

# Carewrite

Carewest news and information for everyone



Photo by Jan Whisson

## Secret recipe for baking success: add a pinch of fun

Carewest Royal Park residents Wasil and Gladys share the secret of their baking success, which is to have a few laughs while they whip up Royal Park's monthly birthday cake and ginger cookies.

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## Next issue

- Submission deadline: June 17
- Publishing date: June 28

### **Submissions are welcome from everyone...**

Staff, residents/clients and their families, volunteers, students, etc.  
Please see the back cover for submission details.

# Staff Appreciation Week coming June 7-14

**Samara Cygman**  
Communications Manager

The old adage, “Many hands make light work,” still proves true today and there are few better places it can be seen than at Carewest.

Teamwork is at the core of everything we do in providing excellent care, communication and customer service for our residents, clients and families and it’s our turn to say “thank you”.

The focus of this year’s Staff Appreciation Week, to be held June 7-14, is teamwork and gives Carewest the opportunity to celebrate the good work that everyone does together, across all the professions.

“Carewest is made up of many different backgrounds resulting in a very diverse culture,” says Debbie Chaisson, Chair of the Employee Recognition Committee.

“This organization has approximately 110 different occupational groups, professionals and disciplines all working together to create the success we have today.”

Besides the regular favourite activities, including the Staff Appreciation Breakfast and other site-based activities, this year’s Staff Appreciation Week holds a few new surprises.

A Carewrite contest will allow you to enter to win gift certificates from your favourite retailers. Please see page 3 for your chance to win. Draws will be held during your site’s cake celebration.

And watch for notifications of activities at each site, including Wii contest games to win great prizes during the week.

“We would like to thank the entire staff for the work they each contribute throughout the year,” says Debbie.

“Carewest thanks you for all your efforts and hard work. You are appreciated.”

*Continued on Page 3.*

## Staff Appreciation Week

*Continued from Page 2.*

**We value the important contribution  
you make each and every day**

- There are approximately 110 different occupational groups working together under one roof to achieve excellence in resident and client care. Many of these professions enjoy provincial and national awareness weeks to enhance the knowledge of all they do on a daily basis.
- Carewest supports initiatives organized locally during these weeks to help raise awareness of the professions working collaboratively in our care centres.
- Any staff member representing their own occupation is welcome to submit a column to Carewrite/Careweb about that occupation, create signage or posters to hang or host a tea for their colleagues.
- We value your individual contributions towards the support of our mission, vision and values and recognize it's important that we all understand what role our colleagues play in working towards our common goals.
- We hope everyone has the opportunity to help educate and raise awareness of the value they bring to our residents, clients and their families during their own professional awareness weeks.
- And we hope everyone receives a much-deserved pat on the back by participating in Carewest's Staff Appreciation Week.
- Your contributions are valued and appreciated everyday and we wouldn't be able to do what we do without you. Thank you!

## Staff Appreciation Contest Enter and you could win!

Answer the following Carewest trivia question, cut out your ballot, and drop it off in the **Staff Appreciation Week – Fun Trivia Contest** draw box located at your site reception. You could win gift certificates! Each site will hold a draw during their Staff Appreciation Week cake celebrations.

### Question:

**Who can use the Thank You Cards/  
Nomination Forms to thank staff  
at Carewest?**

### Answer:

*(Hint – the answer can be found on Careweb on the Employee Recognition Page, under Performance Recognition Awards)*

### Name:

### Telephone Number:

Please photocopy the ballot if more are needed.  
One ballot per staff member only.



# National Hospice Palliative Care Week

Jennifer Cummings

Pain and Palliative Care Nurse Consultant

Carewest's Pain and Palliative Care Consulting Service recognized National Hospice Palliative Care Week during the first week in May.

The focus this year was "Discovering Your Voice."

How do we help the dying to discover their voice?

Understanding their needs is the first step. David Kessler lists some of these needs as:

- The need to be treated as a living human being.
- The need to maintain a sense of hopefulness, however changing its focus may be.
- The need to be cared for by those who can maintain a sense of hopefulness, however changing this may be.
- The need to die in dignity and peace.

These days, most people know what "hospice" or "palliative care" means, but many still do not know what it actually involves and how it can be of benefit until someone in their own life has had the need for palliative care services.

A big part of caring for a loved one or a resident at the end of life involves advocating for them. No one knows a person like the people that have been with them most of their lives. Family and friends can be their loved one's voice when they can no longer tell their caregivers their needs, desires, and wishes.



**Helping someone at the end of life discover their voice**

You can do this in the following ways:

- 1) Let the staff know who the person really is that they are caring for. What did the person do for a living? What did the person love doing more than anything? What things or people are important to them as they live out their final days/weeks/months? Even such simple things like, "Mom hates

oatmeal. Please don't serve it to her," can help the staff care for your loved one. More difficult statements like, "Dad never wanted a feeding tube," can be important information for caregivers.

- 2) Let the staff know what YOU need as the dying person's loved one. How can staff support you? Do you want to sleep overnight with your loved one in the final days? Would you like to talk to one of our pain and palliative nurse consultants about the upcoming loss of your loved one (anticipatory grieving)? Our consultants are also available to you after the loss of your loved one for support.

As a caregiver working in one of Carewest's sites, how do you help your residents discover their voice? Do you make time to get to know your residents and listen to their life's stories? Do you do all the little things that mean so much, like asking if they want their blinds closed, an extra blanket or a hug?

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## National Hospice Palliative Care Week

*Continued from Page 4.*

I'll share one quick story that sticks in my mind about how I was able to help the wife of a man who was dying at one of our sites.

I was meeting with this lovely man's wife to offer support as he was dying. She broke down in tears when asked what she needed.

She said, "I just wish I could hold him one last time."

