



OMNIway

We've Done Great, But How Can We Do Better? . . . pg. 3

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Spreading the Love

Carolyn Della Foresta is seen here hugging a Garden Terrace resident. Della Foresta recently became administrator at Almonte Country Haven. See story at right.

'Music Corners' Calming Riverview Manor Residents

Home's BSO team creates program where people can listen to soft music throughout the day

By Deron Hamel
PETERBOROUGH, Ont. – A resident sits quietly in one of Riverview Manor's two "music corners," a smile on her face, her feet tapping to the cadence of Simon and Garfunkel's Homeward Bound which is playing softly from a nearby CD player.

Another resident with cognitive impairment who

often wanders suddenly stops in front of the CD player. She slowly examines the display of vinyl records hanging from the ceiling, a calm but curious look upon her face as she takes a long pause.

"This doesn't happen very often," registered practical nurse Susanna Kelusky says of the resident. "She wanders throughout the day."

Kelusky is one of the Peterborough long-term care home's Behavioural Support Ontario (BSO) team members. She, along with personal support workers Logan Burrows and Michelle Bellefontaine, began using the "music corners" last week.

"We have only had (the
See 'Music' page 3

Georgina Wiman Shares Why She Loves Being a PSW

Letter to administrator outlines the impression residents have made on her

By Deron Hamel
Shortly before Christmas, Garden Terrace personal support worker (PSW) Georgina Wiman was telling administrator Carolyn Della Foresta

about some of the things she's loved about her job during her nine years working at the Ottawa-area long-term care home. Della Foresta recommended
See 'Garden' page 4

Almonte Country Haven Has Been a 'Homecoming' for Administrator

Carolyn Della Foresta returns to where her LTC career began

Carolyn Della Foresta has had ties to Almonte Country Haven since the Lanark County long-term care home opened its doors in the early 1980s.

Her mother worked there. Her grandmother and a

great-aunt were residents at one time. And it was at Almonte Country Haven where Della Foresta, the home's new administrator, got her start in her long-term care career.

See 'Administrator' page 3

Streamway Villa Begins Quality Improvement Huddles on Each Shift

Short meetings aimed at enhancing resident care, increasing staff engagement

The Streamway Villa team is dedicating five to seven minutes per shift to hosting huddles focused on areas of quality improvement and building staff morale and engagement.

The huddles, which are attended by every staff

member from each department, began in early January. The huddles focus on one area of quality improvement each week, such as falls prevention, restraint reduction, eliminating

See 'Huddles' page 4



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Effie Reid, pictured above, was recently honoured with a 50-year service pin from the ladies' auxiliary of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 52.

Effie Reid Awarded 50-year Pin for Service to Legion's Ladies' Auxiliary

Pleasant Meadow Manor resident proud of her decades of service

By Deron Hamel
Pleasant Meadow Manor resident Effie Reid was recently honoured with a 50-year service pin from the ladies' auxiliary of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 52, for her five decades of service.

"We always served good meals — we'd often hear how much people enjoyed them."

— Effie Reid, resident, Pleasant Meadow Manor

Effie, 89, served on the auxiliary's executive committee and has also been elected as its sports officer. Additionally, she spent a lot of time volunteering in the kitchen to help with banquets, something she remains proud of.

"We always served good meals — we'd often hear how much people enjoyed them," Effie tells The OMNIway.

There continues to be a reminder of Effie at the ladies' auxiliary in the form of the "Effie cake," which

continues to be served during special occasions.

"We used to serve that every Thursday at the Kiwanis Club," she chuckles. While the vanilla cake with fruit filling was not her creation — she found it in a recipe book — it became a fixture at the ladies' auxiliary and was christened the "Effie cake" in her honour.

"We would make it every time there was something special going on," she says.

Aside from her work in the ladies' auxiliary kitchen, Effie enjoyed playing darts and was a member of the bowling team.

"I loved that," she says of her involvement with the bowling team.

Effie's story was also profiled recently in a local newspaper. Her daughter brought in the clipping to show Pleasant Meadow Manor life enrichment co-ordinator Chris Garden, who contacted The OMNIway.

"Effie was always involved (with the ladies' auxiliary) and I thought this would make a good article," Garden says.

Making a Difference, One Plate at a Time at Frost Manor

NCM discusses home's recent culinary creations — and the difference great food is making

By Deron Hamel
Frost Manor nutritional care manager (NCM) Neil MacDonald says he's proud of the food he and

"We have really been focusing on plating with pride — because you eat first with your eyes."

