

WINTER 2024

Āwhina

PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT SOUTHLAND MAGAZINE

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Keeping children warm

Thanks to the incredible generosity of the community, Family Works received more than 200 pyjamas through the Kindness Collective's PJ Project to give to Southland families in need this winter.

Family Works Southland had been selected as a recipient of the Kindness Collective Foundation's nationwide PJ Project this year on behalf of the families it supports.

The PJ Project involved collecting donations of new, warm pyjamas for tamariki and whānau who might go without over winter as a result of hardship.

Family Works director Judith McNerney said they were delighted its families were recipients of the Kindness Collective's PJ Project.

"Many of our families struggle to meet basic needs and their homes are often cold.

"Knowing the children will be warm and cosy in their beds at night will be a comfort to their parents and will see the children well rested and happy."

Between May 1 and June 30, the public dropped off donations of new winter pyjamas into collection bins at The Warehouse throughout the country. Donations collected at The Warehouse in Invercargill and Gore were given to Family Works Southland to distribute to families in need in the region.

In addition to being the collection point, The Warehouse donated winter items to the value of \$500 per store towards the initiative, including pyjamas, warm clothing, energy-efficient heaters and/or hot water bottles.

Kindness Collective chief executive and founder Sarah Page said they were delighted to extend their support to Family Works in Southland, around the South Island, as well as to multiple regions in the North Island through the PJ Project.

"We know the benefits of providing tamariki with warm, winter pyjamas in the colder months, and we're grateful for the incredible Family Works staff on the ground working to share them with their whānau around Aotearoa."

Here are some of the comments from our families who received pyjamas for their children:

"Thank you so much for the PJs for my children. They are much needed and will keep them toasty warm."

"Thank you so much for the cat pyjamas. My little boy will love wearing this for bed tonight and it's

Family Works administrator Sharon Wishart shops for \$500 worth of winter items at The Warehouse Invercargill to distribute to Southland families in need.

perfect for the colder weather."

"To the beautiful people who donated kakahu (clothing). Thank you so much for your kindness. Our whānau appreciate the koha."

Statistics NZ estimates more than 143,000 children are living in material hardship, going without necessities including access to food, shelter, healthcare and heating. Living in a cold home has been proven to affect children's health, school attendance and overall wellbeing.

"To the beautiful people who donated kakahu (clothing). Thank you so much for your kindness. Our whānau appreciate the koha."

A resounding success

Presbyterian Support Southland's Enliven and Family Works services have received a strong tick of approval following comprehensive audits last year.

Enliven

The commitment of Enliven's staff in providing the best care possible to their residents was highlighted with all four of its care homes achieving top marks.

"This result demonstrates our facilities as exemplars in the aged care sector," Presbyterian Support Southland (PSS) chief executive Matt Russell said.

Auditors BSI Group New Zealand completed three certification audits and one surveillance audit of Enliven Southland's care homes, starting with a certification audit of Resthaven Village in August last year.

The auditors looked at all levels of the organisation from the way residents are cared for and the programmes offered to governance and clinical diligence across all levels of care at Vickery Court, Peacehaven Village, Resthaven Village and Walmsley House.

The auditor's report stated – "there are quality systems and processes being implemented. Feedback from residents and family/whānau were positive about the care and the services provided."

Enliven director Carol Riddle said the result gave the team confidence it could grow to meet the increasing

care needs of its residents who were coming into care with more complex health conditions.

"This achievement has taken an absolute team effort from everyone... and shows how invested our staff are in providing the best care possible for our residents."

Enliven audit management team of 2023: (from left) Resthaven Village manager Robyn Byron, Walmsley House manager Robyn Campbell, Peacehaven Village manager Ronette Bolivar, Vickery Court manager Leila Coppins, Enliven director Carol Riddle and Enliven quality manager Raewyn Healey.



“This result demonstrates our facilities as exemplars in the aged care sector.”



Presbyterian Support Southland chief executive Matt Russell and Family Works Southland director Judith McInerney.

As part of Enliven’s contractual obligations with Te Whatu Ora, its care homes are audited every 12 months to four years depending on the findings of the previous audit.

Family Works

The excellent work of PSS’s Family Works team has also been recognised.

Social sector auditors, Te Kāhui Kāhu, Social Services Accreditation completed an audit of Family Works Southland on November 30 last year.

