

December 2023

Newsletter

TAPATAHI
Integrity

PONO
Honesty

KAWENGA TAKOHANGA
Accountability

Wendy's Words

How fast this year has gone and what a huge challenge it has been with lots of achievements. I hope you all look back on this year with pride for getting through the sticky times and forging ahead. I'm proud of this company and what we achieve every single day, with you in the field doing your absolute best to be there for the tangata. Thank you, I can't say that enough.

A wee announcement of my own - my eldest daughter Monique has added to my whānau with a new arrival late November. It was a difficult pregnancy for her, but she got there in the end. I've been in Oz for the last week welcoming my granddaughter and supporting my daughter with her first pepi. A wonderful way to finish 2023 for me.

I wish you all the very best for Christmas and the New Years. Please keep safe when out - it's not you who is the issue, it's those around you.

Catherine's Comments

What a ride 2023 has been. I've written an article following so you can see what I've been up to. I'm glad 2023 is drawing to a close – 2024 has got to be the best (#4 is my new lucky number).

Thank you everyone for being there when we've called with a need to help support our customer's tangata whaiora. They often rapidly become a part of our day-to-day conversation in the office as we look to make sure we're doing the best by them. Through your Daily Notes we learn so much about your challenges, the personalities of your charges and what's needed. So please do not ever underestimate the value and need for your Notes. These also allow us to go to bat with the customer when needed, especially if we can show patterns or needs as you've identified. And besides that, we love to know what excellent work you're doing.

And to say it again – and I'll never tire of saying it – I am so proud of you and this company. I've been catching up with our customers as the year comes to a close, and a number of times I hear how your work is held in such high regard. It really is heart-warming to hear how thankful our customers are to have Apex Care there as part of the wrap. And there is an acknowledgement that sometimes it doesn't go right – we quickly accept, learn and adapt and move forward. The customers like that as we live our Tikanga of Honesty, Integrity and Accountability. Good work everyone.

Nurse's Corner

I hope you are all keeping well during this very busy time of year. We have new training available:

De-escalation: this is a general guide on de-escalation techniques. We have had feedback from kaimahi that they haven't known what to do in some circumstances. This de-escalation training is available here:

<https://www.apexcares.com/mentalhealthtraining>. It will also be added to every new tangata's folder that we create under SupportPlan/Helpful Forms. Please have a read as we do believe it can help you in uncomfortable or confronting situations. And don't forget, we're only a phone call away.

Also within the SupportPlan folder, you'll find a new helpful form called "Subjective Quality of Life" which is some great questions you can go through with your tangata, if they're willing, to find out more about them. This then can help set up a programme of activities, games, conversations that the tangata wants to engage in. Makes life a whole lot easier building a strong foundation to grow from. This is available in TheStaffroom [here](#).

Remember, if there is any extra training you need or areas of interest you have, I'm here to help.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and prosperous new year!

Sarah



Updates and Info

KAIMAHI MONTHLY AWARD RECIPIENT

As I didn't do the November Newsletter, the good news is that we have 2 recipients for this month's \$50 lucky draw. Chosen by a randomiser are:

1. Tia
2. Leota

Holidays

Can't believe Christmas is nearly here. Please ensure WIW is updated with your UNAVAILABILITY as well as your AVAILABILITY.

Some important information for you to know on a Casual Contract:

- Statutory days are the 25th and 26th December and the 1st and 2nd January.
- Statutory days will be paid at 1.5x the hourly rate (standard or sleepover) for any hours worked between midnight 24th December to midnight 26th December. And also from midnight 31st December to midnight 2nd January.

Any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Rochelle or Catherine.

Holiday Pay

To enable your pay to go through on time over the Xmas period, please ensure you get your Timesheets through by no later than the night of Sunday the 24th and Sunday the 31st. Without these, you may not get paid – Rochelle is working on a limited timeframe so doesn't have the time to do chase-ups etc. And don't forget to log your kms!



