



# The Difference

BEACHMERE FEBRUARY – MARCH 2026



## 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

# Here, you're always welcome



**Palm Lake Care**  
Beachmere  
SERVICE MANAGER,  
JOANNE BROWN

Welcome to the new year! Here's to embracing 2026 with optimism, excitement, and joy. At Palm Lake Care Beachmere, we are already looking ahead to our next special event in March: a resident-voted Country Hoedown. We warmly invite residents and families to come along and enjoy the festivities together.

Christmas seemed to come and go so quickly, and it's hard to believe we are already well into the new year. As we move forward, our focus for this year is on maintaining compliance with the strengthened Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission standards, while also aligning with the new Aged Care Act legislation. To support everyone through these changes, we plan to host monthly information evenings. These sessions will provide an opportunity for residents and families to learn more about what's changing, ask questions, and share how we can continue to best support our older people to meet their individual needs. We hope you all enjoyed a wonderful Christmas and New Year, and we wish you happiness and good health throughout 2026.



**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 Beachmere

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

**PHONE:**  
07 3517 7000

**STREET ADDRESS:**  
145 Bishop Road,  
Beachmere QLD 4510

**EMAIL:**  
beachmerecaresm@palmlake.com.au

**WEBSITE:**  
palmlakecare.com.au

**GET SOCIAL:**  
Follow us on Facebook  
and on Instagram (@palm.lake.care)

### Key local personnel

**SERVICE MANAGER**  
Joanne Brown  
JoanneBr@palmlake.com.au

**SERVICE MANAGER SUPPORT**  
Sujan Shrestha

**CLINICAL MANAGER**  
Jasdeep Kaur

**HOUSEKEEPING TEAM LEADER**  
Sharon Baker

**LIFESTYLE TEAM LEADER**  
Currently recruiting

**CHEF MANAGER**  
Thorvaldur Bragason

**MAINTENANCE**  
Ryan Jeanes



## News briefs



### Go team!

Congratulations to these esteemed Palm Lake Care team members who have recently been named Employees of the Month. Keep up the great work!

- **December:** Michelle Shaw (PCA)
- **January:** Janes Haffenden-carr

Congratulations also to our 2025 Employee of the Year, Donna Elphick (pictured). Thank you for all of your hard work – this award is very well deserved!

### 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:** @palmlakecare  
**Instagram:** @palm.lake.care

### Show you care

Did you know you can show your appreciation for our staff and residents on our website? Our 'Thank a Care Worker' page makes it easy to share a kind word or message of gratitude with the dedicated team who go above and beyond every day. You can also brighten someone's day through 'Message a Resident', a simple way to stay connected with your loved one by sending thoughtful notes and well wishes. Both features help spread joy and connection across our Palm Lake Care communities. Visit [www.palmlakecare.com.au](http://www.palmlakecare.com.au)

### 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.



### Happy birthday!

We'd like to wish a very happy birthday to the following people who recently celebrated another lap around the sun:

**December birthdays**

- Judith Weaver

**January birthdays**

- Patricia Twinchek
- June Hurt
- Thomas Partridge
- Helen Fox
- Tomoko Porter
- Gloria Millburn
- William Walton

### 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 and feedback:

- **February 20**
- **March 20**
- **April 17**

Our next Food Focus meetings are:

- **February 20**
- **March 20**
- **April 17**

These meetings are an excellent way to stay connected and informed about what's happening at Beachmere. Weather permitting, meetings will take place on our beautiful covered deck. We look forward to seeing you there and hearing your valuable input as we continue to work together to make Palm Lake Care Beachmere an even better place to live.

## Festive fun!

**Pictured this page:** Our community came together at the end of 2025 to celebrate Christmas in true Palm Lake Care Beachmere style. Good food, great costumes and tons of festive cheer. What a day!



## Clinical Team's note

Happy New Year to all our wonderful residents and families. We look forward to continuing to provide high-quality care to our residents in the year ahead, with a new quarterly focus to support improved health outcomes and resident wellbeing.

Our key priorities for this quarter include reducing:

- Falls
- Skin injuries
- Polypharmacy
- Psychotropic medication use

These initiatives will be implemented in collaboration with our onsite clinical pharmacist, doctors and clinical team to ensure safe, evidence-based care. If you or your family members receive phone calls or emails from our onsite pharmacist regarding medication reviews or recommendations, we encourage you to engage in open discussion. This helps ensure shared decision-making and the best possible outcomes for our residents.

