



OMNIway

National Dementia Strategy Needed . . . pg. 3

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Good Day, Sunshine

Enjoying the flower gardens at Streamway Villa are (from left) administrator Kylie Szczebonski and residents Marnie Burke and Fred Hawes. See story on page 3.

Woodland DOC Confident Diabetes Program Will Improve Resident Health

Janna Sabourin says order sets will make a long-term difference

By Deron Hamel
SOUTH STORMONT, Ont. - While it's too early to report any firm data on its success at Woodland Villa, the home's newly implemented diabetes program is expected to reduce the sick days of residents with the disease.

Janna Sabourin, the Cornwall-area long-term

care home's director of care (DOC), says the comprehensive diabetes program introduced by OMNI Health Care in 2013 and recently incorporated at Woodland Villa will create a system of best practices that can be used to improve diabetic health.

At the centre of the program is a group of

evidence-based order sets addressing several aspects of diabetes care, including nursing assessment, dietary and foot care, and sick-day management. The assessments can be used when residents enter long-term care homes as part of the admissions process.

"We can actually look at it

See 'Better' page 2

OMNI Adopting New Training Management System

System provides easy access to training tools

By Deron Hamel

OMNI Health Care is introducing an online learning management system to track and record all training programs undertaken by staff members at its 18 long-term

care homes in an effort to provide enhanced educational compliance and transparency throughout the organization.

In addition to these benefits, the system, which See 'System' page 2

Vi Larose Reflects on Past Year at Almonte Country Haven

Entertainment, food and social life are among home's strengths, says 90-Plus Club member

Meet Vi Larose, a member of Almonte Country Haven's 90-Plus Club.

Vi, who will turn 100 on Nov. 5, has been a resident at the Lanark County long-term care home about a year. She and her niece, Sharon Pottle, say they are

happy with all aspects of life at Almonte Country Haven, from the food to the entertainment to the kind, caring staff who always have time for residents.

A lifelong resident of Almonte, Ont., Vi says her See 'Meals' page 3

Butterfly Program Engaging Residents with Cognitive Impairment

Families are 'just blown away' by results

Forest Hill life enrichment aide (LEA) Shannon Lynch has brought a unique idea to the Kanata long-term care home that's proving effective at engaging residents with cognitive impairment.

Lynch got the idea to bring larvae to a special area outside the home and engage residents in the process of

watching the cocoons hatch into butterflies from a newspaper article assistant director of care Nicole Fulford had shown her.

Plus, it has proved to be an excellent opportunity to bring residents outdoors to enjoy the summer weather while watching the

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Happy Together

Husband and wife Ron and Dorothy Clare are seen here relaxing in their room at Woodland Villa. The Clares say it's Woodland Villa's people — both residents and staff members — that make the home a great place to live.

Riverview LEA is Making Residents Hysterical

Adam Wicklum's laughter yoga program providing many benefits to residents

By Deron Hamel

Laughter, it has been said, is the best medicine, and if that's the case Adam Wicklum has the cure for what ails you.

For the past two months, the life enrichment aide (LEA) at Riverview Manor has been leading a biweekly laughter yoga program at the Peterborough long-term care home. Residents look forward to the activity and participation has brightened spirits and put smiles on faces, Wicklum says.

The idea behind laughter yoga is simple: voluntary laughter has the same benefits as regular laughter in the sense that both provide a myriad of benefits. Often, the process of forcing laughter turns into regular, spontaneous laughter.

Wicklum, who has completed training in laughter yoga, says the program provides social, mental, physical, emotional and even spiritual benefits.

"Research has found that as we get older we laugh less, but laughter yoga allows you to laugh for no reason," Wicklum says, citing the reasons why laughter is important.

"Laughter yoga promotes a positive mental state, increases oxygen supply, builds physical stamina, boosts immune systems, (creates) social connectedness, improves circulation reduces pain,

helps people relax and is fun."

There are several steps to laughter yoga. These include clapping, chanting, deep-breathing exercises and "happy-face" breathing (called so because participants draw a happy face in the air). After these steps, Wicklum leads residents in the process of getting people to laugh.

Different types of laughter are also encouraged — everything from a hearty, ho, ho, ho, to mimicking the chuckle of people's favourite fictional villain, such as a witch, Count Dracula or the Joker from Batman.

Sometimes, Wicklum leads residents in a "laughter choir" where they are instructed to laugh at different pitches and lengths to produce a long, conducive chuckle — such as "ho, ha, hee."