...Updates and Info

In Memoriam

We would like to acknowledge the passing of Delena Hemi whom we lost in September this year. A stalwart, a character, a larger than life personality, Delena is missed by us, our customers and the tangata she cared for.

Missing Persons Report

Sometimes we need to call the Police when a tangata in our charge absconds. As part of this call, we ask that you file a Missing Persons Report with the Police and let Apex Care know the # given. We often ask the customer e.g. OT to do this report, but there can be confusion as to whether it's been done or not. So, whenever possible, please ask for a case # for the Missing Persons Report so we can give this to the customer to follow up on.

New Employee Handbook soon – only minor tweaks

I am working on an updated handbook – there aren't a whole lot of amendments this time. We had a major revamp last time, so this time it'll be just tweaks which I'll advise of. I'll send this out soon, if not in the New Year.



Updates and Info

Xmas parties

The Christmas parties are being organised. Northland's occurred on the 2nd, last weekend. Great kai (Bertha's frybread is legendary) and good camaraderie. Thank you for sharing yourselves with both my partner and myself.

The Waikato, Auckland and Bay of Plenty Xmas party is on the 14th. We are looking forward to having as many of you as can make it. Please don't forget to RSVP to me if you're coming and need accommodation. Just bring yourself...and some good sounds. Gotta have some good music other than Wendy's Barry Manilow!!!

Staff Annual Survey

Thank you to those who've already completed the Staff Survey. For those of you yet to do this, please click here and let us know your thoughts (nicely though) 😊 [Apex Care Staff Survey](#).

Places to Play

Within Kirikirua/Hamilton there has been a huge leap forward for the disabled community. A wonderful inclusive playground has been built which enables a whole family of abled and differently abled to play safely together. More information is available here: <https://www.magicalbridge.org/newzealand-playground>.

Catherine's Journey

I've decided to share a personal journey I've been on this year, with the intent for you to have a bit of a heads-up as to how important it is to listen to your body. This is a cautionary tale and I need you to keep this in context – all is good now for me, but I want you to think about yourself.

I hadn't been feeling well earlier this year and struggling a bit. I put it down to the busyness of life, but did go for regular blood tests, etc. Nothing flagged though but I knew I wasn't my usual self. I'm 58 and post-menopausal – long dried up and my fertile days gone...I always image a luscious ripe grape and a withered raisin when I think of this time in a woman's womb-life lols – definitely not who she is, but just what's happening inside. Anyway, I started bleeding and, at Wendy and Sarah's encouragement, got myself to the doctors mid-August. Two tumultuous months followed where I had a hysteroscopy and D&C - cancer was found, thankfully Stage 1. Total hysterectomy in mid-October and I am now a cancer-free Wombless Wombling Wahine of Waikato. This is why I was off work for a month as I recovered from this. I am so blessed by how quickly this has happened, and thankful that the histology has come back clear, so no chemo, etc. So bear with me though as I'm still healing and do get tired easily, especially by the afternoon – phone me in the mornings!!!

The lesson I'm sharing here is that things can happen out of the blue. Listen to your body and the signs it's sending you, watch your partners and whānau to make sure they're okay. Be there for your friends when they're going through any medical event as they need your emotional, if not physical, support. Don't do what we often do is poo-poo things thinking it'll pass and I'll get over it. Be aware of yourself and your body's behaviours. If sometimes not right, get it seen to.

And TBH, this also applies to our mental health – we often disregard signs that we need to take care of ourselves, sometimes to our own detriment. Don't do this. Please pay attention to who you are, your place on this whenua, your space and your health. There is only one you - someone who makes a difference to other's lives and who is valued. Please value yourself and take good care of you. And always remember that we're here to listen – sometimes things are a bit cray-cray in the office, but we will always come back to you.



Admin & Info

Timesheets: remember, 9am on Monday morning or you only get paid what's in WIW and not for any other things you should be noting on your timesheet. This is other than Christmas and New Years where it has to be in on the Sunday night.

