

Making the Move to Care: A Guide for Families

Supporting families with the move into dementia care.



OCEANIA Aged Care



Taking the first step

We understand that supporting a family member into care is never an easy process. It often comes with a mix of emotions – concern, responsibility, and sometimes even uncertainty. It’s important to recognise that this is a big decision and that these feelings and questions are completely normal.

This booklet has been created to guide you through the journey ahead – to answer your questions, help to ease your concerns, and give you a clear sense of what you and your family member can expect as they settle into life in Ōrākei Care Suites.

We’re here to walk alongside you. If at any point you need more information, reassurance, or simply someone to talk to, our team is only ever a phone call away.

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In this booklet we will look at:

1. Understanding dementia
2. The Ōrākei care building
3. Oceania’s model of care
4. Visiting Ōrākei
5. Our Team’s expertise
6. Further support & information

Understanding Dementia and the need for care

Dementia is a term that describes a range of symptoms caused by conditions that affect the brain - with Alzheimer's disease being the most common. While the causes may vary, all forms of dementia lead to a gradual decline in how the brain works.

For someone living with dementia, everyday things can become harder. They may struggle to remember recent events, find the right words, follow a conversation, or understand what's being said to them. These changes can feel confusing - for them, and for those who love them.

Your family member may experience some or all of these symptoms. They can shift from day to day, even from hour to hour. And while there are patterns, it's important to remember: every person's journey with dementia is different - shaped by their life, their personality, and their own unique way of being in the world.

As you walk alongside them, there will be challenges - but there can also be connection, comfort, and moments of deep meaning.

There is no right or wrong time for someone to require a move

to care, everyone is unique but there may come a time when a more supportive environment is needed to promote safety and well-being. This may include such things as difficulty maintaining personal safety or managing daily tasks. The decision to move may also be due to a change in the support available at home.



Ōrākei – A safe and supportive place to call home

Ōrākei is a purpose-built care centre designed to offer comfort and safety for people living with dementia. Set across two floors and home to up to 40 residents, the centre's ground floor is dedicated specifically to supporting people living with dementia in a secure, nurturing environment.

Each resident has their own private Care Suite with an ensuite, offering dignity, independence and a personal space to call their own. The layout of Ōrākei has been carefully designed to encourage freedom of movement, with safe, open access to both indoor and outdoor areas - so residents can enjoy fresh air, nature, and a sense of independence, while always remaining safe.

There's always support close by and the care team is never far away, every suite is equipped with a silent call bell - ensuring help is available whenever it's needed.

The internal courtyard is a peaceful retreat - perfect for relaxing with a cup of tea or enjoying quiet time outdoors. Beyond that, our garden provides a lovely space for a gentle stroll, a bit of light gardening, or shared moments over a meal in the fresh air.



Ōrākei has been designed not just for safety, but for comfort, ease of movement and a sense of belonging. Residents are always accompanied when leaving the Ōrākei building, and we warmly encourage family and friends to visit often. Outings are welcomed too, wherever possible and practical - whether it's a trip to the nearby café, a walk through the beautiful gardens at Meadowbank, or simply spending time together.

To help us keep everyone safe, we ensure that staff members know when friends and family arrive and when you're taking your family member out. Entry is via intercom, and exits are managed through secure fob access.

Ōrākei is more than just a care centre - it's a place of connection, security, and quiet joy.

Oceania's model of care – A partnership built on dignity

At Ōrākei, we've taken a thoughtful and personal approach to supporting residents. We work with **Care Partners** - compassionate team members who walk alongside each resident, supporting them to live as independently and meaningfully as possible.

Our Care Partners take the time to really get to know our residents - their story, routines, likes and dislikes, and what brings them joy. Whether it's choosing to wake in their own time, preparing a meal together, or engaging in a much-loved hobby, we're here to support them on *their* terms, at *their* pace and in a place they can call *their* own.

We believe the everyday moments matter. The comforting rhythm of a familiar routine. The satisfaction of doing something for oneself. The connection that comes from meaningful conversation or simply being present with someone who truly understands.

When your family member is preparing to move into Ōrākei, one of our Registered Nurses will be in touch - either in person or over

the phone - to help us plan together. This isn't just about medical details (though those are important too); it's about the small but significant things: how a person takes their tea, favourite music, what calms them, what lights them up. The more you can share, the more we can shape the support around what matters most to them - and to you.

As part of this, we'll complete a **Life History** together at admission. This living document helps guide us, especially during settling in or moments of change. It's a bridge between your family member's past and their new home - and an anchor for continuity and connection.

