



ALZHEIMERS MANAWATŪ NEWSLETTER

Thank you to everyone who popped on some purple for our annual Memory Walks.

Dementia can sometimes feel like a lonely journey but the Memory Walks show that no one has to walk it alone.



More Memory Walk photos inside.

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW MANAGER, VERITY MURPHY

For those I haven't met yet, I have a background in nursing with a focus on elderly care.

I am thoroughly enjoying my role as manager, working alongside a wonderful and dedicated, supportive team.



Look out for your neighbours, your mates, your family/whanau, your community, yourself over Christmas.

If you are travelling during the Christmas break, we have advice in this newsletter on how to make this less stressful for people with dementia. We also have articles about how to make Christmas dementia-friendly and things to be aware of during Summer for people with dementia.

Be safe and be well!!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year, Meri Kirihimete and roll on our Christmas parties!



Christmas Parties

Feilding: MKC December 5

Levin MKC: December 12

Dannevirke MKC: December 11 Palmerston North MKC: December 17

Alzheimers Manawatū and the Marion Kennedy Clubs will be closed through the Christmas/New Year period from 4pm on Friday 19 December - Monday 5 January. Marion Kennedy Clubs will resume on Monday 5 January.



Thank you to everyone who got involved in our Memory Walks:
The verdict is in; we had a great Memory Walk in Palmerston North, ending at The Verdict Cafe in The Square.



Thank you to Muaūpoko Tribal Authority in Levin who did a lovely performance at the end of the Levin Memory Walk.
This year the Dannevirke Memory Walk ended at Te Kete Hauora o Rangitāne's hall, with yummy kai provided by them.



The free use of the community table at the Feilding Farmers Market during the Feilding Memory Walk was great.

Thank you to the Mayors and Deputy Mayor who spoke at the walks.

We were also out and about:



checking out the sculptures on the recently opened Manawatū Tararua Highway (left), horsing around (below left) and Palmerston North MKC members saw another sculpture- this time of late Formula 1 race car driver Chris Amon in his hometown of Bulls- that was erected on June 29.



Carer Support Groups and Memory Cafes

December Carer Support Groups

Feilding

December 1

Palmerston North

December 3

Palmerston North Men

December 3

Dannevirke

December 4

Levin

December 10

Levin Men

December 10

Recommencing February

December Memory Cafés

Woodville

December 10

Dannevirke

December 17

Levin

December 19

Recommencing February

Dementia Advisors

Horowhenua and Palmerston North:

Liam:

027 600 4408

Manawatu and

Tararua: Andrea:

027 357 9560



Christmas Treats

Word Search

DIRECTIONS:
Find and circle the
vocabulary words
in the grid. Look
for them in all
directions including
backwards and
diagonally.

BUCHE DE NOEL

CANDY CANE

CHOCOLATE

CLOVES

COOKIES

CRANBERRIES

EGGNOG

FRUITCAKE



FUDGE

ORANGES

GINGERBREAD

PUMPKIN PIE

GOOSE

SCRUMPTIOUS

GRAVY

STUFFING

HAM

SUGARPLUMS

MINCEMEAT

SWEET POTATOES

NUTS

TURKEY

Fun with food



Our MKC coordinators give every week a theme for the cognitive programs, which includes quizzes and discussions. Sometimes this includes making packages to take home baking.

Gingerbread men recipe

Ingredients

2 cups flour (300g)
1 cup brown sugar
1 Tbsp ground ginger
½ tsp baking soda
150g butter, cubed
1 egg, beaten
1 Tbsp golden syrup

Icing:

1 ½ tbsp water
10g butter or margarine
1 ½ cups icing sugar

Optional: Food colouring to create coloured icing

Method

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C bake (160°C fan-forced). Line two baking trays with baking paper.
- 2 Place the flour, sugar, ginger and baking soda in a bowl or food processor. Add butter and rub in with fingertips or pulse in food processor until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.
- 3 Add egg and golden syrup and stir or pulse to form a dough. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- 4 Roll out on a lightly floured surface or between two sheets of baking paper until 5mm thick. Cut out shapes using biscuit cutters and place on trays.
- 5 Bake for 8-10 minutes, until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

Kelly Sports and Pub Charities grant got the Palmy club members moving



Club members enjoyed the stimulating activities.



Golden Games, a new initiative from Kelly Sports, is designed for seniors to keep them active and socially engaged. These programs are also designed to enhance strength, balance, coordination and cognitive function.

Thank you to Pub Charities for the grant that made this possible.



Team Memory Matters were the top fundraising team for Move for Dementia!

The team behind the dementia-friendly Memory Matters collection of resources in Palmy libraries walked the 11km walkway beside the Manawatū Tararua highway to raise money for Alzheimers New Zealand recently as part of the Move for Dementia fundraiser. They raised \$1462.35!

In second place are Hato Hone St John Youth Palmerston division with \$487.65.

Keeping Christmas cheerful

Making Holiday Gatherings Dementia-Friendly

Family gatherings can be joyful but also overwhelming for someone with dementia. A few thoughtful adjustments can make celebrations more inclusive.