The service met 9 of the 10 audit standards. One standard was partially met due to a minor issue with an incorrect date on a couple of policies.

Matt said whilst the result was not surprising, it was confirmation of the wonderful work the Family Works team undertakes across the region.

“We are proud and passionate about the provision of these critical services and the impact they have on the lives of so many.”

The assessor looked at all aspects of the organisation, including at the operational and financial levels. The assessor conducted site visits to Invercargill, Gore and Te Anau, met with a broad range of staff and external referrers to the service, and reviewed client and staff files, and client exit evaluations.

The assessor stated – “The level of engagement that kaimahi establish with clients and whānau is impressive and the contribution to the community the organisation provides is commendable, that results in measurable outcomes that will continue to impact positively on participants’ lives.”

Family Works director Judith McInerney said she was really proud of her staff and the work Family Works was doing to support families in the community.

“The audit is not just a tick box exercise. For us, it is actually about ensuring we are meeting the needs of our clients properly and safely and being responsive to what our community needs.

“The result also demonstrates our worth to the community, funders and government agencies.

“We are proud and passionate about the provision of these critical services and the impact they have on the lives of so many.”

“Although the audit process is very involved, it is reassuring to receive external feedback which reinforces what we already believed - that we are doing a really good job. We are changing lives.”

In order to maintain its contracts with Oranga Tamariki, Family Works is required to undergo an accreditation audit every two years.

Inspired to give back

Caring for two children under five while fighting a custody battle and suffering from post-natal depression was an extremely stressful time for Mikayla*.

The Invercargill mother credits her Family Works family whānau worker for helping her successfully navigate that difficult period in her life.

“I don’t think I would have made it through without her.”

Mikayla was first introduced to Family Works’ Family Start programme in 2010 after the birth of her second child.

It was her midwife who referred her.

Mikayla said, although her newborn was an easy baby, she had struggled

to care for two young children while experiencing post-natal depression. The depression had impacted her ability to bond with her baby.

Adding further stress, Mikayla was also going through a custody battle with her ex-partner, the father of her eldest child.

However, Mikayla said at the time she did not think she needed Family Works’ help.

“My understanding was [Family Works] was for families who were underprivileged and needed extra support and I didn’t see us that way.”

She also thought Presbyterian Support Southland, which operates Family Works, was a religious organisation and she was concerned that would be the focus.

Despite her misgivings, she agreed to go on the Family Start programme, and it turned out to be a good decision



“I want to give back to a service that has given so much to me.”

for Mikayla and her young family.

“The first time I met my support worker, she just sat down and talked to me.

“It was nice to have someone to talk to that wasn’t my husband...someone I could vent to who was independent.

“I started to look forward to seeing her.”

The family whānau worker supported the whole family and would spend time with the children, giving Mikayla a break.

It was a welcome couple of hours when the children were not with her,



Mikayla said.

The family whānau worker also gave her encouragement, coping strategies, parenting tips, linked her to other supports and challenged her thinking.

“I was taken aback to start with.

I thought: “Wait, aren’t you meant to be on my side?”

However, having someone with an independent perspective helped Mikayla to “take the blinkers away” and see her situation and her thinking more clearly, she said.

“I started to hold myself to account.”

For the first six months, when she was really unwell, the family whānau worker visited weekly, but after she began to feel better, the visits became fortnightly.

She remained in the programme for five years.

The programme had proven so beneficial to Mikayla and her family that when her third child was born two years ago, Mikayla self-referred to the Family Start programme again.

“I knew with my history of mental illness I was more susceptible to post-natal depression again.”

Mikayla said she had a good rapport and relationship with her new family whānau worker Danielle Abey.

“She really cares about helping us.

“It is nice to have someone in your corner battling for you.”

Mikayla recommended the programme to others.

“If [parents] just give it a go, they would realise just how beneficial these programmes are.”

It has been 14 years since Mikayla first joined the Family Start programme.

She is now a happy 35-year-old mother of three, armed with strategies to parent her children well and maintain her own good mental health.

Not only that, but she had been inspired to use her own experiences

Family Start family whānau worker Danielle Abey talks with a client.

to help others struggling with mental health issues.

Last year, Mikayla completed a New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4) course with a strand in mental health and addiction support at the Southern Institute of Technology, and intended to follow that up with a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology through Massey University.