We encourage you to bring in personal items to help make the Care Suite feel familiar and comforting. Favourite photos, treasured objects, a much-loved chair - anything that brings a sense of "home." If you'd like help setting things up, such as hanging pictures or arranging the space, just let us know - we're happy to assist. Ideally, having the room ready before move-in helps create a warm, welcoming environment from the moment they arrive.

We also offer spaces for family and friends to spend time together - from quiet sitting areas to our family room and outdoor gardens. Staying connected with family is vital, and we welcome your ongoing involvement in every way that works for you.

Our team is specially trained to understand not just the words a person says, but also the emotions and cues they may express non-verbally. We recognise that all behaviour is communication - and that understanding comes from partnership, not assumption.

Every person living with dementia is unique, and our approach reflects that. By working closely with you, we can respond in ways that are compassionate, considered and tailored - always keeping their wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.



Staying connected – Visiting at Ōrākei

We understand that when your family member moves into Ōrākei, it's not only a significant change for them - it's a change for you too.

Visits are a vital part of staying connected, and you are more than welcome here. At the same time, we know that adjusting to a new environment and routine can take time - for everyone involved. It's natural to feel unsure at times, especially in the early days. We're here to support you through that.



Here are some suggestions to help you get the most out of your visits:

- **Bring something meaningful.** Photos, keepsakes, or familiar items can help spark conversation. Pets are also welcome to visit (with prior discussion), as they can bring great comfort and joy.
- **Expect ups and downs.** There may be times when your family member is tired, anxious, or less responsive. This is completely normal - we all have good and not-so-good days. Try not to take it personally. If you're ever unsure or feeling unsettled, please don't hesitate to speak with one of our team.
- **Make yourself at home.** You're welcome to help yourself to a hot drink in the kitchen, and if you're feeling hungry and no snacks are available, just let us know - we're happy to help.
- **Engage in shared activities.** If your family member enjoys a particular game or craft, feel free to bring it along. If you're unsure how to adapt it, we're here to offer ideas and support.
- **Enjoy the outdoors together.** The courtyard and garden spaces are there for you to use - for a peaceful walk, a quiet moment in the sun, or simply to enjoy nature together.
- **Simple gestures can go a long way.** Gentle moments of connection or even sitting quietly with someone can be comforting and meaningful.
- **Gently reintroduce yourself.** If your loved one seems unsure of who you are, a soft reminder like, "Hi Mary, it's Fred - your nephew," can help reconnect the dots without causing distress. Even if names are forgotten, the emotional bond remains strong.
- **There's no 'right' way to visit.** We understand that families may not always be able to visit as often as they'd like. There is no expectation or judgement. If you're finding visits difficult or emotionally overwhelming, we invite you to speak with our team. We may have ideas or support options to help make visits easier and more enjoyable for everyone.
- **Use shared spaces as needed.** You're welcome to spend time together in your family members Care Suite. If you're visiting with a larger group, please chat with our staff about using the family room or other communal spaces.
- **Some visits may need to be private.** From time to time, staff may request that visits take place in the Care Suite, depending on the needs of your loved one or others in the centre. We appreciate your understanding when this happens.
- **Be patient with communication.** Dementia can make it difficult for someone to clearly express themselves, which can sometimes lead to frustration. If you're ever unsure how to respond or need support, please know our team is here to help.
- **Join in.** You're always welcome to take part in any planned or spontaneous activities during your visit. These shared moments can be a lovely way to reconnect and enjoy each other's company.

You are an important part of your family members life, and their wellbeing is enriched by your presence. Whether you visit every day or every so often, every interaction matters - and we're here to support you every step of the way.



Trained to care – Our team’s expertise

At Ōrākei, every member of our care team is specially trained to support people living with dementia. Many of our staff have completed - or are working through - a series of **Career Force Qualifications** that focus on person-centred, respectful, and responsive care.

In addition to these qualifications, Oceania provides specialised training based on our unique **model of care**, which draws on both **Montessori principles** and best-practice person-centred care. These philosophies are about more than just care - they’re about *enabling, empowering, and honouring* each individual. The focus is on maintaining and strengthening each person’s existing abilities, preserving dignity, and recognising that everyone has something meaningful to contribute, regardless of where they are on their journey with dementia.

Our team is not only qualified - they are deeply committed to walking alongside our residents with empathy, patience, and genuine connection.

Looking for more support or information?

You’re not alone. There are a number of excellent resources available to help guide and support you:

- **Alzheimers NZ** – Information, support services, and helpful tools for families.
- **Dementia NZ** – Practical advice, regional services, and information for family and carers.

In your local area, there may also be support groups - both formal and informal - where you can connect with others going through similar experiences. These groups can offer not just guidance but also understanding and a sense of community.

If you’re unsure where to start, or you’d like some help finding services in your region, please don’t hesitate to talk to one of our team. We’re here to help.

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