**News release**

**Dementia donation sets record**

A record $390,000 donation by Ryman Healthcare to Alzheimers NZ will significantly benefit the many thousands of Kiwis living with dementia.

Alzheimers NZ chair, Dr Ngaire Dixon, says the donation is the largest single charity fundraising donation the organisation has ever received.

“It is a huge sum that will have a major impact on our ability to support New Zealanders living with dementia,” Dr Dixon said.

“We are so very grateful to Ryman Healthcare and to the many residents and staff of the Ryman villages around the country whose fundraising efforts have set an incredible record for us.”

Dr Dixon said Alzheimers NZ would use the money to fund front-line support services around New Zealand for the 60,000+ people living with dementia and their care partners. Some of the funds are also ear-marked for research.

Ryman Healthcare Chief Executive Gordon MacLeod said it was a pleasure to hand the cheque over.

“The money’s been raised at hundreds of events around our villages and is the most we’ve ever raised for a charity partner. I think it reflects the widespread impact Alzheimer’s and dementia have on so many lives.’’

Ryman Healthcare is New Zealand’s largest retirement village operator, and its 32 villages include more than 700 dementia care beds.

“We’ve provided dementia care for the past 20 years and so it is an area that’s close to our hearts. We’re delighted to see the money go towards support as well as research. We know Alzheimers NZ will make good use of it.’’

Each year Ryman Healthcare chooses a single charity partner to concentrate its fundraising efforts on. The company matches each dollar raised by residents and staff with its own corporate donation.

Mr MacLeod said residents and staff had knitted, baked, made toys and held sausage sizzles to raise funds.

Ryman will also be donating $25,000 from its fundraising efforts at its Melbourne village to Dementia Australia, taking the total raised to $415,000.

Ryman has donated more than $3.2 million under its charity partnership programme since 1999.

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