Because her husband was in care, in a hospital bed with side rails up, she didn't feel she had the right to do something that she would have done automatically at home.

I took her by the hand to his bedside, put down the side rails and said, "Climb in and hold him. He's your husband and there is absolutely no reason why you can't."

I left her there, crying gently with her arms around him, telling him how much he had meant to her.

After his death, she called me to thank me for giving her husband "back" at the end of his life.

Such simple things mean so much to our residents and their families as they face one of the most difficult times in their lives.

Everyone can make a difference and help someone who is dying to "discover their voice". After all, we'll want someone to do that for us when it's our turn, won't we?

## Many hands, good hearts and a generous donation Annual Rotary Partners Rose Tea



**In the first two pictures, volunteers from Rotary Partners prepare the roses for clients/residents. In the third picture, the Prairie Mountain Fiddlers keep the crowd entertained.**

**Jan Whisson**

Activity Convenor, Carewest Sarcee and Royal Park

Each year, clients, residents and staff look forward to the Carewest Sarcee Annual Rotary Partners Rose Tea. Clients/residents receive a lovely fresh cut red rose and we all enjoy the afternoon of entertainment. This year, the Prairie Mountain Fiddlers keep our feet tapping as we dined on delectable delights.

In addition to putting on this lovely event, the Rotary Partners made a generous donation of three washers and three dryers to replace our very well-used and tired machines. The clients/residents were thrilled to receive them. The Rotary Partners have been great supporters of Carewest and of Carewest Sarcee for many years. They also host the Rotary Partners Bingo afternoon, which features donated prizes. We are very blessed to have them as part of our Sarcee community.

# EMPLOYEE

## Liz Amadio

# PROFILE

Carewest employees and volunteers make up a vibrant community with diverse talents and dreams. This month, we profile Liz Amadio, Registered Nurse at Carewest Colonel Belcher.

**Tracy Mendoza**  
Internal Communications Coordinator

Not only is it National Nursing week from May 10-16, but it is also Carewest Colonel Belcher Registered Nurse, Elizabeth Amadio's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the field of nursing.

Elizabeth, usually referred to as Liz, has been working at the Colonel Belcher even prior to it becoming a Carewest centre in 2002. In total Liz has worked there for over 31 years.

Born in Edmonton, Alta., Liz moved to Hamilton, Ont., to train as a nurse at St. Joseph's School of Nursing, where she graduated in 1959.

She was trained by strict nuns that influenced her educational experience. This influence has molded her into a caregiver with high expectations for herself and her colleagues.

"I strive for excellent care for our residents and clients here at Carewest," says Liz.

Liz spent 16 years traveling the United States with her husband, who she met in Hamilton, Ont. She worked various nursing jobs in each of the cities where her husband played professional hockey in the NHL, many of them located in the U.S.

They moved to Calgary in 1973.

"I worked at the Holy Cross Hospital in the operating room for seven years. That was a great experience," says Liz.



Photo by Tracy Mendoza

**Liz Amadio, Past President of the United Nurses Association of Alberta, has worked at Carewest Colonel Belcher for more than 31 years.**

Then, in 1979, Liz started her years at the Colonel Belcher Hospital which is now a Carewest facility.

And in 1981 she lost her husband.

Realizing that she would be working for quite a while, she went back to school and received her Bachelor's of Nursing degree from the University of Calgary in 1990.

Liz has two sons and now, two grandchildren. Aria is nine years old and Angus is 10.

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## Employee Profile: Liz Amadio

*Continued from Page 6.*

“I spend a lot of time with my grandchildren,” says Liz.

“I get up and see them off to school three days out of the week to help out.”

Aside from the work and responsibilities, Liz always enjoys her extracurricular activities such as

petit point, sewing, paper tole and her favorite, cake decorating. She also travels to Las Vegas twice a year and visits a close friend in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Liz was given the 2001 Professional Caregiver of the Year Award from The Alzheimer Society of Calgary.

This year, Liz respectfully resigned as the president of the United Nurses of Alberta after 20 years but still works in the role as vice president.



# What's new on Careweb this month?

## Leadership Development Program

Do you want more details about Carewest's Leadership Development Program? Twelve workshops are being offered this fiscal year, the details of which you can view on the Education page. Simply click on the purple Education tab at the top of the home page.

## User Names and Passwords

If you've ever gotten a headache from trying to remember your username and password, we've got the cure. Effective early June usernames will be reverting back to the original firstnamelastname format and passwords will all be one generic password – carewest. More communication about this will follow via e-mail, site postings and the next Carewrite.

## Thank You E-cards

Thanking someone for making a difference will never be easier with the addition of a Thank You for Making a Difference e-card on Careweb.

The new card will allow you to send a colourful sign of appreciation to any Carewest employee, with a personalized message and a head's up to their manager, all at the click of a button. Look for the new e-cards on the Employee Recognition page. It should be up and running before Staff Appreciation Week, June 7-14.

Read more at  
[www.carewestintranet.ca](http://www.carewestintranet.ca)

# ? Did you KNOW

Samara Cygman  
Communications Manager

**Did you know that Staff Appreciation Week breakfasts, Performance and Service Awards luncheons and Staff and Family Barbecues – staff appreciation events – are all coordinated by Carewest Food Services staff?**

Food Services staff don't only cook, prepare and serve food for residents and clients. They take on the task of doing so for staff, for other Calgary hospitals and for anyone visiting Carewest who needs a delicious and nutritious meal.

Please pause to say a big thank-you to a Food Services employee today – they work hard to ensure our staff appreciation events are memorable ones.

**Carewest Food Services staff always deliver fresh and tasty meals and snacks during Staff Appreciation events.**



## Mad Hatter's Tea Party

Western Canada High School LINKages Program students formed great relationships with the seniors of Carewest Colonel Belcher and celebrated the end of the season with a festive Mad Hatter's Tea Party on May 7.

