



The Wave

LifeCircles Newsletter, Spring 2011, Volume 5, Issue 1

Our Mission

To provide comprehensive, compassionate, and team-based care to the frail elderly in partnership with their families and caregivers in order to maximize independence and their quality of life.

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Thoughts from the Executive Director

We just completed the review of the participant's surveys. It is important to us to hear what you and your families are saying about how LifeCircles is functioning and identify areas that we can improve. Thank you to all of you and your families who took the time to fill out the survey. That information is very important to all of us at LifeCircles. We work very hard to get better at meeting the needs of each participant. One way of doing that is listening to and following your suggestions.

A second important way to get input from the participants is through the Participant Advisory Council. LifeCircles' staff meets with participants and caregivers to find out what is working and what things we can do to make it better for everyone involved. We meet six times a year. We meet in February, April, June, August, October and December on the third Thursday at 11:00 am. Please let Paula know if you would like to be involved with this group.

I want folks to know that there will be some construction going on during the next three months. We will be putting in new office space next to the transportation office and we are building a green house in the front porch area. We are also putting in more restrooms in the front of the large day room. These changes will allow us to provide more activities and better care to our participants.

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Participant Advisory Committee



“We have a good group of people here. Employees and participants.”



“I really like coming here, I like the exercises.”

Surveys were mailed and returned and the overall outcome was positive! You like the medical care you are getting; you like the employees; and you like the socialization. You feel so-so about the food – but we are working on it!! We will be adding a couple of new round tables to the day room. We are working on the best use of space. Our audit with the State and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services went very well! These are some of the topics that are discussed in the Participant Advisory Committee meeting. If you are interested, we still need more members. Let us know and we will invite you to the next meeting.

Thoughts from the Social Workers

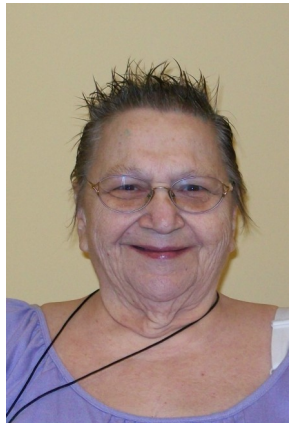
Coping with Stress

Stress—it is in everyone’s life! It can make you feel depressed, worried, sad, overwhelmed, sick, and crabby! Feelings of stress can come from a variety of sources- relationships with others, your own health issues, financial problems, or trying to take care of others. But if you can learn how to deal with stress in positive ways, your life can be much improved. Everyone copes with stress in different ways, but some of the following ideas may be helpful:

- Learn how to say ‘no’ to unnecessary things
- Spend time with supportive people
- Express your emotions- talking with others, writing, doing something creative—can all be positive ways of expressing emotions
- Count to 10- in the middle of a crisis, taking a few moments to think and calm down can improve your decision-making
- Do something you enjoy- music, nature, television, read, take a bubble bath, play with a pet
- Practice healthy habits- eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise, take medications as ordered
- Adjust your expectations- perfection is never needed!

Stress, when not addressed, can cause even more health and emotional problems. It pays to be aware of the sources of stress in your life and the methods that help you cope. It also pays to learn positive ways of coping, instead of ways that make the situation worse in the end. If you would like to talk more about anything related to these types of issues, please contact your LifeCircles’ social worker. A life with fewer stressful feelings is a goal for which everyone can strive!

LifeCircles Participant' Interview



Brenda England was born in Lansing, MI. Most of her early life was lived in Middleton, MI. She graduated from Middleton High School. She met her husband there. They were married 40 years. He was an Over the Road truck driver. Brenda raised her two kids pretty much by herself when he was on the road. They moved several times and ended up living in Three Rivers for 20 years. She worked in a sewing factory, where she learned her love for sewing, which she loves to this day. She then worked for the telephone company for 15 years. During that time they

transferred to Muskegon. She took an early retirement to be able to stay at home and care for her husband who had a heart attack. They enjoyed traveling with many trips to Montana where his family was from. He passed away in 1995. To this day Brenda still loves all crafts but really loves to sew. She makes some great purses. She has a cat who keeps her company at home. He avoids one chair in her house because she has two clowns sitting in it

Bill Goetchis was born and has lived his whole life in Muskegon, MI. He has two sisters and a half brother, along with several nieces and nephews.

His oldest sister lives in the Detroit area and is a teacher. His youngest sister lives in the Ravenna area. Bill graduated from Orchard View High School in 1970 at the LC Walker arena because their class was so big. He worked for Goodwill while in the 10th grade in the craft department. He made rugs. His supervisor asked him if he would like to give his mother a rug for

a Christmas gift. She really liked that gift. He later worked at Goodwill as a janitor. Bill is a member of Wolf Lake United Methodist Church and has been a participant of LifeCircles since March of 2011. He enjoys playing cards and visiting with people.



"I love you girls here, you take such good care of me. You make me feel better!"



"You do a fantastic job here!"

Employee's Corner

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My name is Bridgette Carmean. I was born and raised in Muskegon. I went to culinary school in Pennsylvania after graduating from high school. I have worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant for 4 years, the last 2 ½ years for LifeCircles. I love to cook, go camping, do scrapbooking and I love to spend time with my family. I am the favorite aunt to my 2 nephews and 3 nieces. I really enjoy working with all of the participants at LifeCircles.



Hi. My name is Cathie Gagnon and I'm a physical therapist (PT) at LifeCircles. I graduated from the University of Michigan and have worked as a PT for over 25 years. My husband and I live in Grand Haven. We have 5 children and keep busy with travel soccer, basketball, baseball, lacrosse and music recitals. I like to scrapbook, exercise, and ride bikes to the beach with my kids. I started working at LifeCircles last fall. I love the people I work with and the participants we serve.