



CASE STUDY
Oceania

“Being the first aged care and retirement living operator in NZ to become a hearing accredited workplace supports our brand of ‘Believe in Better’. To see the benefits this brings to our residents’ lives has been a joy.”

J Biggs, Oceania

Oceania owns and operates over 40 aged care centres and retirement villages across New Zealand. They are the country’s third largest aged care provider and are passionate about supporting their local communities and providing elderly New Zealanders with the best care.

Oceania began its partnership with NFDHH in March 2023. With a shared and ongoing commitment to supporting the well-being of our stakeholders, both with and without hearing loss, we view this as an excellent partnership.

“When NFDHH offered to run a series of hearing awareness workshops for residents and staff, the resident experience team at Oceania was thrilled and excited to roll them out to all our retirement villages in the Auckland region. The staff and residents found the content of these workshops

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ON GENUINE INSIGHT AND INCLUSIVITY.**



particularly relevant to our sector. We also encouraged our residents not living with hearing loss to attend.”

Human connection is human care.

Residents’ well-being and improved resident experiences underpin Oceania’s strategic pillars. Understanding there is a direct link between social connection and physical and emotional well-being, the organisation recognises that staying connected is not always straightforward as we age. To counter this, it goes to great lengths to build a strong sense of community around its residents. The Hearing Health Morning Teas, delivered by NFDHH to seven Oceania villages across Auckland during the accreditation process, are an excellent example of this work.

“Our residents found the NFDHH team extremely relatable. To us, this is particularly poignant. We are a human-centred organisation, so empathy and passion are paramount to building positive and lasting relationships within our villages.”

All residents who attended the Hearing Health Morning Teas had the opportunity to have a free hearing screening to check for hearing loss and learned how to access grants for hearing aid support. And learning some basic New Zealand sign language (NZSL) was a hit with residents and staff alike.

“The sign language workshops were very popular. It wasn’t surprising that requesting coffee with milk through a sign has been easy for our residents to remember!”

In addition, NFDHH ran two team workshops with head office staff and village managers, equipping them with the necessary tools and resources to support residents with hearing loss.

Making a difference

Oceania’s partnership with NFDHH has made an incredible difference in the life of one of its residents. This resident moved to a new village just as the pandemic hit. Living through lockdowns and in a new environment, she felt further isolated by her hearing loss. Since our visit, she has been enjoying that her fellow residents are better aware of how to communicate with her, and she’s now confidently joining in activities. Even the Village Manager is learning sign language to chat with her.

It’s stories like these that inspire Oceania and NFDHH to continue delivering their meaningful mahi.



(Above) NFDHH presenting Hearing Health Morning Tea at Lady Allum Village.

Putting their people first

NFDHH has also assisted Oceania in becoming more accessible for staff with hearing loss. They helped them to identify ways to improve their staff’s hearing health outcomes. As a result, they now encourage all village managers to learn basic NZSL and have begun offering annual hearing screening checks to all staff.



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CONVERSATIONS HAVE BEGUN AMONGST OUR WIDER STAKEHOLDERS GROUP. THEY ARE DETERMINING HOW WE CAN FACILITATE AND ACCOUNT FOR FUTURE RESIDENTS AND STAFF THROUGH BUILDING DESIGN.



(Above) Residents of Meadowbank Village attending the Hearing Health Morning Tea.

An accredited action plan

Armed with their new learnings, Oceania has many plans to improve the day-to-day experiences for their residents living with hearing loss. These include using captions for movie nights, turning TVs off when not in use, and looking at ways to reduce noise in communal spaces.

In villages where a Hearing Loop is available staff now have a better understanding of how this can assist residents with hearing aids and provide more support.

They will also be looking to appoint a staff member in each village as a Hearing Loss Champion (HLC), whose job it is to support residents and staff with hearing loss, raise hearing loss awareness, train staff members in hearing aid maintenance, organise hearing screenings and take responsibility for ensuring information, equipment, and resources are available when needed.

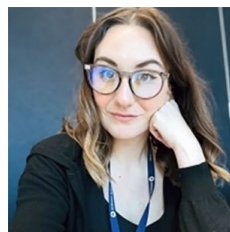
Oceania invited NFDHH CEO, Natasha Gallardo for a walk through of one of their villages, alongside key design and technical staff to discuss opportunities for future designs.

Future-focused and passionate

“Conversations have begun amongst our wider stakeholders group. They are determining how we can facilitate and account for future residents and staff through building design.

We’re excited to be able to adapt the way we offer services and experiences to our residents based on genuine insight and inclusivity.

Into 2024 and beyond, we’re delighted to share that we will offer more resident workshops throughout Aotearoa as NFDHH extends its reach to Christchurch and Rotorua. As an organisation, Oceania invests in keeping our fingers on the pulse of the latest research. We are particularly interested in the correlation between long-term hearing loss and dementia and will do everything we can to reduce risk factors for our residents. We’re continually grateful to the NFDHH team for supporting us in navigating these waters and preparing for the predicted growth in New Zealanders living with hearing loss in the future.”



Julia Biggs

Resident Experience Manager - Product & Digital Services, Oceania