Photo by Tracy Mendoza



# Sending a thank you card has never been faster or easier

## Introducing the Carewest thank you e-card

**Samara Cygman**  
Communications Manager

Thanking someone for making a difference will never be easier with the addition of a Thank You for Making a Difference e-card on Careweb.

The new card will allow you to send a colourful sign of appreciation to any Carewest employee, with a personalized message and a head's up to their manager, all at the click of a button.

Debbie Chaisson, Executive Administrative Assistant, says even though only staff have access to Careweb and the new e-cards, anyone can still use the paper Thank You cards and accompanying nominations forms as a token of appreciation.

“Too often, we go about our day silently appreciating the little things that people around us do to make life better for us,” she says.

“Take time to express your appreciation by giving a Thank You card or e-card. You'll be amazed at the difference it makes to both them and you.”

The paper cards will still be made available at site reception, Employee Recognition and resident bulletin boards for employees, residents, clients and family members to use.

Whether you are filling out the new e-cards or the paper cards, the Carewest Thank You for Making a Difference cards are a great way to give an immediate thank-you (no matter how big or small) to a Carewest employee.



### Did You Know

**If you have trouble signing on to Careweb, you can always phone Samara Cygman, Communications Manager, at 403-943-8158 or e-mail her at [samara.cygman@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:samara.cygman@albertahealthservices.ca)**

In addition to the thank-you card, the person presenting the card should be filling out the attached nomination form and forwarding to Human Resources at Carewest Administration, Second Floor Southport Tower.

A copy of the nomination is placed in the employee's file and is forwarded to their manager. Information is entered into a database for consideration for a Gold and/or Excellence Award, as well as the recipient's name published in Carewrite.

To streamline this process, the new e-cards will provide users with the opportunity to fill out the background

behind the appreciative gesture and copy the information to the employee's manager.

Also, a copy is automatically sent to the Employee Recognition database.

“We know that Carewest is made up of many caring, dedicated employees. The Employee Recognition Committee wants to learn about these employees and share their acts of kindness and commitment with others,” says Debbie.

“By creating Thank You e-cards, we hope to make this easier for everyone.”

Look for the new e-cards on the Employee Recognition page at [www.carewestintranet.ca](http://www.carewestintranet.ca)



# Ninety questions

received during March Health Promotion Month

## Employee Health & Safety

During March Health Promotion Month, Employee Health & Safety asked for your questions related to heart health, cholesterol and high blood pressure. Pink boxes were provided for this purpose.

Thanks so much for such a great response. We received 90 questions and will provide the answers on Careweb over the next few months. Here's a sample of the questions we received.

### Ask the Pharmacist...

**Q Are there long-term complications to blood pressure medications?**

**A** It is always best to consult your own pharmacist and doctor. It is advised to stay with one pharmacist for your prescription needs so that the pharmacist has a complete profile of your medications.

### Ask the Dietician...

**Q How do I increase my HDL cholesterol?**

**A** Increase exercise, eat more Omega 3 fats (fish, walnuts, flaxseed) and lose weight.

### Ask the Fitness Specialist...

**Q Why do I get a stitch in my side when running?**

**A** It could be dehydration, lack of calcium or low potassium.



Pink boxes were provided at each Carewest site to gather questions about heart health, cholesterol and high blood pressure.

### Ask the Doctor...

**Q If my blood pressure is low (98/58) and I feel dizzy, should I withhold my medication?**

**A** Do not withhold medication without consulting your doctor.

# PeopleSoft celebrates first anniversary

**Ruth Zwolinski**

Compensation and Benefits Coordinator



A year has already passed since the implementation of PeopleSoft and by all accounts everything has gone exceptionally well.

After being on Symmetry (our old payroll system) for 29 years, the scope and complexity of the transition project was significant – not only from a technical perspective but also from the perspective of forming new working relationships and establishing new processes with Telus Sourcing Solutions (TSS).

As part of Carewest's Human Resources 2010/11 business plan, a post-implementation evaluation will be conducted to make sure we have identified any areas that are still problematic – and look at solutions.

Some of the benefits of the new PeopleSoft system were immediate.

For example it provided immediate assurance to Carewest of a stable and reliable payroll system. Ensuring employees are paid accurately and on time is a critical priority.

Some of the changes that employees would have noticed were updated Employee ID numbers and a new format for pay advices that included much more detailed information. Included in those details are employee and employer benefits costs, taxable benefits and the ability to view the full vacation bank, etc.

Although the formal post-implementation review has not yet started we have made a lot of changes and improvements along the way as specific issues have come up.

For example, understanding some of the reports such as vacation banks and benefits – although the vacation accruals and benefit plans didn't change, the administration and reporting of them did create confusion.

Responding to these issues has highlighted another area of confusion – who is responsible for what when responding to questions/problems.

With the exception of recording employee hours, all pay and benefit-related corrections are done by TSS as they are the party responsible to make the changes and coordinate the work with the benefit carriers. Carewest has and continues to work with TSS to ensure the continuity of service levels.

Carewest's role is to review and assess the nature of the problems to see if it is an employee-specific issue or a broader system issue and then request the correction from TSS.

For clarity the following steps should be followed:

1. The employee raises a problem/question with their unit clerk and/or manager to see if the problem can be resolved. If it can't be resolved, then it moves to step 2.
- 2a. If the problem is related to missing hours, stats, etc. it is directed to Patty Hewko in Staffing Services for further investigation and resolution.
- 2b. If the problem relates to pay, benefits or vacation banks, the inquiry comes to Ruth Zwolinski for further analysis. The outcome of this analysis is communicated back to the employee and manager if appropriate. Ruth then approves and forwards a request to TSS to correct the issue.
3. Problem resolution is undertaken.