Wicklum says resident response to the program has been encouraging.

"Last week I had a resident who didn't want to go, but then changed her mind and when it was done, she said she really liked it and felt uplifted, so that was great to hear," he says.

When Wicklum leads the program every other Wednesday he tries to mix up the atmosphere. Sometimes the program is held in the activity room, but if the weather is nice he and the approximately 20 resident participants will go outside.

Better Diabetes Control Means Fewer Hospital Visits

Continued from page 1
when our diabetic residents become ill (and know that these are the things we have to do," Sabourin says.

"It was quite a learning experience for us. I think the tools that are there are great and the physicians are really getting on board with using it."

— Janna Sabourin, director of care, Woodland Villa

"It was quite a learning experience for us. I think the tools that are there are great and the physicians are really getting on board with using it," she says, adding Nancy Bonaparte, Woodland Villa's physician assistant, has played a large part in the program's implementation.

Sabourin says the ideal outcome for the program would be to see fewer

hypoglycemic events and improved blood-sugar control and the elimination of blood-sugar-related complications in residents living with diabetes.

OMNI received a grant from Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd. and Eli Lilly (Canada) Inc. in February 2013 to help make this diabetes strategy possible. Assessments were done in each of OMNI's 18 long-term care homes in areas including hypoglycemic events, numbers of residents with diabetes, and the time required to resolve issues related to diabetes.

Diabetes is a serious issue in long-term care, and its impact on quality of life is profound: fluctuating blood sugar brought on by diabetes can cause falls and the disease also poses challenges for wound care. Diabetes can also lead to cardiovascular disease and stroke.

By having better control of diabetes, residents can

avoid hospital visits, which in turn improves quality of life while reducing the burden on the acute-care system.

For example, a hypoglycemic event can take more than two hours to correct. If a hypoglycemic event happens when there's a staff shortage, it compounds the stress level and can prolong treatment. But with the protocols, team members can quickly assess the situation and resolve it in a timely manner.

"Basically, the order sets are streamlining everything to make sure that everyone is on the same page when it comes to ordering insulin (and when it comes to ordering medications for diabetes," Sabourin says.

"We're hoping to see less hypoglycemic events with our residents. We're hoping to get blood sugar under control and to eliminate any complications that will happen because of diabetes."

System to Standardize Education for Staff

Continued from page 1
was developed by Surge Learning Inc., will provide a one-stop shop for family educational tools, information about educational events and even company surveys.

OMNI selected Surge Learning after examining several systems in a process that was started at OMNI a few months ago, and implementation of this system was started in June and will carry on through the summer.

The system provides easy-to-access educational tools for staff members to continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge. The education offered includes courses mandated by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care as well as those provided by OMNI and Surge Learning.

A major goal of implementing the system is to standardize education across the homes and work towards

achieving 100 per cent staff education compliance.

As an accountability measure, the system records every training program completed and worked on by staff members. This is an important function, given increased scrutiny homes face from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, says Shawn Hoyland, Surge Learning's director of sales and marketing.

In the near future, all of OMNI's policies and procedures will be made available through the new system, eliminating the need to flip through cumbersome binders and file folders.

"The ministry can come into a home and want to see how many staff members have completed resident abuse education, as an example, and the home can quickly pull a report and hopefully show that they have 100 per cent compliance," Hoyland says.

In addition to current staff members, the system will contain information on past staff members who have completed training programs.

"(This program) makes training much more accessible to staff members, rather than having to bring everybody in at different times, which is also expensive," Hoyland explains. "The goal is to track all of the education in one place to make it as simple as possible to get that overview of where (the organization) is at."

Surge Learning has worked with other long-term care providers to implement the system, and Hoyland says he has seen favourable results.

"(Providers) with more than 1,000 employees have had 100 per cent compliance with their educational programs — that's pretty hard to do without a system like ours," he says.

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EDITORIAL

National Dementia Strategy Needed

There's been a lot of talk recently about the need for a national dementia strategy. Given the impact the condition has on people and society, perhaps we should have that conversation here as well.

... a national strategy should address care as dementia progresses in people. This means plans need to be in place to co-ordinate and address care at various levels — community care, day care and long-term care — to help people move through the health-care system.

