



Adriel House & Rest Home  
36 Osborne Road  
Amberley  
North Canterbury  
New Zealand

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**Misceal McCormick, *Spark of Life* Master Practitioner and Owner of 2 *Spark of Life* Dementia Specific Centres of Excellence, Adriel House and Rest Home, Amberley New Zealand.**

My name is Misceal McCormick, I am a *Spark of Life* Master Practitioner, a Registered Nurse and Owner of 2 small Rest Homes (21 residents in each), specialising in the care of people living with dementia. Adriel House and Rest Home are situated in a rural farming community, 40 Km's north of Christchurch, New Zealand. In November 2019 both homes achieved certification as *Spark of Life* Centres of Excellence which means that our two homes have met specific requirements, showing comprehensive qualitative and quantitative evidence.

I was first introduced to the *Spark of Life* Model of Care when I heard Jane Verity, Founder and CEO of Dementia Care International, speak at a Gerontology conference in New Zealand. The *Spark of Life* Philosophy resonated with me as it is all about treating residents as individuals, not a disease, and seeing them as **whole** persons. What appealed to me was that the *Spark of Life* Model of Care includes the education that enables this information to be passed on to every staff member in the facility. This is a total package.

I began implementing the *Spark of Life* Model of Care at Adriel in 2012 after attending the 3 week International *Spark of Life* Master Leadership Program in Perth, Western Australia.

Because the *Spark of Life* Model of Care is unique, it has enabled Adriel to have a point of difference, to think outside the square and move away from the boundaries of convention. We have learned to discover new possibilities and solutions to issues facing people living with dementia. This has led to innovation and new ideas in my team. These ideas don't need to be expensive or grand, but they have a huge positive impact on staff, residents and families.

Implementing the *Spark of Life* Model of Care at Adriel, has enabled me to have a definite goal to strive for – to be recognised as an innovator in the delivery of Dementia Care in New Zealand. This has set us apart from other Rest Homes in New Zealand and has had the added benefit of ensuring we have a good reputation in the community of providing supportive care and reducing behaviours of concern. This has led to high bed occupancy and our small privately owned home remaining financially viable.

The *Spark of Life* Model of Care, has helped to create Adriel's unique culture and care delivery. We provide genuine Person Centred Care. Each resident is appreciated as an individual person and supported on their own journey. All staff at Adriel work as a team, supporting our people with dementia: Gardeners, Maintenance People, Kitchen Staff, Carers/Supportive Partners, Cleaners, Diversional Therapists, Managers, Registered Nurses and Owner. Families are also included, invited and encouraged to share in the care of their loved ones. Everyone communicates and works together to ensure the residents remain as individual and independent for as long as possible. This focus is integrated into their daily support and is now the norm.

Meaningful activities based on the *Spark of Life* Philosophy are provided for residents which give them purpose, motivation, opportunity for reminiscing and boost their self-esteem. They have reason to get out of bed in the morning.

Because of the above, for the last 4 years, we have not required the use of personal or physical restraint.

Due to the welcoming, inclusive and understanding atmosphere created by all staff, new residents feel at home and settle in quickly. We have experienced minimal behaviour issues - between 0 and 2 per month and PRN psychotropic medication has only been used 3 times in the last 3 years. Fall rates have also been reduced with 40.5% over the last 4 years.

Through the education on the *Spark of Life* Philosophy, staff have shifted to a rehabilitation mindset and because of this, our residents remain independent for longer and their quality of life is improved. The doors to the garden are open for residents to walk freely in and out. They are encouraged to collect the paper from the mailbox, pick flowers from the garden, feed the numerous animals, weed and water plants and vegetables.

Residents feel good about themselves and also enjoy assisting staff with meaningful activities such as: harvesting fruit & vegetables, gathering the freshly laid eggs, preparing vegetables, preserves etc. These meaningful activities keep residents active for longer periods, their muscles become stronger, their balance improves, they sleep better, behaviours of concern decrease and their lives are enriched.

Through the education staff are also empowered and their self-esteem and confidence in their job improved. They find that they can put into practice what they have learned in their everyday work and personal lives. Their communication with residents is enhanced and they experience immediate positive results from the residents. Witnessing these outcomes are so rewarding, and is at the core of why our staff love to work with people who have dementia. They want to make a difference in a person's life. They experience firsthand the immense reward when they see their residents improve - rehabilitation in action also known as rementia.

Adriel House and Rest Home is now attracting staff that really care. Once you have staff that understand and practice the *Spark of Life* Philosophy, they feel a sense of achievement and a heightened job satisfaction which both facilitate a happier working environment. Staff now tell me: "I look forward to coming to work". That is always wonderful and encouraging for an owner to hear especially when the comments are not related to wages or money but to the good feeling the staff have.

In April 2014, Adriel received its first Continuous Improvement (a New Zealand standard that represents exceptional outcomes) by independent Auditors for using the *Spark of Life* Model of Care and being able to evidence a reduction in behaviours of concern and depression.

In April 2017 when reaudited, we received a second Continuous Improvement for the continued use of the *Spark of Life* Model of Care and the positive impact it had on the lives of residents living at Adriel. When the Auditors interviewed the staff they stated they focus on “Bringing the light back into the residents’ eyes through meaningful and compassionate interactions and activities.

All of the above are the reasons why I whole heartedly recommend the *Spark of Life* Model of Care.

Mischeal McCormick, RN/Owner