As we move forward, the intent is to make more benefit and pay information accessible on Careweb for all employees.

Another goal is to provide more information to managers and unit clerks so they can address some of the commonly asked questions from our 2,500 staff, rather than having the majority of calls come to the Benefits or Scheduling departments.

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## PeopleSoft celebrates

*Continued from Page 11.*

Please look for an overview of Carewest benefits plans coming shortly to Careweb.

A detailed overview of the roles and responsibilities within the HR benefits/pay area is highlighted below.

### **Ruth Zwolinski, Compensation & Benefits Coordinator: 403-943-8172**

- Overall responsibility for compensation and benefits
- Professional registrations
- Seniority lists
- Recognition of previous experience (portable hours) for starting salary
- All compensation queries regarding step increases, rate of pay, occupations, preceptor pay and rates of pay
- LAPP queries including retirement applications

### **Jessica Stewart, Human Resources Assistant: 403-943-8173**

- Employee Update Form (EUF) & Leave of Absence
- Manages position control – recruitment requests (postings)
- Point of contact for rotation changes
- Filemaker training regarding the EUF process
- Queries regarding benefits, Alberta Blue Cross and mat leave

### **Arlene Bianco, Clerical Assistant: 403-943-8176**

- Requests for letters of portability, confirmation of employee hours and letters of employment
- Administration of police clearances
- Management of employee personnel files
- Benefit forms processing
- Queries regarding benefits, Alberta Blue Cross and mat leave

If you have a compensation or benefits query that does not fit into the above please contact Ruth at 403-943-8172.

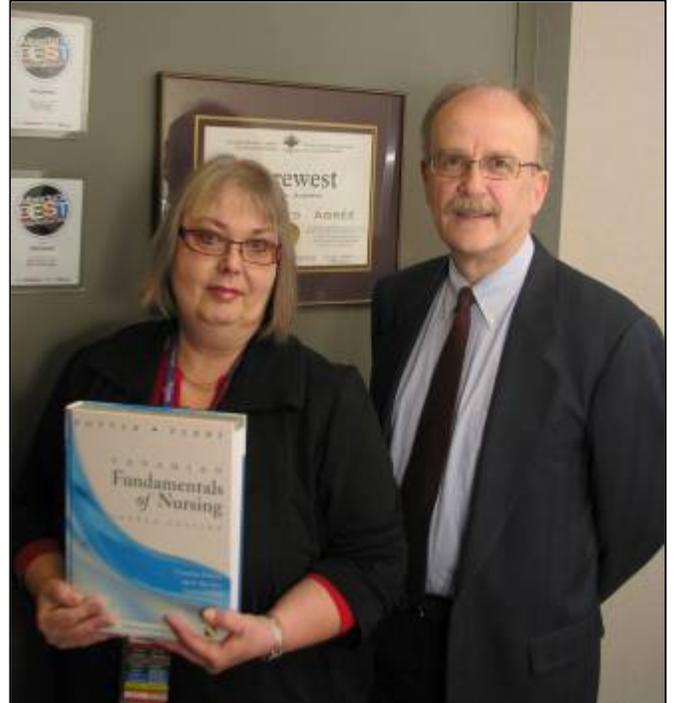


Photo by Tracy Mendoza

## **IODE donates \$470 toward staff education**

Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE), an organization of women who are dedicated to a better Canada, made a \$470 donation towards Carewest staff education at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning.

Irma Tamminen (left) and Mark Ewan (right) display one of the purchases that provides the nursing staff the most current information and best practices for nurses in Canada.

Carewest thanks IODE for having made this significant donation that will assist nurses for years to come.

# Pet therapy gets a pat on the head

**Tracy Mendoza**

Internal Communications Coordinator

Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning, Carewest Signal Pointe, Carewest Glenmore Park, Carewest Sarcee and Carewest Royal Park are the five Carewest centres that host pet visitation therapy programs for the residents and clients several times a month.

The Pet Access League Society (PALS) is a local non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance the quality of life of individuals in need, who can benefit from the value of the human-companion animal bond. With over 400 volunteers, it is the largest organization of its kind.

PALS Executive Director, Sandra Johnston says there is an increase in awareness for animal therapy.

“This program has advantages for everyone involved by creating great relationships, bringing social benefits from the PALS volunteers to the residents in care,” says Sandra.

There are over 50 facilities in Calgary that PALS visit on a regular basis. Most of these facilities are for children, seniors or people with disabilities.

When PALS brings pets such as dogs for visits, the residents often reminisce about their own pets and families.

Sandra explains that the PALS program is one of the few that those with dementia can also take part in, regardless of communication barriers.

Pet therapy is becoming better recognized as a valuable tool and the PALS program is experiencing a growing demand from facilities, requesting the program.

“When we come to visit the residents with the pets, it is also a good little break for the staff,” says Sandra.

Recreation Therapist Alison Muir, of Royal Park,

expects the future relationship to be strengthened between Carewest and PALS because she believes it is truly therapeutic and the pet visits result in socially and emotionally fulfilling days.

“I love to see the reaction on the residents’ faces because they can’t have pets here and, as a pet owner myself, I feel this is a positive and warm experience for them,” says Alison, adding one of the regular visitors to Royal Park is Riley, the dog, who is always greeted warmly by the residents.

“These pet visits bring joy and pleasure to our residents.”



Photo by Tracy Mendoza

**When PALS brings pets such as dogs for visits, the residents often reminisce about their own pets and families. In this picture (left to right) are volunteer, Lilian Baily, Debbie Hollowell and (dog) Riley.**

# Carewest creates Intimacy and Sexuality policy

Carewest recognizes that, throughout our lifespan, a sense of well-being is achieved, in part, through connection with others. In order to maximize this sense of well-being, we support the human right of individuals to meet their needs for love, companionship and sexual expression.