She wants to work with teenagers and young adults.

“It is important to intervene at this early stage before addictions, self-harming and other self-sabotaging behaviours take hold.”

Ultimately, Mikayla said she wanted to work for Family Works.

“I want to give back to a service that has given so much to me.”

(*not the mother’s real name. Her name has been changed to protect the family’s privacy)

PSS was founded by the Presbyterian Church, but its focus is on providing social services and practical support to the community.

Family Start is a free, home-based programme in which a family whānau worker supports parents to achieve better health, education and social outcomes for a child from birth up to five years of age. They also link families with other supports as needed.

The programme is offered in Invercargill, Te Anau, Manapouri, Gore and Maitai.

To be eligible for the Family Start programme, families must be facing challenges such as housing issues, multiple births, relationship issues, physical or mental health issues, lack of support, addictions, among others.

To find out more go to:
pss.org.nz/family-works/services/family-start/



Overcoming barriers

The Southland Multicultural Trust (SMCT) has taken over the coordination and management of the Southland Migrant Settlement Network from Family Works, bringing organisations together to maximise support and positive outcomes for Southland's migrant community.

“We are very pleased with this outcome as we believe the work of the network sits nicely within the parameters of SMCT's focus.” Family Works director and network chair Judith McInerney said.

In response to Southland's migrant population growing and diversifying, Family Works initiated a community project two years ago to explore ways to overcome the barriers migrants experience when trying to access social services.

Funding was received from the Tindall Foundation, through Presbyterian Support NZ which enabled Family Works to bring together organisations and agencies working with migrants in Southland to discuss the barriers faced by staff and the migrant community when accessing social services, and how they could be overcome.

About 30 Southland organisations and agencies were now involved in the network, including NZ Red Cross, Ministry for Ethnic Communities, SIT, Southland Multicultural Trust, MAR Colombia, Barnados, NKMP, NZ Police, Southland Migrant Walking Together Organisation, Reach and WellSouth.

Family Works director Judith McInerney (left) and SMCT community liaison officer Jo Wilson.

Judith said a highlight over the past 12 months was hosting community meetings with the Police national ethnic liaison team and the MBIE Refugee and Migrant Services team.

Other highlights included inviting former Colombian and Congolese refugees to a meeting of the network in March this year to discuss their needs and concerns. A number of their concerns were able to be addressed during the meeting and others are to be followed up.

The network had been approached to discuss how \$30,000 in funding from MBIE could be utilised to develop refugee leadership and it was agreed the network will assist with identifying projects and individuals who would benefit from the funding and the distribution of this funding for Southland.

The network members also worked with the Invercargill City Council on its Welcome Kit for migrants.

Judith said one of the biggest benefits to have come out of the meetings was the increased cohesion and collaboration between the groups working with migrant communities, and the sharing of information.

“This not only benefits our migrant population in Southland, but also those who work with them as it builds confidence, knowledge and

collaborative relationships.”

Judith said there continued to be an enthusiastic buy-in from stakeholders, and links between stakeholders and national agencies were being strengthened.

SMCT community liaison officer Jo Wilson said taking over the coordination of the network was a perfect fit for the trust, complementing their work with the Southland Multicultural Advisory Group.

SMCT officially took over the coordination and management of the network at the end of June.

“We are very pleased with this outcome as we believe the work of the network sits nicely within the parameters of SMCT's focus.”

Concept plans unveiled

Concept master plans for Peacehaven Village's redevelopment have now been completed, unveiling units and amenities which will support a vibrant retirement community now and into the future.

"We are excited to be at the stage where we can share the final concept plans for the redevelopment with the community," Presbyterian Support Southland (PSS) chief executive Matt Russell said.

Completed over multiple stages, the redevelopment will see construction

of at least 35 new two-bedroom occupation right agreement (ORA) units, replacing 50 existing, aging single room cottages in the west and central zones of Peacehaven Village.

A mixture of standalone, duplex and triplex units will be constructed, offering a range of pricing and

product options. Floor layouts were modern, spacious, and optimised to allow a variety of furniture layouts.

"The size of the grounds and sense of space onsite is unique to Peacehaven Village and something we've retained in our plans."

Matt said flexibility had been built into the design so that as the project progressed, PSS would be able to adjust the types of units built in the later stages to respond to the market demand.

A new communal residents building is planned as part of the redevelopment scope, which would house amenities and provide space for social activities.

