in making something, simply for the love of it.

Moving with purpose

Staying active doesn’t mean pushing yourself or keeping up with others. Instead, it’s about choosing the right kind of movement for the right purpose – and doing what feels safe, comfortable and achievable.

Different types of movement support different areas of health, and even gentle activity can have benefits:

Movement for bone strength

Bones respond to movement that encourages them to carry weight. Standing exercises, supported walking and light resistance activities help signal to the body that bones are still needed. Over time, this can help slow age-related bone loss and support strength. These movements can be adapted using chairs, rails or mobility aids to ensure safety and confidence.

Movement for balance and fall prevention

Balance relies on coordination, muscle strength and awareness of body position. Slow, controlled movements – such as tai chi or guided balance exercises – allow the body to practise stability in a safe way. Improving balance can reduce the risk of falls and help residents feel more confident moving through their day.

Movement for heart health

Gentle aerobic activity supports circulation, heart health and blood pressure. Walking, dancing or participating in light exercise sessions can raise the heart rate slightly without strain. Regular movement helps the heart work more efficiently and supports overall endurance – not just for exercise, but for daily activities.

Movement for flexibility and mobility

Stretching and range-of-motion exercises help keep joints moving freely. Maintaining flexibility can make everyday tasks – such as dressing, reaching or turning – feel easier and more comfortable. These movements can be done seated or standing and are especially helpful when performed regularly.

Movement for cognitive health

Movement benefits the brain as well as the body. Activities that involve learning sequences, following instructions or coordinating movements stimulate multiple areas of the brain. This brain-body connection supports memory, focus and mental agility, while also encouraging engagement and enjoyment.



The success of Palm Lake Care 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 one of our Laundry Attendants, Sharon.



We would like to introduce to you one of our lovely Palm Lake Care Bargara residents, Ralph Morley.

Meet the team

What are three words that best describe you? Organised, good at time and people management, and friendly.

Tell us about your other employment/work roles leading up to your current position with PLC? I previously worked at ALDI for around 10 years, where I progressed to a Deputy Manager role. I have also worked in aged care as a carer for several years and am a qualified gym instructor and personal trainer.

What does the average day entail, in your role here at PLC? My average day includes washing and folding, engaging and mixing with residents, and spending time interacting with them.

What’s your favourite part of your job? Talking and engaging with the residents.

How do you like to spend your downtime/days off? Spending time with my family and grandchildren, going to the beach, and going to the gym.

What is something that our residents may not know about you? I’m quite sporty and athletic. I have been heavily involved in gym training, triathlons, and marathons over the past 10 years, and am getting back into it.

What advice do you have for others considering a career in aged care? You need to be caring and patient – those are the most important qualities in aged care.

Meet your neighbour

Ralph Morley is of English, Irish and Welsh heritage, but proudly calls Australia home. He grew up in Chinchilla, living at an outstation known as Baking Board (which was named after a tree stump, where people once baked their bread). His family later moved to Fernvale, in Ipswich, where his father worked at the railway station, and Ralph fondly remembers going on picnics with him. As a teenager Ralph played rugby league, and also began a lifelong love for vintage cars – one still remains in the family. Fun fact: Ralph once owned over 300 zygote cacti.

Ralph played a role in starting a Baptist church in Goodna and Gailles, and believes the Methodist church there is still running today. He studied Theology in Brisbane for four years to become a Pastor and met his wife, a schoolteacher, during this time. They moved to Maleny, but after her passing, Ralph moved to Bundaberg.

Throughout his life, Ralph has worked in many roles, from a steam and diesel fitter on the Queensland Railways to a marine engineer on Thursday Island, where he also controlled prawn trawlers. He later took over a church in Ayr. There, he even learned to fly planes so he could travel across Australia to support different churches. At one time, Ralph’s church had over 500 members who helped build both the local primary and high school. Although he is no longer a practising Pastor and now holds Merit status, Ralph has preached for most of his life and has married many couples.

Today at Palm Lake Care Bargara, Ralph enjoys chatting with fellow residents, values the Lifestyle team who brighten his days, and especially loves the bus outings. His advice to younger generations is simple and heartfelt: live your life as God would have lived it – live and pray.

OUR COMMUNITIES



Your rights, your choices, your voice

The strengthened Aged Care Standards put the power in your hands.

Central Support Office

At Palm Lake Care, we believe that every resident has the right to feel respected, heard and in control of their everyday life. These principles sit at the heart of the Statement of Rights, one of the new Strengthened Standards that guide how aged care services are delivered across Australia.

Recently, the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) highlighted the importance of embedding these rights into daily practice — not just as words on paper, but as lived experiences. This includes recognising the important role of registered supporters, family members and advocates who help residents make decisions when they need support to do so.

Supported decision-making means that residents are encouraged and assisted to make your own choices wherever possible — about your care, routines, preferences, and the things that matter most to you. It recognises that needing support does not mean losing independence or control. Instead, it's about working together so your wishes, values and voice remain central.

Whether it's deciding what time to get up, how care is provided, what activities to join or who is involved in important discussions, you have the right to be included and respected. Palm Lake Care's role is to listen, to explain options clearly, and to ensure decisions are made with you, the resident — not for you.

