

## **Awards for Excellence Ceremony 2017**



**The Awards were Presented by Richard Cloutier from 680 CJOB Radio.**

Awards for Excellence are given each year by the Long Term & Continuing Care Association of Manitoba to honour the efforts and dedication of outstanding service teams, employees, volunteers and providers who go “above and beyond” to offer care, and services in a variety of care and living settings – for example: Personal Care Homes, Supportive Housing residences, Retirement Residences, (sometimes known as Assisted Living), Adult programs, Community and Seniors resource centres.

The award is open to all staff and volunteers who are engaged in providing care and services to seniors throughout the province of MB.

### **Judging**

An independent panel of judges reviews all of the nominations and selects the award recipients.

Thank you to all who submitted nominations. On behalf of the Long Term & Continuing Care Association of Manitoba, we would like to formally congratulate all of the nominees for their valuable contributions to the lives of clients and residents in Manitoba. By now, all nominees will have received a letter from the Association's Board Chair, recognizing their special achievements. It is quite an honour to be nominated and recognized by your peers and colleagues. Thank you for your continued efforts to provide exceptional care and services that enrich the lives of seniors in Manitoba.

### **The First Award goes to Maylene Vergara**



Maylene is a Rehabilitation Aid at Middlechurch Home of Winnipeg. She is responsible for all of the Resident programs related to safe mobility and rehabilitative care and Maylene does not take this responsibility lightly.

Maylene noticed right away that only a handful of the almost 200 Residents were participating in the rehabilitation activities. She was determined to change this. She began by assessing each of the residents carefully, exploring their individual desires and needs. Maylene also reviewed all of the Residents and families' survey results. She noted that overwhelmingly, families and residents were seeking more than just a walking program.

She began by working closely with the physiotherapist services and through this exercise, she was able to understand each Resident's ability to do more.

Armed with this information, Maylene cultivated and nurtured an innovative Resident exercise and activity program.

At first, only a small group of residents gathered. But then the momentum began to build! Word spread quickly, and more Residents began to attend.

Maylene's program captured the Residents interest because it offered a rewarding level of exercise along with a sense of accomplishment.

A large map tracks the kilometers the Residents have travelled and the distance is plotted on a map for all to see! This inspired memories of favorite family trips to a myriad of destinations all around the world. Reminiscing while pedaling made the kilometers melt away.

Maylene has a way of making all the residents feel safe and welcome. Now, the Residents banter and encourage each other. And then.....the program became so much more than just exercise. It suddenly became a social activity where residents and families gathered and new friendships were nurtured. Now more than 70 Residents flock to her program. On any given day in Maylene's exercise room you will find not only Residents, but families and volunteers gather to share stories and exercise.

Besides her cycling program Maylene has added pulley exercises and continues with the walking programs.

One of her colleagues wrote: "Middlechurch Home is pleased and proud that Maylene works on our team! "

Maylene is to be commended for her initiative and innovation. Maylene has clearly gone above and beyond to improve the quality of life for residents at Middlechurch. It was an honour to present this Award for Excellence to her. Congratulations, Maylene!

### **The Second Award goes to the Gardenia Way Culture Committee**



Welcome Cheryl Massey, Alexis Carlin, Meagan Fitzpatrick, and Stacy Blazina of Revera Long Term Care at Beacon Hill Lodge, Social work and Recreation departments.

I am honoured to share their story today.

Let me take you back to the Spring of 2016, when an employee led focus group came together to support the person centred approach of enhancing quality of life in long term care.

The employee led “Gardenia Way Culture Committee” consists of a variety of staff:

- Health Care Aids
- Nurses
- Laundry staff
- The home’s chef
- Managers
- Recreation staff
- Housekeeping staff
- Maintenance staff
- Occupational and Rehabilitation staff

These people all had an important goal in mind - to eliminate departmental silo’s and by doing so, improve quality of life for the residents. They focused on the following goals:

- Working and Living Environment – How do we make it feel like home?
- Staff and Resident relationships/interactions – individualized care; dignity; fostering friendships
- Recreation and Leisure activities

Setting the stage for success came next. First, Staff was empowered to make person centred care decisions.

Next, staff was encouraged to develop effective and efficient care strategies. Third and perhaps of the highest importance, staff were to look at how to improve the cohesiveness and morale of the staff in all departments. In essence they were asked “How do we work collaboratively as a team with the same goals each day, every day to improve life for the residents?”