"PSS is proud of its long history of providing aged care services in

A high level concept of the Peacehaven Village redevelopment looking south towards Tweed Street.



“We are excited to be at the stage where we can share the final concept plans for the redevelopment with the community”

Southland. The redevelopment is a key component of ensuring Peacehaven remains a vibrant retirement community, offering stylish, modern and competitively priced accommodation to meet the needs of its current and future residents for many more years to come.”

Completion of the project was anticipated to take three to five years, with work on stage one due to begin in the latter part of this year



and expected to take 18 months to complete, he said.

PSS CEO and staff had met with village residents to seek their feedback on the design and determine what amenities they would like to see incorporated into the design.

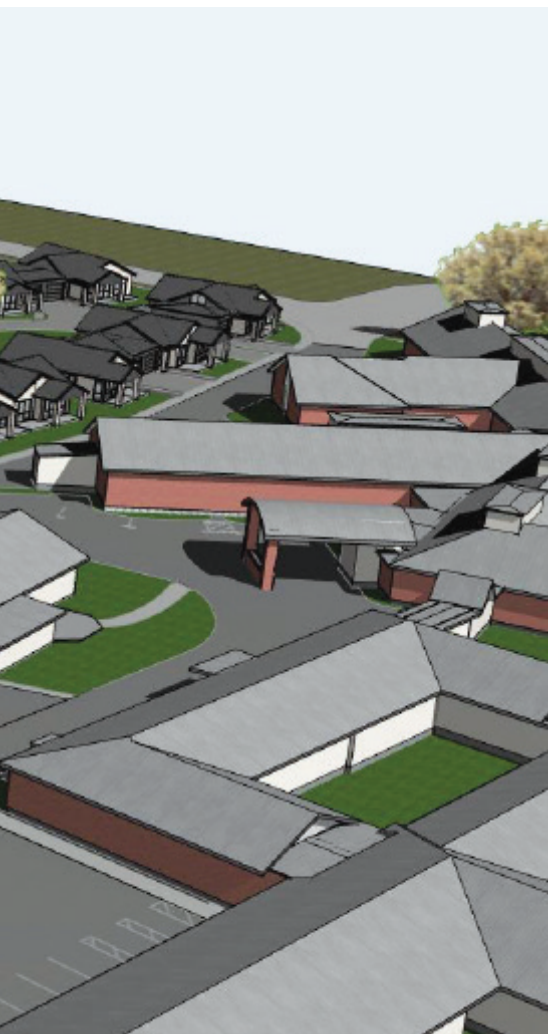
As part of the redevelopment, PSS is working with community partners to look at the feasibility of repurposing the existing 50 units to ensure these

A high level concept of a Peacehaven Village standalone villa.

facilities are not lost to the regional housing stock. A needs assessment and feasibility study has been conducted by PSS and work continues with interested parties.

Construction of a standalone show unit is planned to allow perspective buyers to experience the units.

Registrations of interest in purchasing the new ORA units will open soon. People can register their interest in purchasing a unit by emailing enquiries@enlivesld.nz.



A high level concept of a Peacehaven Village duplex villa



A high level concept of a Peacehaven Village triplex villa



Meeting community need

Community support is needed to help fund plans to create six additional, much-needed beds for the most vulnerable of Southland's elderly population as part of an expansion and upgrade of Peacehaven's dementia care unit.

With an aging population and average age expectancy continuing to rise, demand for dementia level care is increasing in terms of demand and complexity.” Presbyterian Support Southland (PSS) chief executive Matt Russell said.

“It is critical that as a region we are poised to respond to this challenge and ensure Southland is able to care for its residents now and into the future.”

PSS operates the Enliven Iona Dementia Care Unit at Peacehaven Village in Invercargill. The unit has two separate wings, one with 20 beds for less severely impacted dementia patients (known as D3), and the other with 20 beds for those requiring specialised hospital-level care (known as D6 psychogeriatric care). D6 is the highest level of dementia care available in New Zealand.

PSS is the sole provider of psychogeriatric care in Southland. Care is also provided to people from the Whakatipu Basin, Wanaka and Central Otago areas, when their dementia advances.

Matt said due to a lack of D6 beds in Southland, there were times when residents had to leave the region while they waited for a space to

LEFT: Peacehaven's Iona unit care worker Hannah Dempsey and resident Joe Cregeen having fun using the unit's new therapeutic interactive games console.