While the Federal Government's Statement of Rights offers a long and detailed list of strengthened rights and principles under the new Aged Care Act, OPAN has provided an abridged version. All Australian aged care providers and aged care workers are legally obliged to deliver services in line with these rights:

- **Autonomy and freedom of choice:** I have the right to make my own choices about my care, relationships, lifestyle and taking risks, with support if I want it.
- **Equitable access:** I have the right to have my needs assessed in a way that works for me including having my cultural background, past trauma or cognitive conditions, such as dementia, respected.
- **Safe, quality care:** I have the right to be treated with dignity and respect by experienced aged care workers who value my identity, culture, spirituality and diversity.
- **Privacy and confidentiality:** I must have my privacy respected and my personal information kept confidential, and be in control of who this information is shared with.
- **Communication and complaints:** I have the right to be informed in a way I understand and to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. My feedback must be dealt with fairly and promptly.
- **Support and social connections:** I can stay connected to important people, pets and culture including independent advocates. As an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander I can stay connected to Country and Island Home.

By embedding the Statement of Rights into everyday interactions, we continue to build communities where dignity, choice and genuine partnership are part of daily life — because your voice matters.



Long time love

As of June 2025, Delma and Frank Murray are recognised as having Australia's longest marriage. Married in 1945, the Newcastle couple met in 1939 and last year marked 80 years of wedded bliss. They have two children, five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren and are acknowledged by The Australian Book of Records.



Caloundra

Caloundra residents William and Florence Hitchen have a love story that dates back almost seven decades, to a grass paddock airstrip in regional New South Wales...

According to Flo: "After completing my midwifery training at Crown Street Hospital in Sydney, I was eager to begin my career. Although I hoped one day to work in the UK, I accepted a temporary posting in rural NSW to gain experience. My journey began aboard a DC3 aircraft, landing on a grass paddock airstrip. Stepping off the plane, I felt a mix of excitement and uncertainty as I looked for the taxi arranged to take me to the hospital."



According to Bill: "I had grown up in Gilgandra, working in my family's taxi and bus business. That Sunday, I was needed at the airfield to collect the hospital's relief staff. When the DC3 came to a stop and Florence stepped out, I noticed her immediately. She was very pretty, and her warm smile turned a routine job into a moment I would never forget. As I helped her into the taxi, neither of us could have known that this chance meeting would begin a 69-year love story."

Bill and Flo were married in 1956 and built a life shaped by partnership and hard work. Together, they ran a fuel distribution business across country NSW before moving the business on to Rockhampton, where they settled and raised two children, David and Deborah. The Hitchen's family now includes three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

"We have travelled widely, but our greatest joy has always been the life we built side by side," Flo says.

"Since retiring to the Sunshine Coast nearly 30 years, we remain deeply grateful for that DC3 flight that brought us together seven decades ago," smiles Bill.

Deception Bay

One of our lovely Deception Bay residents, Beverly, aged 89, has just found a new calling in life: as her community's resident DJ!

Bev first started collecting records in 1972. Last year, while tending to her home, Bev's nephew saw the record collection and decided to bring them in to Palm Lake Care for Beverly. Bev purchased a new record player to listen to the records and with so many positive comments from neighbours, she realised just how much those others of her generation would love to hear her records and the popular songs of their time. Bev decided to become a DJ and was thrilled to hold her first concert here in our community on January 21! She had so many residents turn up and enjoy the music, filled with so many memories. She plans to continue holding concerts where her friends and neighbours can join in to listen to her collection of wonderful golden songs over a morning tea.



OUR COMMUNITIES



Your sunny helper

Sunlight triggers the skin to produce vitamin D, which is essential for calcium absorption, strong bones and immune system support. As we age, the skin becomes less efficient at producing this vitamin so it's a great idea to get some sun on your skin - but not too much!

Beachmere

What's more Aussie than Christmas by the sea?

Our Palm Lake Care Beachmere residents are very lucky to have Moreton Bay as their immediate next door neighbour, so it's little wonder that our festive season celebrations embraced the bayside alfresco energy. Fresh air, sunshine, great food, family and friends... Summer festivities are a delight at Beachmere!



Bethania

Getting out and about in the great South-East is one of our Bethania residents' favourite past times.

Our community bus has taken residents to lunch outings at local taverns, for example, and also recently right into the heart of Brisbane's CBD to allow residents to keep up with the changing landscape of the city they know so well.



Volunteers get rewards

Volunteering is rewarding because it boosts mental health by releasing 'feel-good' chemicals like dopamine and oxytocin, reduces stress, and fosters a sense of purpose and accomplishment. Not mention the reward that the recipient receives! Volunteering enhances self-confidence, connects us to our community, and provides opportunities to learn new skills while making a genuine, positive impact.



Mt Warren Park

Our recent highlight for our Mt Warren Park community was attending their local community centre to volunteer for "Kids 4 Kids".

This local charity provides school supplies to families in the area who might need a financial hand. Our residents loved packing the stationery kits and giving back to their community in this way - it was, in fact, their second year of volunteering with Kids 4 Kids. Such a rewarding day for everyone involved!



Toowoomba

Our Toowoomba community is blessed to have a special relationship with its neighbouring Palm Lake Resort.

For example, the Palm Lake Resort Toowoomba Ukulele Group delighted us on Australia Day by dressing up in costumes and performing a lovely concert. With a sausage sizzle and Happy Hour drinks to follow, it was a great day. Oi, Oi, Oi!



Important information

Meet our Central Support team

Chief Executive Officer:

Dan Aitchison

Operations Manager:

Katie Cooley

Executive Manager – Clinical

Governance: Lisa Patterson

Executive Manager – Quality and

Risk: Patricia Heke

Operations Support Lead:

Caroline Bosnic

Support Services Manager:

Steve Wheeler

Customer Experience Manager:

Carmel Morgan

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. You can also email your feedback directly to plcfeedback@palllake.com.au And, of course, 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!