— Neil MacDonald, nutritional care manager, Frost Manor

his colleagues have been preparing for residents at the Lindsay long-term care home, noting the team has been putting a strong emphasis on the presentation of meals.

Making food that looks good is as important as creating meals that are tasty, he adds, noting all kitchens in OMNI Health Care's 18 long-term care homes are being encouraged to enhance the appearance of the plates they create.

The reason is simple: if food looks good, residents will want to eat it, MacDonald says.

"We have really been focusing on plating with pride — because you eat first with your eyes," he

tells The OMNIway.

Some of the dishes in the current menu cycle that MacDonald cites for their top-notch presentation include an asparagus frittata and a pulled-beef sandwich topped with crispy onions that were recently served for lunch and were met with rave reviews from residents.

"There were no peanut-butter-and-jam-sandwich requests for that meal; it was very delicious," MacDonald says.

look and taste like they're being served in a high-end restaurant, MacDonald says.

"The residents really appreciate these things and the food is really something they look forward to each day," he says. "We have been doing really well with the new menus."

MacDonald says he's also proud of the dinner Frost Manor's kitchen team prepared for the staff Christmas party: a beef



A pulled-beef sandwich, courtesy of Frost Manor's kitchen.

It's little extras, like adding a lemon slice or crispy onions to beautify dishes and give plates "some height," that often make the greatest difference, he adds.

Frost Manor residents have noticed the effort the home's kitchen staff puts into making meals

short rib served off the bone with fingerling potatoes, asparagus and gravy, garnished with crispy onions and sliced chives.

"It was an awesome Christmas meal," he says. "It was braised low and slow for a really long time and came out great."

Former Woodland PSW Returns Christmas Day to help out

Melody Letford and her daughter do residents' hair and makeup, make day easier for staff

By Deron Hamel
Melody Letford just couldn't stay away from Woodland Villa on Christmas Day.

Although she no longer works at the Cornwall-area long-term care home as a personal support worker (PSW), Melody is well aware of the challenges team members face during the busy holiday season.

So, on Dec. 25, she and her daughter, Meghan, stopped by Woodland Villa to do residents' makeup and hair.

Christmas is one of the busiest days of the year for

family visits at the 111-bed home, and residents always want to look their best. Knowing this, Melody didn't think twice about volunteering her time.

"I wanted to do something with my daughter that was special on Christmas Day, and I missed being at the home," Melody, who left her position at Woodland Villa about a month ago, tells The OMNIway.

"My daughter and I went over, and she did the makeup and I did their hair, and we had a great time

talking to the residents. ... It was really nice to be back to see the residents and the staff again."

Ethel Britton, a registered nurse at Woodland Villa, says the gesture from Melody and Meghan was well-received by residents and staff members.

"On a busy day like Christmas, this meant a lot to residents and staff," she says.

Kim Lama, Woodland Villa's nursing administrative services manager, agrees.

"It was a great help for the PSWs working that day, and the ladies loved it," she says.

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EDITORIAL



Riverview Manor BSO team members Susanna Kelusky (left) and Logan Burrows (right) are seen here in one of the Peterborough long-term care home's two "music corners." The areas have CD players with soft music playing throughout each day to help calm residents affected by agitation.

Music Corners Attracting Residents

Continued from page 1
program running) for a couple of days now and we thought we would have to

"We have a certain resident who really likes jazz and when he is upset or restless, we can direct him to the music."

— Susanna Kelusky, registered practical nurse, Riverview Manor

show the residents where the music was playing, but we found that the music drew the residents (to the areas)," Kelusky says.

If a resident with cognitive impairment is experiencing agitation, staff members can direct them towards the music, which has a calming effect, she adds.

"We have a certain resident who really likes jazz and when he is upset or restless, we can direct him to the music."

In addition to the music, the corners have records on display and books with musical facts and trivia residents can look at.

The connection between music and calming people with dementia is well documented. Music programs are regularly offered through the home's life enrichment department, but the BSO

team wanted to implement a program where residents could listen to soft music throughout each day.

Residents were asked about their favourite music and the BSO team collected CDs donated by staff members to match residents' choices. The team then created two areas in the home where people can gather to enjoy music — one area has pop music, the other has mainly classical and jazz.

