



SIoux LOOKOUT
Meno Ya Win
HEALTH CENTRE

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OUR INAUGURAL QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first quarterly newsletter for the William A. George Extended Care Facility (ECF). I am Cynthia Dwyer, Administrator for the ECF.

The purpose of the newsletter is to keep our residents and their families updated regarding events at the ECF and keep everyone informed of any changes that may affect the residents. The contents of the newsletter will give families and friends a reference point during conversations in

regards to specific topics of discussion with the residents. The newsletter will also provide staff introductions, safety information as well as current and upcoming events. The newsletter will be distributed quarterly, starting February 2020.

It has been my pleasure to get to know each of the residents and my hope is the newsletter will provide families with communications regarding the lives of the residents at the William A. George Extended Care Facility.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Dwyer, BN, RN
Director/LTC Administrator

OUR VOICES: TWENTY-TWO YEARS CARING FOR NANAS AND PAPAS

By Leslie Marshal, PSW

Growing up, I was a fortunate girl. I was surrounded by Nanas. We always had a Nana living with us—Mom’s mom, Dad’s mom, my cousin’s Dad’s mom.

I always felt so special fetching their tea, bringing their snacks, even pouring them a healthy shot of bourbon before bed. It was an honour in our household to look after the Nanas. I respected these women beyond measure and was mesmerized by their storytelling. They taught me how to make a proper pot of tea, how to set a proper table, how to make those little

cashew-shaped almond cookies at Christmas. I also had the honour to care for them when they became frail or sick. All my Nanas left this world knowing they were loved! Respect came naturally to them.

Fast forward a few decades, I found myself the victim of corporate downsizing, so I seized the opportunity to go to college again. I took a Professional Social Worker (PSW) course, or Health Care Aide as it was called then. I was soon asked by the manager at the William A. George Extended Care Facility to submit my resume and—TA DA!—my career as a PSW began.

How hard could it be looking after 20 Nanas? For those of you who know me, I started this position twenty-two years ago without a single strand of grey hair on my head. A wise man I worked with once said to me, “Once a man, twice a child.” I now understand what he meant. Being a PSW is a mentally and physically challenging position. The hours are long, and there are many daily challenges: Alzheimer’s, Dementia, Diabetes, Failure to Cope, COPD, Arthritis, Parkinson’s... the list goes on. These diseases affect our most vulnerable populations. As

PSWs, we care for your Nanas and Papas with compassion, empathy, knowledge and professionalism. Most of all, we do so with love and respect.

At present, there is a PSW shortage in Ontario. PSWs are a vital part of the Health Care Team. Without them, caregivers may not be able to keep up with the day-to-day activities required to care for a person with a chronic disease. In our overburdened Health Care facilities, the problem becomes more concerning.

All these Nanas and Papas living in long term care facilities are real people who lead full lives. They have had families, occupations, and are smart, productive members of society who, by chance, ended up unable to care for themselves and are residing in long term care. Like any of us, they deserve love, respect, compassion and, most of all, first-rate medical and personal care.

My career is coming to an end. It was truly rewarding and an honour to care for all the Nanas and Papas over the years. Being a PSW is a career that affords me the bragging rights that, YES, I did make a difference in this world.



BECOME A VOLUNTEER

at William A. George

SAFETY UPDATE



0 falls in the last 90 days

CALLING FOR COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

By Jesse Bonello, Sioux Lookout Bulletin

The William A. 'Bill' George Extended Care Facility, which is a 20-bed Long Term Care Facility operated by the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Care Centre, is looking for community volunteers to spend time with Extended Care Unit (ECU) residents.

Some activities that volunteers partake in with residents include singing, colouring, playing games, reading aloud, and simply chatting with residents.

"Some people come in and do singing, and the residents really like that. Some people might bring a dog and some of the residents like that. Some of our residents have cognitive decline, so it's very hard for them to concentrate, so volunteers come in and help redirect them and help them... The nursing staff and the PSW's (personal support workers) are very busy, and it's hard for them to be able to sit down and take that one-on-one time," said Cynthia Dwyer, administrator of long-term care.

