

*Working to enhance quality dementia care*

## Finding Success Using a Consulting Psychiatrist

As the Administrator of Cascade Park Gardens, I found that one of our biggest challenges was effectively managing the increasingly difficult behaviors often exhibited by our residents with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. Typically, when a resident's behavior escalated to a point that was unmanageable within our setting, we would send them to a local geropsych unit for treatment.

When we sent a resident out to a geropsych unit, their behavior would change; sometimes their unmanageable behaviors would vanish, and on occasion they would actually worsen. I often found that our residents would be returned to us untreated, or worse, transferred to a SNF after unsuccessful therapy.

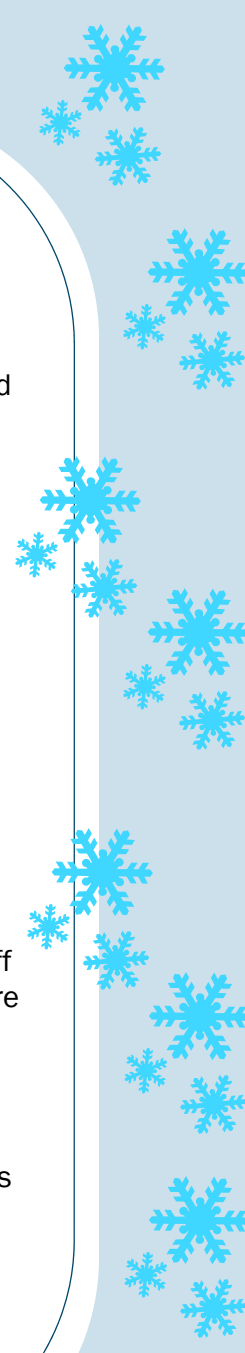
Knowing that individuals with dementia respond much better to treatments when they are in a familiar setting, surrounded by the stimuli typical of their everyday environment, I sought out options for an in-house solution to this problem.

Since we were using the Auburn Geriatric Psychiatry Unit for the majority of our resident treatment, I asked their Medical Director, Dr. Douglas Wornell if he would be willing to provide on-site treatment to the

residents of our community. This made good sense to Dr. Wornell, who agreed to offer Cascade Park Gardens weekly on-site visits, 24-7 telephone access, and staff and family educational support. For a flat monthly rate, Dr. Wornell agrees to see an unlimited number of clients.

Dr. Wornell does not provide individual psychiatry treatments to our residents, but rather consults directly with their primary physician to develop a collaborative treatment plan. Nursing staff identify clients whose current interventions are not working. Our experience with Dr. Wornell has been absolutely wonderful; in fact we have only sent one resident to a geropsych unit since utilizing his services. Through this partnership, we have increased resident retention rates, enhanced our staff training, and improved upon the overall care provided to our residents.

Cascade Park Gardens is a contracted Medicaid provider for the Specialized Dementia Care Program in Boarding Homes (SDCP). Should you have questions regarding the services offered at Cascade Park Gardens, please contact Vanessa Thomas at (253) 475-3702.



*In seed time learn, in harvest  
teach, in winter enjoy.*

*~William Blake*

### See You in the Spring!

The SDCP newsletter will continue on a quarterly basis. That means the next newsletter will come out in March. We hope this newsletter will be a means of sharing resources and informing providers of best practices.



If you have an idea for a resource to share, please send it to [Fickejw@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Fickejw@dshs.wa.gov)



## Family Education Nights Begins in Burlington

I originally came to the idea of a family resource night because of the long and stressful conversations that I had to have with numerous families in our facility. Our support program events had had as few as four people, but with the new approach, we have seen as many as 16. I came to the conclusion that I could not provide "support" to my families or any other families because I did not know first hand what it feels like or how it is to deal with a loved one afflicted with Alzheimer's and or Dementia.

I do, however, understand that education can be the first step to empowering people to deal with and handle such a devastating disease. Families need someone to be upfront and honest and to touch on subjects that are sometimes overlooked when we learn about dementia care.

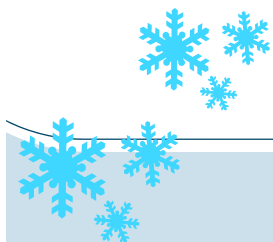
I started by simply looking at the education topics I would want my staff to understand. One of the biggest problems with families and dementia residents is communication. You could hold a meeting every week and still not touch all of the communication topics families need. Families need to know what they can do to enhance their loved ones lives, not their own lives. If I can educate families to understand this is not about them, but the resident, it can open doors you would never open before.

For education nights, I found materials on the ADSA website, information from our dementia specialty training, and the ALZ.org website.

Since hosting the family resource nights staff has had to spend less time educating families, families have begun to support one another, better communication occurs between families and their loved ones and some of the newly educated families have begun volunteering in the facility helping other residents.

An education meeting or education night is a start of showing our families we love and care for them as much as we do our residents.

Elena Roppel, Administrator  
HomePlace Burlington



### Dementia in the News:

[Helpful hints for Families Battling Alzheimer's Disease](#) from The Best of Times

['My Darling Thinks I'm a Stranger': The Haunting Testimony of a Man Whose Wife has Alzheimer's](#)

## Best Practices in Dementia Care

Family members often want to "do" something with their loved one when they visit. Some need a little coaching to do so. Here are a few guidelines to share with family members that will help them create "moments" with their loved ones that will make them both feel good (not frustrated!)

- Embrace the idea that there is no wrong answer
- Do the activity together
- Avoid correcting your family member if you think a mistake is made
- Walk your family member through every step
- Give your family member answers
- Give hints on how to do an activity while it is being done
- Demonstrate the activity first while your loved one watches

From the manual *A Different Visit: Activities for Care Givers and Their Loved Ones with Memory Impairments*

This manual has been made available to all SDCP providers.

For more information, email [Fickejw@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Fickejw@dshs.wa.gov)