This is the rationale behind Carewest’s draft Intimacy and Sexuality policy – an initiative undertaken by a working group of Carewest staff and supported by senior management.

As a sub-committee to the Carewest Ethics Committee, the Sexuality and Intimacy in Care Working Group is comprised of Social Workers Catherine Shaw, Kathy Richards and Rochelle Gallagher, Chaplain Arnie Chamberlain and Director, Chronic Care and Supportive Pathways, Marlene Collins.

**It gives staff a guideline to follow regarding how to be proactive or how to react if two residents or clients decided to begin a relationship that is intimate or sexual in nature.**

By developing a policy for Carewest staff to follow in honouring the residents’ and clients’ sexuality and intimacy rights, this working group emphasizes the level of Carewest’s commitment to supporting people as a whole. This policy will allow people to be able to rightfully and respectfully express themselves.

The Subcommittee is currently consulting with various stakeholders and staff groups within Carewest, including the Ethics Committee regarding the development of this policy and procedures. Consultations will also include external groups such as the Protection of Persons in Care Act.

“All of this is about relationships, because life is really all about relationships,” says Arnie.

The impetus for the creation of this policy was born from a situation that occurred within the organization, in which two residents made the decision to start an intimate relationship.

At the time, both residents suffered from dementia.

After many consultations with the families and the Carewest Health Ethics Committee, it was decided that, to encourage the residents’ well-being, Carewest staff would do what they could to support the relationship.

Catherine says that the working group was formed to apply the learnings they garnered from this situation into a framework.

“We started out doing basic research and then it turned in to developing a written policy,” she says.

“This policy is meant to guide staff facing similar situations in the future. Once we have the policy developed, staff will be trained and supported in learning how to apply the new policy.”

The members of the Sexuality and Intimacy in Care Working Group have put together a draft framework that is based on a model of wellbeing, that highlights signs of wellbeing and illbeing and focuses on love as being centre to a person’s being.

These behavioural signs can be used to determine how people, who cannot or may not be able to articulate their feelings, are affected by one another.

Observing signs of wellbeing or ill-being can be used to collaboratively assess whether people with dementia are enjoying each others’ company – even if they cannot verbalize their thoughts.

Kathy says the research done by the team has opened their eyes to a grey area in ability to make choices for yourself after being deemed cognitively unable. Clients may have capacity to consent to a sexual relationship without having capacity in all other areas.

*Continued on Page 15.*

## Carewest creates Intimacy and Sexuality policy

*Continued from Page 14.*

“There have been some new changes to the *Adult Guardian and Trusteeship Act* in that there is a continuum or range of some of the decision-making options that people are able to make. It may not be an all or nothing situation,” says Kathy.

“Who has the right to decide? We know that people with dementia – they may not be able to articulate or comprehend the full aspect of something but I think we’ve gotten pretty good at interpreting behaviours to know if something is supportive or know if something isn’t good for somebody.”

The policy will not only come into effect in long-term care, it will be available to all programs within all Carewest facilities.

It gives staff a guideline to follow regarding how to be proactive or how to support residents or client if

the two individuals decided to begin a relationship that is intimate or sexual in nature.

Intimacy, by definition is the experience of being known, understood and loved. It includes talking loving words, kissing, hugging and body contact.

For example, holding hands is a way to show someone they care and that they are not alone. It is an offering of support and a gentle gesture to show human affection.

Kathy Richards, Registered Social Worker at Carewest Colonel Belcher, says the Intimacy and Sexuality policy will give dignity to the nature of privacy.

“There is nothing to be ashamed of. Everyone should be able to express themselves,” says Kathy.

If anyone in the Carewest community would like to offer feedback, please contact the members of the working group.



Photo by Tracy Mendoza

### Hoping for a bumper crop

Carewest Sarcee resident, Betty Gamblen, carefully plants the seeds for fresh tomatoes. In just a few short months, those tiny seeds could produce a bumper crop of tomatoes.



Photo by Tracy Mendoza

### Old-fashioned fashion show

Carewest George Boyack hosted a Mother’s Day Fashion Show on May 7. Bob Roberts (left) and Lilo Bahr (right) showed off some old-fashioned trends.

# Leadership development modules offered

**Samara Cygman**  
Communications Manager

***It's hard to lead a cavalry charge  
if you think you look funny on a horse.***

Best said by former US politician Adlai Stevenson, the above quote certainly may ring true for anyone new to a leadership role.

At Carewest, all employees are required to make decisions and judgments in the workplace, whether about resident or client care or working safely.

And all employees have access to Carewest's Leadership Development Program – 12 four-hour modules offered for anyone interested in developing their leadership skills.

Facilitated by consultant Wendy Clark, the modules touch on subjects like delegation, communication and conflict resolution.

“If you attend these workshops, you are leading somehow in your area or you want to build your leadership skills,” says Wendy.

“Most of these workshops are about you and understanding yourself as a leader. All these concepts are transferable to your home life and outside work.”

The schedule for the remaining workshops is as follows:

- **Developing Effective Leaders: May 26**
- **Situational Leadership (delegation): June 30**
- **Conversations that Matter: July 7**
- **Communication and Trust: Aug. 18**
- **Conflict Resolution: Sept. 29**
- **Effective Teams: Oct. 14**
- **Think Change: Nov. 4**
- **Delivering Exceptional Customer Service: Dec. 8**
- **Coping with Workplace Challenges: Jan. 10**
- **Time Mastery: Feb. 17**
- **Discovering Diversity: March 31**

All workshops are held at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning from 8 a.m. to noon in Conference Rm. 2.

If you are interested in more information about each of these modules, you can see a more detailed synopsis on Careweb. Click on the Education tab and then the link to the Leadership Development Program on that page.