"A lot of evenings we don't have anyone here to do activities with the residents and some weekends, so I'm reaching out to the public to say, how can we fill that void as a community? At the end of the day, I just really want more community involvement, and for people to come and see what these residents still have to offer to the community.

"My philosophy is these residents have a lot of life left in them, and that's one of the reasons I'm really putting it out there in the community. They have a lot of life left in them, they've had very interesting lives, they have things to share, and I want the public and the community to know that. I think there's a stigma that long-term care is the end of the road. Someone could come here and live 20 years, so it's their home. I'm trying to open this up to the community to say that these people are still part of the community, and to introduce the residents to different things," she said.

The Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre website describes the Long Term Care

Facility, "Residents receive coordinated care by a multi-disciplinary team that includes physicians, a nurse practitioner, a dietician, physiotherapists, an occupational therapist, a speech/language pathologist, daily nursing and activation staff. Volunteers complete the experience including but not limited to pastoral care services, visitation, singing and gardening. We believe in resident and family centred care with a restorative approach that focuses on dignity and respect. We are located at 75 Fifth Avenue in Sioux Lookout."

For those interested in volunteering, Dwyer can be contacted at cdwyer@slmhc.on.ca or 807-737-3030 ext. 6568.

OUR ELDERS, INTEGRAL TO OUR COMMUNITY

The teachings and counsel of Elders are integral to First Nation communities. That is why the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre has an Elder's Council.

The Elder's Council is comprised of eight Elders, representing each of the Tribal Councils, the Independents and Lac Seul First Nation, plus the two Elders in Residence. Appointed for two terms by consensus at the bi-annual Elder's Gathering, members support issues management as well as program and policy development.



- Elder's Council 2018.

ELDER COUNCIL VISIT: A DAY OF FOOD, FAMILY AND SONG

By Gregory Link, Communications Specialist



- Pelican Falls First Nation High School students.

On Thursday, December 5th, the Elder's Council visited The William A. George Extended Care Facility (ECF) for our annual Christmas concert which was broadcast to our northern communities by Wawatay Radio.

Gathered together in the activity room, the Pelican Falls First Nation High School music class serenaded the residents, their friends and family members with acoustic guitar renditions of holiday classics. The Elder's Council followed the students with a Cree hymn. In between performances, Margie Kimball and Martin Tuesday kept the crowd entertained with a Christmas carol sing-along.

Every year around the holidays, the Elder's Council visits the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre and the ECF to let the patients

and residents know that their friends and family members back home are thinking of them at this special time of the year. It was a particularly exciting visit for some patients and residents who had not seen the elders in a year or more.

Our annual Christmas concert is one of many activities organized throughout the year for the ECF residents. Events like this provide opportunity for our residents to socialize, celebrate and connect with their home communities.

With an abundance of food, family and song, good times were had by all.

CHRISTMAS DINNER AT EXTENDED CARE

By Cynthia Dwyer, Directory/LTC Administrator

Every first week of December, the William A. George Extended Care Facility provides its much-anticipated annual Christmas dinner for the residents and their families.

A fourteen-year tradition, this get-together provides an opportunity for the residents to experience a wonderful Christmas dinner with their families in their home. The dinner includes a full course meal of turkey with all the fixings and has an amazing turn out of up to one hundred people or more.

The residents get very excited for this event and staff ensure that they have the best time possible by dressing them up in their nicest attire. Lisa Hindy creates a wonderful energy with the residents while getting the ladies' hair, make up and nails done. June Wynn graciously donates her time in cooking all the turkeys. As well, Sharon Yule also gives us her time with helping in the kitchen. This event takes many volunteers and staff to be successful.

There are many activities going on while the supper is being served and thereafter: there is a local men's choir that performs Christmas carols throughout the building, Father Steve attends and provides grace and Santa comes to greet and hand out candy to the children and residents.

The atmosphere is one of laughter and happiness, and the residents, their families and the staff look forward to the event every year.



THOUGHTS FROM THE PARK BENCH

The longer I live, the more beautiful life becomes.
- Frank Loyd Wright

MESSAGE
FROM
THE TEAM

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Wishing everyone love,
life and laughter in the
year to come.