According to the Alzheimer Society of Canada, about 747,000 Canadians are living with some form of cognitive impairment. This, of course, includes most residents living in long-term care homes. And the number of Canadians with cognitive impairment is expected to rise to 1.4 million by 2031.

There's also the immense financial burden dementia has on us all. According to the society, \$33 billion is spent annually on medical and indirect costs associated with the condition. By 2040, it will be \$293 billion per year.

So what should a national dementia strategy look like? The Alzheimer Society of Canada says a national strategy should be "a comprehensive, workable

approach that dramatically improves the lives of people living with dementia."

To accomplish this, a national strategy should address care as dementia progresses in people. This means plans need to be in place to co-ordinate and address care at various levels — community care, day care and long-term care — to help people move through the health-care system.

This is crucial because the needs of people with dementia constantly change and a one-size-fits-all approach to care is not a viable solution.

The good news is that steps are being taken in the right direction. The Canadian government committed to renew health research to address the growing onset of dementia and related diseases during the throne speech last October.

Steps have also been taken to develop a dementia strategy in Ontario. Windsor-Tecumseh MPP Percy Hatfield and the Alzheimer Society of Windsor and Essex County recently collaborated to circulate a petition calling for a strategy that addresses primary health care, health promotion, illness prevention, caregiver support and investment research.

Canada is the only G7 country without a national dementia strategy, a fact that was underscored many times by the media during a conference in London last December focused on dementia's impact on the most economically developed countries.

The time is right for change.



Almonte Country Haven resident Vi Larose is seen here spending time with niece Sharon Pottle.

Meals Among Highlights at Almonte for Vi Larose

Continued from page 1
favourite aspect of life at the OMNI Health Care home has been the people she lives with as well as the staff.

"The people are all so friendly," she says.

Sharon adds that Vi has had a more active social life since moving into Almonte Country Haven. When entertainers come in, Vi is "always sitting up in the front row," she says.

"And Vi really loves the staff," Sharon says.

Vi and Sharon also

compliment Almonte Country Haven's kitchen staff for the food served. Vi says the meals are enjoyable and she likes the fact that there's always choice provided at mealtimes. There's always snacks provided throughout the day, too, she adds.

Asked what she wants to do for her milestone birthday, Vi's answer is straightforward: "Be happy."

Almonte Country Haven launched the 90-Plus Club in June.

The club is designed to honour residents who are nonagenarians and centenarians — people in their 90s and 100s.

The 90-Plus Club has 26 residents, with some nearing the 100-year mark.

As part of the 90-Plus Club, members have the opportunity to choose activities and contribute to the home's newsletter, Small Home, Big Hearts, and, if they choose, be profiled in the OMNIway newsletter. — DH

Natural Beauties Flourish with Helping Hands at Streamway Villa

Hope and purpose synonymous with nature

By Lisa Bailey

Volunteers are creating a pretty view from the patio at Streamway Villa. All around are well tended beds of colourful flowers and hanging baskets of red, robust geraniums and other natural beauties suspended from the patio canopy.

The helping hands of volunteers, including two teenagers and three adults with family or friend connections to Streamway Villa, are looking after the flower beds. And it's very much appreciated by the home and its life enrichment team.

The volunteers are deepening the residents' enjoyment of the outdoors in summertime, which contributes to their quality of life.

"The gardens are looking

fabulous," life enrichment aide Nancy Williams says.

"We like to keep our gardens looking so nice, and the patio and gardens is one of the attractions of our home," she says.

From the patio, which is just off Streamway Villa's dining room, the flower beds rim the perimeter of the yard and abut the building.

The volunteers carried out the planting and spread black mulch which accentuates the colour of the many blooms.

Residents are definitely noticing the volunteers' handiwork during walks and from the patio, Williams says. The patio is a popular spot, visited by residents after every meal and into the evening. Campfires and other activities are held in

the patio and yard area too.

It's a place not only to connect with nature but also to the community as passersby are visible and sounds like church bells are audible.

Residents at Streamway Villa are also engaged in a gardening program at the home, tending to a raised vegetable garden that is right outside the dining room window — a great vantage point to see the growing foods.

Williams says gardening and connecting with nature is part of daily living for many people, and that continues for residents at Streamway Villa.

"It gives hope and purpose and (a sense of) belonging because they're helping to maintain (living) things," Williams says.