If you are interested in enrolling in one or more of these modules, please phone Carol Dallaire at 943-8146 or e-mail [carol.dallaire@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:carol.dallaire@albertahealthservices.ca)



Facilitator Wendy Clark leads a class through the first leadership development module in the series offered by Carewest.

This is the third time the series of 12 leadership development workshops have been offered for Carewest staff.

Understanding Self – Understanding Others was well-attended and walked participants through one of the tests to determine leadership style.

Photo by Samara Cygman

# Donor seeks out Carewest

## as one way to give back for all he has received

### Calgary Health Trust

Like every individual who donates to the Calgary Health Trust, Peter Gonzales has a unique story about how he came to donate and continue to make bi-annual contributions to Carewest's Greatest Needs.

His personal connections to Carewest through his wife and close friend – both of whom were at one point employed through one of the continuing care centres – were never enough to inspire a donation on their own. Instead, Peter developed a vested interest in donating to Carewest when his personal connections combined with a number of other factors – a news topic, amalgamation of life experiences and desire to make a difference.

Peter's initial decision to support Carewest surfaced when he heard about a need to support our country's veterans. He soon took the initiative to find out how he could help give back to these people and to his country.

Describing it in his own words, Peter says, "This country has been very good to me so I feel better giving back a little bit for what I receive."

Peter grew up in Trinidad and has fond memories of his early childhood experiences – many of which have fed his desire to donate to Carewest and various other charities.

Reflecting on the day he made his first donation to Carewest, Peter says, "It was a Saturday after breakfast with some friends. I started hearing about the veterans again... so I went to ask a lady [at Carewest Colonel Belcher] some questions. I told her about my intention to bring in some money. She thanked me and I said I'd be back."

Sure enough, Peter returned to make another donation and has continued to do so.

In talking about the impact he's hoping to make, he says, "I want to help these people improve their lives. If people make the right choices, the health care of this country will improve."

Peter's continued generosity and decision to donate to Carewest is now furthering the quality of care available to residents at Carewest centres across the city.

*Every donor has a unique story as to how and why they choose to donate to the Calgary Health Trust. Your donations are eligible for a tax receipt and can be directed to the area of health care that matters most to you. To learn more, visit [www.calgaryhealthtrust.ca](http://www.calgaryhealthtrust.ca) or call 403-943-0615.*

## Skin and Wound switches to resource binder format

Selena Sun

Carewest Skin and Wound Committee

To ensure consistency, the Carewest Skin and Wound Committee would like all sites to adopt the binder format, rather than a caddy. The binder provides a breakdown of the different categories (Advanced Care Product Guide). The product guide was updated with the input of all members around the table. We would like to complete this project by August, 2010.



# Butting out with a little help

## Tracy Mendoza

Internal Communications Coordinator

Whether you're a resident, client or a staff member of Carewest, if you're ready to quit smoking, cessation options are available.

Coleen Manning, Clinical Standards & Nursing Practice Specialist says readiness to quit is normally based on a "Stages of Change Model."

"The first stage is pre-contemplation, when the idea of quitting is brought to mind. Then, the person considers quitting. In the preparation stage, they are getting ready to stop smoking, or have already made an attempt," she says.

"These steps are helpful hints that indicate when someone is ready to take action and stop smoking. It's at this point that the physician may be contacted for more support or suggestions."

At Carewest, when residents express they are serious about quitting, the nurses identify their readiness to quit. When it is confirmed by a physician, a prescription can be written for the three specific stop-smoking aides.

Nicotine gum, the nicotine patch and Zyban pills, all of which are 100 per cent subsidized by Carewest, must be prescribed by a physician – even though they are over-the-counter aides.

Other aides to quit smoking, including Champix pills and Nicotine inhalers, are not subsidized by Carewest but, with a prescription, can be made available.

Roxanne McKendry, Carewest's Manager of Employee Health and Safety, says Carewest supports the "QuitCore" program for employees – a free, eight-session program led by trained professionals, which runs twice a year. So far, QuitCore has helped more than 7,000 Albertans snuff their smoking habits.

The QuitCore program uses techniques such as relaxation, hypnosis, behavior modification and

counseling strategies to help mental and physical recovery.

"One of our goals is to educate and help people understand how important it is to reduce or eliminate health risks, like smoking," says Roxanne.

Paul Charlton, Client Services Manager at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning, says when someone makes the decision to quit, Carewest will support their decision to embrace a healthier lifestyle.

"For those quitting smoking, we give positive encouragement and acknowledge successes either small or large. We will help support people in making healthy choices even when they slip."

To find out more about QuitCore, visit [www.cancerboard.ab.ca](http://www.cancerboard.ab.ca) or call 1-866-710-QUIT (7848).



***"Pain is temporary.  
Quitting is forever."***

*Anonymous*

## Other public resources

### **Alberta Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission (AADAC)**

Smoker's Help Line: 1-866-332-2322

Online: [www.aadac.com](http://www.aadac.com)

### **Alberta Cancer Board**

Southern Alberta Office: 403-521-3433

Online: [www.cancerboard.ab.ca](http://www.cancerboard.ab.ca)

### **Alberta Quits**

Online: [www.Alberta.quitnet.com](http://www.Alberta.quitnet.com)

### **Become an Ex**

Online: [www.becomeanex.org](http://www.becomeanex.org)

# Food services and dietitians work together to provide tasty, tailored meals

## Tracy Mendoza

Internal Communications Coordinator

As part of Carewest’s commitment to providing excellent care, the food services staff and clinical dietitians work diligently to provide meals which support healthy eating for all residents and clients on a daily basis.

“Our menu follows Canada’s Food Guide for Healthy Eating to ensure variety in our meals,” says Kim Otto, Clinical Dietitian at Carewest Colonel Belcher.

Modifications are a constant work in progress.