While the program is aimed at residents who have cognitive impairment, all residents are encouraged to take time to enjoy the music.

"The corners are for anybody to enjoy," Kelusky says.

Administrator 'Grew Up' at Almonte

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She was a 16-year-old high-school student when she began working at Almonte Country Haven as a nurses' aide in 1991. At the time, the position only required on-the-job training.

"I worked here for 10 years, from 1991 to 2001, so, for me, it is a homecoming," Della Foresta says of her return to the home. "I am very familiar with the home; I can literally say I grew up here."

Almonte Country Haven was built when Della Foresta, who formerly served as administrator at Garden Terrace, was six

years old. She recalls doing wheelchair races in the hallways when visiting her mother at work back in the 1980s. It was a very different resident population, she notes.

"I can remember one gentleman had a part-time job and he would go out in his truck to work every day," Della Foresta says, adding there are many more people with complex-care issues among today's long-term care residents.

Della Foresta, who is filling the position left after former administrator Marilyn Colton retired in late 2015, says she's pleased to return to the home to

find that some of the people she worked with 25 years ago are still there.

"The great care that they were providing then, they are still providing now, and it's a beautiful thing to see," she says.

Just after Della Foresta began her new position, someone gave her a greeting card which simply read: "Welcome home." It is an apt statement, she says.

"I've come back here and it just happens to be my 25th anniversary with OMNI, and I'm back where I started to celebrate that, so I feel very fortunate," she says. — DH

We've Done Great, But How Can We Do Better?

OMNI Health Care team members from across the organization did a great job in 2015 of driving ingenuity to enhance quality of life for the more than 1,400 residents living in the organization's 18 long-term care homes.

The importance of quality improvement must be embedded in everyone's mind. People, be they staff members, families or visitors to homes, need to feel open and encouraged to discussing and making suggestions related to enhancing quality for residents.

Strong focus on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's quality indicators helped homes identify areas where improvement was needed. Teams created processes and interventions to enhance many areas of care, such as restraint elimination, reduction of antipsychotic administration and skin care improvement.

"The actual steps that have been taken in order to improve quality are better understood and communicated, and because they are, people are engaged more," OMNI president and CEO Patrick McCarthy says of those working in OMNI homes.

"They are engaged in the process of understanding it and making that happen."

Focusing on enhancing quality throughout the organization has also provided OMNI team members with insight into the importance of not only coming up with good ideas to bring about positive change, but also the need to engage everyone in the ideas to make them happen.

This, of course, is great news. But what now? How can we do even better?

A key thing to remember as we move into 2016 is that quality improvement is everyone's responsibility; and continuously pushing ourselves to do better is at the heart of quality.

This means people need to be aware of the importance of quality in all aspects of resident care, not just their area of focus.

In other words, the importance of quality improvement must be embedded in everyone's mind. People, be they staff members, families or visitors to homes, need to feel open and encouraged to discussing and making suggestions related to enhancing quality for residents.

By taking this approach to quality improvement, people will see the results of their actions which will ultimately lead to a high level of satisfaction for all.

How do we do better? How do we make it happen for the resident? How do we improve the resident experience? These are all questions we can ask ourselves as we work further to enhance quality in our homes.

We are moving to the next level in 2016. Let's make this a journey to remember.



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Village Green Team Member has a Fascinating Underwater Hobby

Brian MacPherson has gone underwater exploring in both historic and exotic locations

By Deron Hamel

Exploring the wonders that lie beneath Lake Ontario has been an important part of Village Green maintenance manager Brian MacPherson's life for about 10 years.

“(Diving) was something that I have been interested in for a long time, and I just decided one day to try it.”

— Brian MacPherson, maintenance manager, Village Green

He got his first taste of diving and underwater exploration as a member of the Canadian naval reserves, and the experience sparked an interest that eventually led to him getting his diving certification, the “first step” people with an interest in the hobby need to take.

“It was something that I have been interested in for a long time, and I just decided one day to try it,” MacPherson tells The OMNIway.

The parts of Lake Ontario around Kingston are a haven for divers because of the region's rich history. Before the advent of cars, Lake Ontario was much like Highway 401 is today. The lake saw heavy traffic from vessels travelling between Toronto and St. Lawrence Seaway.