Consider:

- Keeping background noise (TV, music, multiple conversations) to a minimum.
- Setting aside a quiet space where the person can retreat and rest if needed.
- Involving them in simple traditions, like setting the table or choosing music.
- Introducing visitors one at a time, with a reminder of who they are.
- Serving familiar foods, as tastes and routines can be very reassuring.

The Gentle Shift: How to Redirect with Respect

Sometimes a person living with dementia gets stuck on a topic, concern, or activity. Redirecting is a skill that can ease distress — when done gently and kindly.

- Validate first: “You’re worried about your coat — I’d be looking too.”
- Gently shift focus: “Let’s look after morning tea.”
- Use sensory distractions — music, touch, movement
- Don’t argue, dismiss, or correct
- If one approach doesn’t work, try another later

Travel advice during the silly season

For someone living with dementia, travel can be both exciting and unsettling. Changes to routine, unfamiliar places, and long journeys may feel overwhelming, but with preparation, holidays can still be meaningful and enjoyable.

Choosing the right type of travel

When planning, think about the person’s comfort level; would they prefer a short day trip instead of an overnight stay?

Tips for smoother journeys

- Plan travel around their best times of day — many people with dementia feel more settled in the morning.
- Keep routines where possible — meal times, bedtimes, and favourite activities provide structure.
- Bring familiar comforts — a favourite cushion, blanket, or photo album can help anchor them.
- Prepare essentials — carry medicines, snacks, and a copy of their care details in one bag.
- Allow for rest — build in breaks and avoid rushing.
- Consider wearing a MedicAlert bracelet/ ID card explaining the person’s condition, in case of emergencies.
- If staying with whānau, plan beforehand i.e. having a quiet room for rest ready.

Overseas travel sorted

Airports and overseas travel can feel overwhelming at the best of times, but for people living with dementia—or any hidden disability—the crowds, noise, and tight schedules can be especially stressful. The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard is a simple, discreet way to signal that someone may need extra patience or support while travelling.

What is the sunflower lanyard?

First launched at London's Gatwick Airport in 2016, the Sunflower Lanyard was designed to help staff identify travellers who might need a little more time, clearer communication, or extra assistance. For people living with dementia, wearing the lanyard can reduce the stress of repeatedly explaining their condition. It creates an environment where travel is less daunting, more inclusive, and more enjoyable for everyone.



How to get a Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard from Palmerston North Airport

At least one week before flying call them on

06 351 4415

or email info@pnairport.co.nz with:

- Your postal details (if you would like it posted to you)
- Airport departure or arrival date and time (if you are collecting it from the Airport Help desk).

We also recommend that you contact your airline and request any special assistance.

Palmerston North airport staff are trained to quietly offer assistance—whether that's giving you more time at security, providing clearer instructions, or helping you navigate the airport.

Tips for using the lanyard when travelling

- Carry essential info – Keep travel documents, medicines, and a brief care plan together in one bag.
- Know its limits – The lanyard is not a fast-pass; it's simply a signal for extra understanding.
- Communicate with your airline – If you need specific support (like wheelchair assistance or boarding help), arrange this in advance.



Stay sun smart this summer

Summer in New Zealand is a time for sunshine, beaches, and enjoying the outdoors. But hot weather can also pose risks for people living with dementia. Because dementia can affect a person's ability to recognise thirst, express discomfort, or respond to changes in temperature, it's important for whānau and carers to take extra care during the warmer months.

Why heat is a concern for people with dementia

Our bodies naturally cool down through sweating, but in older adults this process is less effective. Dementia can add another layer of vulnerability: a person might forget to drink water, wear heavy clothing, or not realise when they are overheating. Dehydration and heat stress can develop quickly and may appear as confusion, agitation, or sudden tiredness.

Practical tips for carers

- Encourage regular fluids – Offer water or juice often, even if they don't ask. Ice blocks, jelly, or juicy fruits like watermelon can also help keep fluids up.
- Keep cool indoors – Draw curtains in the heat of the day, use a fan, and dress in loose cotton clothing.
- Plan outings wisely – Go out early morning or evening when it's cooler and avoid the midday sun.
- If you're heading outdoors, don't forget sunscreen and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Watch for warning signs – Flushed skin, rapid breathing, headache, or unusual confusion may signal heat exhaustion. Seek medical advice promptly.

Be a champion this Christmas

Support us through financial donations or donations in kind.

Check out financial donation options-including being a champion- on our website.

Givealittle is giving charities like us an early Christmas present!

If you donate on December 2, Givealittle will waive the fees for us. Our Givealittle link is on our website.



Thank you to those who donated in kind:

- Lois Jermy donated us pantry goods
- Inner Wheel donated baking and pantry items
- Good Bitches Baking
- Treesmart who donated three truckloads of mulch for our gardens.
- Thank you to Gilmours Central for donating two slices for our Memory Walks.
- A huge shout out to all our volunteers, we value you and all the work you do for MKC and the members.

Thanks funders and supporters



LOW COST BINS



Alzheimers New Zealand



Eastern & Central Community Trust

To contact Alzheimers Manawātū

please call 06 357 9539 or email manawatu@alz-man.org.nz.

Our website: alzheimersmanawatu.org

Facebook.com/alzheimersmanawatu

Instagram: [alzheimersmanawatu](https://www.instagram.com/alzheimersmanawatu)

Our social media also has reminders about upcoming events and educational information.