If a resident or client is experiencing trouble swallowing food, the dietitian, occupational therapy and nursing staff work with the resident to modify the texture so the food can be consumed comfortably and safely. Examples of texture modification may include either minced or pureed foods.

Special cutlery, cups or plates may be provided, depending on the physical needs of the residents or clients, in consultation with Occupational Therapy.

Patrice Maldiney, Manager of Food Services at the Colonel Belcher says, “We consider resident preferences to enhance meal satisfaction.”

“Meal satisfaction rounds” are conducted to determine resident satisfaction, especially for those who have difficulty verbalizing their preferences.

The nursing staff informs the dietitians when they discover something unusual with the residents or clients in the dining room during meal time.

Resident weights are also monitored according to nursing protocols.

A serving list indicating diet and preferences is posted on the unit fridge so that food service and nursing staff are aware of diets and what each individual is eating.

“Overall, I think people are appreciative of the changes we make. If someone is struggling with meals, we want to make them as comfortable as possible,” says Kim.

The food services team welcomes all feedback from families, residents or clients about the food and service.

At the Colonel Belcher, residents hold a forum each month. This provides another opportunity for residents to discuss food quality and any new concerns or questions that may have come up with the existing menu.



# Could lack of vitamin D increase the risk of MS?

## Neurologist says supplements do help

**Samara Cygman**  
Communications Manager

The sun, a source of light, heat and energy, is also a source of vitamin D – a vitamin in which many Albertans are deficient.

Living so far from the equator puts us in a disadvantaged position in terms of sun exposure... there just isn't enough.

And while Dr. Mary Lou Myles, clinical neurologist and author of many presentations on the topic, doesn't advocate an increase in sun exposure, she does see a direct link between a person's risk of developing Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and vitamin D deficiency.

"In Alberta we have one of the highest rates of MS in the world and studies have shown very high rates of vitamin D deficiency in our population," she says.

"This prompted my interest in how vitamin D supplementation might be used as a primary prevention strategy in MS."

Dr. Myles has been practicing as a neurologist since 1997 and began participating in MD education initiatives in 1999.

And while she isn't involved in the vitamin D research, the topic has become an area of interest to her in how it can be applied to benefit her patients and their families and she has been watching the results of studies over the last decade.

According to Dr. Myles, the prevalence of MS increases the further one is from the equator. Even in genetically similar populations, such as in Australia, there is a fivefold difference in MS between



**Neurologist Dr. Mary Lou Myles suggests vitamin D supplements are essential for most people living far from the equator.**

Tasmania (furthest from the equator) and Queensland (closer to the equator).

While sun exposure is one way to get vitamin D, supplementing your diet is another.

"I think we should be much more proactive in our population at ensuring adequate vitamin D levels to reduce the risk of numerous diseases, including MS," says Dr. Myles, adding that she doesn't recommend packing up and heading for more tropical climes.

"One can achieve adequate vitamin D levels by supplementation without any need to move."

Research she cites indicates that taking vitamin D3 supplements in amounts between 1,000 International Units (IU) and 2,000 IU (from fall to spring) everyday, should provide an adequate amount of vitamin D.

But because vitamin D is fat-soluble, it can accumulate in the body if excessive amounts are taken in the form of supplements (you can't overdose on vitamin D from the sun because your body has a mechanism to shut off production of it in the skin, once a certain level is reached).

The signs and symptoms of an overdose include nausea, vomiting, calcium deposits in the tissues/organs, kidney failure and heart failure.

"In one study of the safety of high dose vitamin D in MS, individuals were given an average of 10,000 IU a day for a year and there were no adverse effects," says Dr. Myles, adding these individuals were closely monitored and such high doses are not recommended based on current evidence.

*Continued on Page 21.*

## Could lack of vitamin D increase the risk of MS?

*Continued from Page 20.*

“I believe that there is now enough evidence to suggest all people with MS should take vitamin D supplements to maintain a vitamin D level of  $\geq 100$  nmol/L (in the blood). For most, I have found 2,000 IU daily to be enough but there are some who require higher doses and that is why I now base my recommendations on an individual’s vitamin D level.”

Despite this, Dr. Myles continues to work to pursue answers about the prevention of MS using vitamin D supplements.

“There is very strong evidence establishing vitamin D deficiency as a risk factor for MS and suggesting that maintaining adequate vitamin D levels reduces the risk of MS,” she says.

“There are numerous other health benefits of vitamin D in optimizing wellness and in reducing the risks of diverse diseases including osteoporosis, many common cancers (including breast, colon, prostate) and type 1 diabetes to name a few. The role of vitamin D in health and disease continues to be an area of intense research. Given the extremely high prevalence of vitamin D deficiency in our population it has been a surprisingly ignored area of public health but this finally does seem to be changing.”

## Neuro-Rehab social workers present at conference

**Liz Reimer**

Client Services Manager, Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning

I'd like to acknowledge the fantastic work of Social Workers Bonnie Wolski and Mercy Maviko, of the Neuro-Rehab program at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning, who presented a three-hour workshop at the Alberta College of Social Workers Annual Conference in Edmonton, March 18-20.

The topic was on the client's right to live at risk and the dilemmas experienced by caregivers. They developed the in-service for our unit, which was later shared with the Carewest social worker group. They presented the abstract and were invited to present to approximately 120 people for the three-hour workshop. They did our unit and Carewest proud!



# Aloha!

**Residents at Carewest George Boyack were entertained by Alison Gauthier on April 15 as she performed a number of graceful hula dances.**

Photo by Tracy Mendoza

# Bringing aphasia to life

## A volunteer's perspective

**Twyla Sim &  
Heather Tomlinson**  
Speak Language  
Pathologists

As a group of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) working on a neuron-rehabilitation unit, we are grateful for the volunteer support that has allowed us to offer enriched programming for our aphasic clients.