The Gardenia Way Culture Committee began by developing safe forums *to ask all front line staff* directly, what they thought would achieve success.

Many conversations resulted from these safe forums. The Committee emphasized to staff that their ideas would be used to “do it better/do it differently” and that the committee’s objective was to make this above all else, sustainable. Staff was asked to come up with solutions to the challenges and to nominate their peers to take these solutions for a “test drive”, and evaluate the solutions.

Just some of the accomplishments this team has realized over the past 9 months are:

- Established the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Gardenia, project leaders
- Revamped the food service delivery
- Improved resident care (in behavioural situations and safety)
- Enhanced Communication between staff and Residents
- Found more time to spend with Residents
- Implemented a Resident Activity Station with fun supplies:
  - i.e. Flower arranging supplies
  - Games, cards
  - Coloring books, puzzles
  - Sensory toys
  - Live plants
  - Decorations made with residents
- Established a communication book for EVERYONE!
- Renamed the Nursing Station – the Team Station!

The project was designed to shift the perspective of staff members by empowering them. The expectation is that this is the “new normal” and is the lens through which staff see their daily interactions with the residents.

This approach to change made all the difference! Instead of management prescribing change, ideas and plans were developed by front line staff. This approach has created ownership and pride. The project is now scheduled for all floors with a completion date in 2017.

The project and the staff’s success, demonstrate that anything is possible when people come together.

It was an honour to present this Award for Excellence to all of you. Congratulations to the staff of the Gardenia Way Culture Committee!

**The Third Award goes to Kara Flamond from Bayside Personal Care Home**



Work demands on staff in long-term care can feel overwhelming at times and of course there are never enough staff or hours in the day to do all the things you would like to do.

But this just seems to spur Kara on as she works diligently to provide for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the 60 residents at Bayside.

Kara recognizes that sometimes we overlook the simple things.....like the power of human touch.

She also understood the residents' physical needs for wellbeing such as regular, professional dental care and eye care services. As we age, these needs increase and changes can happen quickly. Kara knows how difficult it is for the residents to travel to these appointments. But she also knew how important they are. When there are problems in these areas, it can negatively affect how the residents respond to all other social activities. To enhance social interactions and to entice the residents to participate, Kara thought about safety interventions, sensory stimulation, and workshops.

To reach all these goals, she developed, planned, and implemented a number of initiatives:

1. Activities of Daily Living and family communication boards for resident rooms. These boards provide a quick visual references for staff as well as families.
2. Vision screening and an Oral health plan that includes in-home dental assessments and cleanings.
3. Massage Therapy, also in-home by registered massage therapists.
4. Sensory Room: The room includes a projector for visual and sound therapy for all residents, but it is especially helpful for those with cognitive dysfunction as it can decrease anxiety and agitation. Families are invited to bring photos and videos that chronicle family events are encouraged.
5. A workshop provides activities primarily for male residents
6. A Coffee Shop Support Group was started for residents providing a safe forum to discuss their feelings regarding their experience in long-term care. This is especially helpful for those who have recently moved to the home.

And Kara is not finished! She is continually thinking of other ways to improve the lives of the residents! The outcome of Kara's efforts have benefitted residents, staff, and families. Families were especially excited and supportive.

Families are thrilled to have services like dental and vision provided in the home. It is so much easier for families and residents not to travel to appointments, especially when the residents are frail and we are enduring winter's icy weather. Residents are benefiting from improved oral and visual health. Massage therapy has lessened anxiety for some residents and provides relief from those arthritic joints. And residents now have a voice, a safe environment to share stories

and commiserate with each other. A nurse with training in mental health nurse offers his/her expertise during the coffee shop support group sessions. Staff benefit from experiencing and working in the “commitment to care environment” that has been created.

Her colleagues have said “What makes Kara unique is her ‘I’m never done’ attitude. Kara is constantly looking for ideas and initiatives to improve the quality of life for the residents. She is one of the most committed people you will find anywhere. Once she is done one project, she is on to the next! Her goal is to create the best care in the region.”

Kara truly cares and it shows. While she is often “up to her ears” in meetings and paperwork, Kara is NEVER too busy to stop and talk to a resident or answer a call bell. She is kind and compassionate to everyone. Kara’s inspiration is in the example she sets for others – ‘be the example’. And she is.

The value and impact of Kara’s activities can be seen in the faces of the residents and the happy faces of the families that witness how their loved ones are cared for at Bayside.

It was an honour to present this Award for Excellence to you. Congratulations, Kara!