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New NCM says Working in LTC is a Chance to Make a Difference

John Wickert brings restaurant experience to new role at Burnbrae Gardens

By Deron Hamel

While John Wickert has only been the nutritional care manager (NCM) at Burnbrae Gardens for about a week and a half, he says he's enjoying his new job, largely because it's a chance to make a difference to others.

"It has been really a pleasurable experience so far. . . . Everyone is really friendly and the residents are great."

— John Wickert, nutritional care manager, Burnbrae Gardens

With a background in the restaurant industry, Wickert says he pursued a position in a long-term care home because he views his new job a chance to provide "a good service" to people receiving care.

He came to the Campbellford long-term care home after he was recommended for the position by Burnbrae Gardens' former NCM, Adam Brand, who is now at Riverview Manor in Peterborough. Brand and Wickert previously worked together at a restaurant.

While Wickert is new to the position, the experience

of working in long-term care has been rewarding, he says.

"It has been really a pleasurable experience so far," he says. "Everyone is really friendly and the residents are great."

Wickert is finding many similarities between cooking in a long-term care home and a restaurant. For instance, the clientele always expects high-quality food. So, attention to detail is important in both restaurants and long-term care home kitchens.

What's different, he says, is that the atmosphere in a long-term care home kitchen is more relaxed which gives staff members a lot of time to focus on the quality of each dish.

"There's still the urgency to get the food to people in a timely manner (but) there's still more time to put a lot of effort into it," Wickert says.

Administrator April Faux says that while Wickert is new to the position his commitment is shining through.

"John was highly recommended and he's got great restaurant experience, which is a perk, plus he's young and energetic and he really wants to be here," she says.



Several of Country Terrace's Dutch residents are seen here during a luncheon celebrating the Netherlands. The event was organized by life enrichment aide Alysha Verhoeven.

LEA Organizes Luncheon that Brings Her Back to Her Roots

Country Terrace's growing Dutch population sparks an idea

By Deron Hamel

When Country Terrace life enrichment aide (LEA) Alysha Verhoeven began to notice an increase of Dutch residents at the Komoka long-term care home, she got an idea for a program that would tap into her own Dutch roots.

Alysha thought of her grandmother, or "oma," Margaret Verhoeven, who is an excellent cook. What better way to make Dutch residents feel even more at home than to have her oma prepare a Dutch luncheon for them?

So, Alysha called her grandmother, who has volunteered in other long-term care homes, and

asked if she'd be willing to cook some of her favourite Dutch recipes for them. Margaret was happy to help out and recently prepared a Dutch spread of food that included a traditional meatball soup and a cake, while Alysha prepared an array of sandwiches and tea.

Adding to the spirit of the event, Alysha decorated the dining room with red, white and blue ribbons to reflect the colours of the Netherlands' flag. She also brought in a clog, a traditional wooden shoe, that was used as a centrepiece, as well as miniature porcelain gin bottles shaped like houses that are distributed by Dutch airliner KLM.

Of course, no event celebrating culture would be complete without music, so the luncheon was followed by a Dutch singalong that brought out residents' musical side.

"One woman, who speaks mainly Dutch, was singing the entire time and I've never heard her sing like that before," Alysha says, adding that several residents who aren't Dutch also joined in.

Alysha says she wants to celebrate a different culture each month on a go-forward basis.

"We have a lot of people here who are of different ethnicities, so it would be nice to celebrate everyone," she says.

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Program Has Seen 19 Butterflies Hatched

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chrysalis process inside a large mesh tent where the butterfly houses are stored.

Lynch says the residents have enjoyed many aspects of the program since it began in early June, from painting the butterfly houses to watching the vibrant colours of the butterflies' wings to simply sitting outside in the warm weather.

Residents can sit inside the large tent and watch the butterflies come in and out of their house and fly around. Sometimes residents sit in the tent

reading or simply enjoying the ambiance.

The LEA says family members are overwhelmed with the program's success. What has made it successful, she adds, is the fact that the program allows for residents to reminisce and socialize in an atmosphere that provides a lot of sensory stimulation.

"The family members are just blown away by this," she says. "They love it when you show them the photographs of their loved ones smiling and laughing."

The program has also served as an opportunity

to make new connections. Rita Gurova, a staff member who works in the kitchen, speaks Russian as her first language. One of the residents involved with the program also speaks Russian, so Gurova takes time to visit with this resident when the program is running.

Nineteen butterflies were hatched this year, and life enrichment co-ordinator Craig Forrest says he hopes to increase that number to 50 next year and open the program to more residents. — DH