The volunteers have participated in our weekly aphasia group and observed individual assessment and treatment sessions. Some of them have also had the unique opportunity to serve as conversational partners for aphasic clients – an experience the clients would otherwise not have had.

With the help of our volunteers, we have been able to develop a resource binder for the aphasia group, which we have also shared with our colleagues in community-based programs for aphasics.

Three of our volunteers offer their comments about how the experience has been mutually beneficial.

“One of the most exciting things I witnessed while volunteering with the aphasia group was how clients use their communicative strengths to help others with areas or moments of difficulty. This really highlights the truth that language is a social phenomenon and is facilitated by social situations. Additionally, since I knew that aphasia could be a devastating impairment, I guess I never thought that treatment would be so fun. I started volunteering to see if a career in speech-language pathology was an appropriate path for me and to meet admission requirements. The challenge and reward of interacting with aphasic clients has made me certain that I've chosen the right career path. I've met my

### What is aphasia?

**Aphasia is an impairment of language that happens when someone suffers injury to the language areas of the brain. It can affect the ability to speak, the ability to understand others when they speak, as well as other related abilities like reading and writing. More than 20 per cent of all people who suffer a stroke develop some form of aphasia.**

requirements, and now I volunteer just for the joy of it.”

*Catherine Knott*  
BA Linguistics/BA  
Psychology

“Despite numerous exposures to aphasia in my courses and textbooks, the chance to actually work with aphasic patients provided

me with new insights and understandings of the disorder. Observing the different kinds of aphasia was a totally different experience than simply learning the definitions from a textbook and this greatly enhanced my learning. I've developed compassion and understanding for this population and appreciation for all the hard work they do in order to improve their communication. Realizing the impact therapy can have on the daily life of a person with aphasia has really fuelled my passion to pursue speech pathology as a career.”

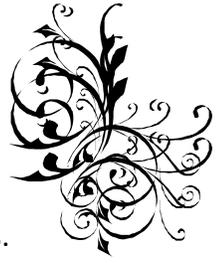
*Kimberley Free*  
BSc Honours Psychology

“My initial intention, just like every student volunteer, was to get a reference letter for grad school but volunteering on the neuron-rehabilitation unit made my textbook and course notes come to life! I have been actively involved in developing a resource binder filled with activities that would aid in aphasia group therapy. I also had the opportunity to observe individual treatment with aphasic patients. With the experience and knowledge that I have gained, I intend to pursue a PhD in Speech Pathology.”

*Veena Kailambettu*  
BA Linguistics



# Coffee Break



Now you can enjoy *Carewrite* in an interactive way with puzzles and word searches.  
Samara Cygman, Communications Coordinator

## Word Search: Employee Recognition

i	i	c	t	i	u	o	y	k	n	a	h	t	p	a	c
e	c	i	v	r	e	s	p	a	o	k	w	o	l	e	t
k	e	o	e	r	e	t	a	a	i	a	s	a	a	r	r
p	c	e	m	c	o	m	m	i	t	t	e	e	r	e	r
a	n	e	p	m	n	s	d	r	a	c	d	e	d	d	i
r	e	b	l	a	i	n	f	n	t	e	i	f	e	s	
e	r	a	o	e	e	t	f	a	i	t	d	e	n	e	t
c	e	r	y	c	b	c	m	p	m	k	i	l	o	o	s
f	f	b	e	a	m	r	a	e	o	k	c	n	e	i	a
e	f	e	e	r	o	t	a	s	n	e	a	e	h	c	t
e	i	c	o	f	o	p	b	t	a	t	t	f	c	a	c
d	d	u	r	e	c	o	g	n	i	t	i	o	n	c	g
b	r	e	a	k	f	a	s	t	s	o	r	u	a	e	
a	p	p	r	e	c	i	a	t	i	o	n	e	l	c	o
c	d	e	t	m	i	t	m	c	b	o	r	a	b	n	e
k	m	o	i	c	i	s	a	e	e	s	e	r	a	e	u

## Sudoku

Skill level: Medium

				7	1	4	8	
		6			8	5		
	9							
		2						7
9			8		5			2
1			9			6		
							4	
		8	1			9		
	4	9	3	5				

APPRECIATION  
BREAKFAST  
COMMITMENT  
DIFFERENCE  
GALA  
PERFORMANCE  
STAFF

AWARDS  
CARDS  
COMMITTEE  
EMPLOYEE  
LUNCHEON  
RECOGNITION  
THANK YOU

BARBECUE  
CELEBRATION  
DEDICATION  
FEEDBACK  
NOMINATION  
SERVICE

## How to play Sudoku

Fill in the game board so that every row and column of numbers contains all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every 3 x 3 square of the puzzle must include all digits 1 through 9.

sources: [www.armoredpenguin.com](http://www.armoredpenguin.com) & [www.sudokuessentials.com](http://www.sudokuessentials.com)



## Whose turn is it to deal?

Lorraine Brooks, resident of Carewest Royal Park, is often visited by her brothers, sisters and friends for gatherings and card games.

Photo by Tracy Mendoza

# Carewest Staff Appreciation Week June 7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>



The Executive Leadership Team extends their sincere appreciation to you for the excellent work you provide on behalf of Carewest.

Carewest is made up of 110 different occupational groups filled by 2400 individuals from many different backgrounds making Carewest a culturally rich organization.

We are grateful for your commitment, passion and compassion you bring to our residents and clients everyday.

*Thank you  
for making a difference!*



## Carewrite

Carewrite is produced monthly. We welcome your submissions.

Please contact Divona Herzog

Tel: 403-254-1672 | Fax: 403-256-2148 | Email: [divona@herzog-associates.com](mailto:divona@herzog-associates.com)

Please send photos to Jean Stern Administrative Office Services through interoffice mail.