One of MacPherson's favourite diving sites is the Wolfe Islander II, a ship that was sunk in 1985 to make an artificial reef. The vessel, which is completely intact and sitting upright, is about 60 feet below water and

is an excellent opportunity to train divers, he says.

“It's like an underwater jungle gym,” MacPherson chuckles. “You can swim through the engine room and there's a passenger lounge area on the back, and it's really neat because there's a lot of different fish living in it.”

Another of MacPherson's favourite sites to explore is the wreckage of the Comet, a paddlewheel steamship that sank May 14, 1861, after colliding with another vessel.



“The ship sits on the bottom of the lake upright, and that's another neat one,” he says.

MacPherson has also enjoyed diving in Honduras, Mexico and Cuba. A benefit to diving in these warmer climates is that there is greater light penetration compared to Lake Ontario and, of course, a wide variety of tropical fish, he says.

In Honduras, MacPherson dove among the non-aggressive blacktip reef sharks without a cage, which he characterizes as “almost being like on safari in Africa.”

“One of the great things about diving is that it helps dispel some of the myths about sharks,” he says. “Sure, some sharks are aggressive, but (others) are not.”



Streamway Villa staff members are seen here gathering for a quality improvement huddle on Jan. 28.

Huddles Enhance Resident Focus

Continued from page 1

antipsychotic usage and other quality indicators.

Discussions in the huddles are based around worksheets administrator Kylie Szczebonski has compiled from online sources.

The goal of the huddles is to improve quality in a care for residents while engaging all staff members in the importance of quality in a long-term care setting and valuing everyone's input in the process.

The huddles also help Streamway Villa achieve the motto the Cobourg long-term care home has adopted for this year: “Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success,” a quote from American industrialist Henry Ford.

“We say it every week

so that we can get people to start putting it in their heads that we're working as a team,” Szczebonski tells The OMNIway.

The huddles also aim to underscore the value of being resident-focused. In other words, no matter what a staff member may have to do in a day in terms of paperwork, for example, caring for residents must always come first.

“We want people to realize that, yes, we have tasks to do, but we're taking care of people, so people come first before the task,” Szczebonski says.

While the huddles have only been used for three weeks, they are already garnering positive results, Szczebonski says, adding the greatest outcome has been the discussions staff members are having.

“The other day we heard a housekeeper talking to another staff member about how they liked what we were doing in the huddles,” she says. “I've heard a couple of PSWs (personal support workers) say, “This is really awesome because now we're getting some of the communication going.””

Additionally, the huddles are engaging staff members who are sometimes not as connected with others on the front-line team, such as those working in the kitchen.

“I feel, as the administrator, that the huddles are bringing people together and it's bringing a more positive approach to 2016, so I want to keep that trend going,” Szczebonski says.

“Quality improvement is something everyone has to pay attention to.” — DH

Garden Terrace Changed PSW's Impression of Seniors

Continued from page 1

Wiman write a letter outlining her thoughts, so that's exactly what she did.

The result was a six-page handwritten letter Wiman shared with Della Foresta about funny stories she has about residents and how working in a long-term care home has left an impression on her.

In fact, working at Garden Terrace has changed Wiman's impression of the senior population, she says.

“Before I started working here almost 10 years ago, I had this impression that elderly people didn't have the sense of humour that they have — I thought they would all be prim and proper and wouldn't be able to engage,” Wiman tells The OMNIway.

Working at Garden

Terrace, she says, has made her realize that nothing could be further from the truth.

“I have learned that no matter how young or old you are, no matter where you're from or where you now reside, everyone wants to be cared about, loved and feel like part of something,” she says.

Wiman says some of her favourite resident stories stem from her tattoos, a topic of frequent discussion amongst residents, she says.

One resident, she notes, would ask her several times a week about her skin art. The resident expressed concern, thinking Wiman's tattoos were an injury. When the resident discovered that they were tattoos, she said, “I don't like that.”

However, the resident never judged Wiman.

“She was awesome and

always accepted me, even though she didn't like all aspects of my exterior,” the PSW writes.

Asked what advice she has for people considering a career as a PSW, Wiman says it would be to spend as much time engaging residents as possible.

“Speak to them; learn from them,” she says. “We also have to remember that this is their home, not ours, and we have to do whatever it takes to make their life better every single day.”

It also takes a certain type of person to be a PSW, Wiman says.

“I think you have to care about the residents more than anything else; you have to be able to stand up for the residents and advocate for them and encourage others to do the same,” she says.



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