We will also continue our efforts to reduce unnecessary antibiotic use as part of our commitment to Antimicrobial Stewardship. Antibiotics will only be used when clinically indicated to treat infections such as UTIs, wounds, or skin infections. As excessive or inappropriate antibiotic use can lead to resistance, we are working closely with doctors to ensure pathology results are obtained before prescribing antibiotics wherever possible.

### STAFFING UPDATE

We are pleased to share that ongoing staff recruitment is strengthening our clinical team and reducing reliance on agency staff. To enhance clinical governance and continuity of care over weekends, we welcome Priteshni Deo, who will work Monday to Friday, and Renu Kisi, who will cover Friday to Monday.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. We look forward to another year of compassionate, safe, and high-quality care.



**Clinical Manager**  
Jasdeep Kaur

## 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.





## Meet the team

Like integral links in a very important chain, everyone's role makes a difference. Meet Monika Monika, Enrolled Nurse.

### What are three words that best describe you?

I think people would say I am a good communicator; I have good time management and am inquisitive.

### Tell us about your other employment/work roles leading up to your current position with PLC?

I have spent the last few years working in aged care and I really love it; it feels like home to me.

### What does the average day entail, in your role here at PLC?

My days are usually busy but challenging. I like to take time to talk to the residents and get to know them. I find I am well supported here at PLC Beachmere to be the best nurse I can be.

### What's your favourite part of your job?

My favourite part of my job is being able to talk to residents, I really enjoy making them smile.

### How do you like to spend your downtime/days off?

I would say my days off are pretty boring, but I do use them to rest and relax.

### What is something that our residents may not know about you?

I don't know if the residents know that I am a good seamstress, I can sew with a machine or by hand.

### What advice do you have for others considering a career in aged care?

The advice I have for anyone wanting to enter a career in aged care is, be polite, give the resident time to be themselves and to get what they need to say out and support them to live their best lives.

I grew up as a country girl on my parents' farm in Harrisville, Queensland, alongside my younger sister. My childhood was filled with fond memories of playing with our cats and dogs, milking cows, and helping feed the calves.

In my early adult years, I worked in Brisbane at Queensland Rail as a stenographer. One of the simple joys of that time was heading home at 5pm to a delicious home-cooked meal made by Mum and Dad.

Trevor and I married when I was 21, and together we built a beautiful life in Eastern Heights, raising our three daughters. As a family, we loved spending time at the beach and enjoying picnics together – those are still some of my favourite memories.

Throughout my life I've had many hobbies, including craftwork, painting, reading, baking, and of course, tennis – my absolute favourite. I used to bake plenty of yummy treats for family and friends. These days, I enjoy spending time with Trevor and listening to light classical music, especially André Rieu.

If I had to describe myself in three words, I'd say funny and caring, and my daughters would tell you I'm "the ants' pants." I feel very fortunate and deeply loved by my family.

My advice to young adults would be: Run – run as fast as you can! Enjoy life, go on adventures, and experience as much as possible before settling down and having children.



## Meet a neighbour

Our community is full of stories. Let us introduce you to one of our lovely Palm Lake Care Beachmere residents, Beverley McCormack.

Pictured: Don't forget it's Valentine's Day on February 14. Maybe you could create some gifts for your loved ones?



## The love of creating

This time of year encourages us to reflect – on what we love, what brings us comfort, and what makes us feel most like ourselves. It's when we're reminded of love in its many forms – not just the grand gestures, but the small, meaningful moments.

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.

Others discover new creative interests later in life. Painting for the first time, trying a craft class or learning a new

technique can be both stimulating and empowering. The joy isn't in mastering a skill or producing something perfect – it's in the process itself.

Of course, making also offers tangible rewards. Completing a project, no matter how small, provides a sense of accomplishment that can be especially meaningful when independence or mobility feels reduced. Finishing something with your own hands reinforces the feeling that you are capable, creative and still contributing.

Importantly, making doesn't need to be physically demanding. Activities can be adapted to suit different abilities – whether that means working at a table, using modified tools, taking breaks or focusing on simpler tasks. Even gentle, repetitive actions like folding fabric, arranging flowers or sorting pieces can be calming and fulfilling.

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.

# 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.

## Bargara

**The love stories continue up the Queensland coast to tropical Bargara where we found another Palm Lake Care couple proudly celebrating their love.**

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, the pair was 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 also agree that a love like theirs is the kind that only grows richer with time.



# OUR COMMUNITIES



## Sounds so good!

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

### Deception Bay

**Beverly first started collecting records back in 1972 and it's a prized collection that is still paying dividends more than 50 years later!**

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.



## 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!



### 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.



### 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@pallmlake.com.au](mailto:plcfeedback@pallmlake.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!