“It is critical that as a region we are poised to respond to this challenge and ensure Southland is able to care for its residents now and into the future.”

become available in Iona. The nearest D6 facility to Invercargill is in Dunedin.

“When these very vulnerable residents needed to leave the region for D6 level of care it creates a huge amount of stress and anxiety for their families.”

The Iona project, expected to cost about \$386,000 excl GST, involves creating the six additional beds by repurposing office and storeroom space within the existing building footprint.

The project also includes fire safety compliance work, equipping and furnishing each new room, creating a new nurse station and nurse call system, and refreshing the lounge and kitchenette.

Matt said although the Iona redevelopment project was modest, it would increase the number of D6 beds in Southland by 25%.

The project would be funded with a combination of support from individuals, community and

external funders and donors, with any funding shortfall met from PSS Enliven operating budgets.

Matt said private aged care providers like PSS did not receive government funding for capital expenditure projects, so they needed to seek support from external funders to help finance capital improvement work in their care homes.

“As a charitable trust, our funds for capital development projects are extremely stretched.”

The project is expected to start later this year.

If you wish to support the Iona D6 project, you can donate online at pss.org.nz/get-involved/donate or email fundraising@pss.org.nz.

The Iona D6 wing earmarked for development to create six new bedrooms for residents with dementia



Cultural confidence and competence

"Ka mua, ka muri." This whakatauki (Māori proverb) means "walking backwards into the future" - the idea we should look to the past to inform the future.

Michelle Ryland - Pou Tohutohu Ahurea Māori

As an organisation Presbyterian Support Southland has undertaken a commitment to increase the cultural confidence and competence of our team to achieve positive outcomes for the people in our care and our hāpori (community).

The opening and blessing of the Vickery Court whānau room in May was a key part of our haerenga (journey), providing our residents and their whānau with an inclusive, peaceful place to come together and meet their needs at end of life.

The blessing of the whānau room was a moving experience for residents and staff. Joe Wakefield representing mana whenua blessed the room and imparted some of his wisdom about clearing pathways

for the use of the room and other tikanga. It was a fantastic learning opportunity for those who were present. Soon to follow are the openings of the whānau rooms at Peacehaven Village and Resthaven Village.

Te Haerenga (our cultural journey) has gained momentum over the past year and there has been noticeable growth in the cultural space.

We have rolled out our internal cultural competency training to all Family Works staff and are close to launching it for the rest of the organisation. The kete training has helped build on existing knowledge, providing staff with new learning, and strengthened our practise.

With Matariki fast approaching staff are looking forward to the upcoming celebrations and an opportunity to put some of their learning into action and embrace the key themes of Matariki.

At each care home we will be holding a remembrance service to honour those who have passed since the last rising of Matariki. We will also be celebrating the present with our team and residents and looking to the future.

As part of building and gathering momentum on our haerenga we will be launching our Poi Rere initiative in our care homes during Matariki. This is a fantastic programme which is easy to integrate into daily life and as part of existing exercise programmes. Using poi provides an opportunity to engage with and share part of Te Ao Māori (the Māori world view). Poi is adaptable for all ages, allows creativity, and generates opportunities to experience rich interactions, and have some fun.

Residents, whānau, staff and the community will be involved, and we see it as another way for our residents to remain connected and feel part of our local hāpori (community).



Joe Wakefield representing mana whenua (left) blesses Vickery Court's newly refurbished whānau room accompanied by residents and staff.

Together we can make a difference

Our staff work with more than 3300 vulnerable children, whānau/families and older people in Southland and the Whakatipu Basin every year. Every contribution, large or small, helps us help others.

How to donate



Website: pss.org.nz/get-involved



Internet banking: Our bank account number is 02 0924 0545924 00 (BNZ)



Cash/Eftpos: Please visit our Central Office, 183 Spey Street, Invercargill, or any of our Enliven care homes

For more ways to see how you can help through donations or volunteering your time, please visit our website.

Unemployment, poverty, family disputes, mental illness, loneliness, social isolation and social inequity are just some of the issues we see people struggling with every day.

Thank you to all those who have donated towards the work we do. Your donation will help enable us to walk alongside them, letting them know they are not alone and can get the support they need.

Thank you to our major community funders



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