Daily Notes: these are so incredibly important. Don't think they're just a piece of paper – this is both the customer's and our view on how things are going on site. Do not underestimate how important these are and get them in shortly after your shift. Don't save up a wodge and submit days' worth at one time – these are to be done within a few hours of your shift ending to ensure everything is current and we can address any concerns straight away. And please, if two people are on shift, then 2 sets of notes are to be submitted. This is a must for everyone.

Incident Reports: within 12 hours of the incident, ideally straight away. We have instances where the customer knows there's an incident and is told an incorrect story by others. Please get your incident report in so we can nip issues in the bud, get changes made if needed and ensure the tangata is first and foremost in what's known and what needs to be done.

Fines: if we receive a fine from our customer for parking or speeding, we will pay this but garnish your wages for the cost. We will advise you before doing this.

Safe driving: If you're in a customer's company car or any car, please don't speed. Pay attention to the speedo and keep to the limit. And remember that going too slow is also a hazard – not fineable usually but it does cause frayed tempers on the road, so just keep to the speed limit.



FIRST AID REMINDER

Thank you to those who are getting their first aid done. This is a mandatory part of your employment. Don't think you're exempt because you've been working for a long time and no one's asked before – everyone is responsible for this.

Our expectation of you is the following:

1. You approach a First Aid provider and book in for refresher / to do full certification.
2. Apex Care will pay for 4 hours of your time to do this if we are paying for the certification. Advise admin@apexcare.co.nz of the date you're booked so we can mark this in your WIW calendar, thus you will be paid for the time.
3. Apex Care will refund you \$80 towards the cost of this course upon receipt of the certificate and your payment invoice. Please send through to admin@apexcare.co.nz.
4. If you do not have a First Aid cert at a stage to where you can do a refresher but have to do a whole new certificate, then we will pay \$80 towards this – the rest of the cost is to be borne by yourself.
5. If you have a First Aid cert that you have gained through another company you're working with, please send this through for our records.
6. If you cannot/do not gain your First Aid certificate:
 - This will affect the places where we can place you i.e. where medications are required to be given, we cannot place you there. Where we have high end tangata e.g. Oranga Tamariki shifts, we cannot place you there.
 - And if you continue not to gain your First Aid certificate, we will take the measure of looking to not offer shifts to you until this certificate is gained.

Course Links:

- Red Cross: Save-a-Life

<https://first-aid.redcross.org.nz/book-course/?region=Waikato&course=save-a-life>

This first aid course allows you to acquire the following NZQA Unit Standards: 6402.

- St John also have a number of different courses which you can book: [St John Courses](#)
- .MyFirstAid: <https://www.myfirstaid.nz/>

This is a very serious and mandatory requirement of working at Apex Care. Please make sure you take the time to invest in yourself and also to protect yourself.



REMINDERS

NEW STAFF REQUIRED

If you know someone who would fit in with Apex Care, please send them our way. We cannot hire anyone who already works permanently with our existing customers as that would be unethical, but we can hire casuals who work for others. We need kaimahi with skills in our industry, drivers licence, a clean police check and NZ Visa.

So please refer them and, if they complete 50 hours with us, \$200 will be winging its way to you. But I know you'd love to have them on board with us anyway as we are a company who cares, can offer diversity and a challenge. So please refer them on to us by filling in this form

<https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/xpf1N7KqW913> and having your person sign on-up at <https://www.apexcare.co.nz/registration>.



Meri Kirihimete

As 2023 draws to a close, a big thank you from Apex Care team for being a part of this particular whānau. We will do the same again in 2024 – always challenging, always helping and always making a difference. It may not feel it sometimes, but you are. When you read the history of some of the tangata we care for, see the trauma experienced and disruptive patterns they have, and then see how they change with your care – thank you. They are very blessed to have you.

As is Apex Care.

Thank you to those who've chosen to work through. And to those who're having a break, we hope you have a wonderful time. Please stay safe everyone – the roads are usually crazy, people's tempers are often frayed and we want you to stay safe.

Have a blessed Kirihimete / Christmas and New Year.