

St. Vincent de Paul Rehabilitation and Nursing Center

29 Providence Avenue

Berlin, NH 03570

T: 603-752-1820

F: 603-752-7149

stvincentrehabcenter.org



March 26, 2021

Families, friends, residents and staff,

We experienced another week of successful visitations, thank you for the focus and attention to our requests and guidelines. Although testing is not mandatory for visitation we are grateful visitors are accepting the rapid COVID test; this allows us to prevent a person positive with COVID from exposing our resident and staff community. As a reminder, we are escorting individuals to and from their visits. We understand some individuals may not stay for the entire allotted time, staff will periodically check-in to gauge when you would like to end the visit and be escorted out of the building. A friendly reminder, a fully vaccinated visitor must still wear PPE and schedule a visit.

We conducted surveillance testing on Tuesday and we continue to have negative results! The state of New Hampshire is adjusting surveillance testing reimbursement to align with the federal government's testing requirements. We will not be testing all eligible staff next week and will begin testing 100% of eligible staff once a month with a PCR test. We intend to randomly test staff with rapid antigen tests the remaining weeks of the month. As of today, the 7 day test positivity rate is 3.4% which is well below the dreaded 10% threshold. The "Rate of Active Cases per 100,000 Population" determines our current Phase. Phases provide allowances such as hairdresser appointments, limited number of other non-essential person and trips outside of facility for fully vaccinated residents. This number fluctuates based on active cases over a two week period and we are currently at 133 per 100,000 population. A prevalence of 50 or fewer will put us in Phase 2 with increased allowances.

Families are beginning to assist residents transition from winter to clothing to spring/summer. Due to limited closet space this is a great time of year to transition seasonal clothing. Please contact Candy O'Neil, Activity Director for more information. Some residents have also begun receiving stimulus payments, these payments do not affect Medicaid eligibility or increase the monthly payment for cost of care. The stimulus will not count as a Medicaid resource for 12 months, residents or Financial POAs will have one year to spend the money and remain below the \$2,500 asset threshold for Medicaid. Please contact Diane Lapointe, Business Office Manager, for details specific to you.

Kim Reardon, Memory Care Director, is highlighting the Music and Memory Program in her March update. Please contact us to inquire about more details if you are interested in this program.

Jeffrey Lacroix

Administrator

St Vincent de Paul Rehab and Nursing

29 Providence Ave

Berlin, NH 03570

(P) 603-752-1820

(F) 603-752-5766

Music and Memory

In 2018, St. Vincent DePaul began participating in a National Program, *Music and Memory*. What is this program and how does it work?

Music & Memory started with the understanding that music is deeply rooted in our conscious and unconscious brains. Music is also important if the functioning of the brain is deteriorating; like in someone living with dementia and other types of cognitive loss. The Mission of *Music and Memory* states "MUSIC & MEMORY® is a non-profit organization that helps individuals with a wide range of cognitive and physical conditions to engage with the world, ease pain, and reclaim their humanity through the use of personalized music. By providing access and education, and by creating a network of Music & Memory certified organizations, our goal is to make the therapeutic use of personalized music a standard of care throughout the health care industry." This mission encouraged us to participate in the program.

Music has been found to help elevate some symptoms related to dementia. Some of these symptoms are: responsive behaviors, depression, pain relief, depression, difficulty swallowing, weight loss and improving their quality of life. If a loved one is displaying any of these symptoms giving them music that is personalized to their likes has shown to improve their mood.

Why is personalized music important? Think about an event such as your prom, a religious service or going grocery shopping. What is always the constant? Music. What happens when you hear a song on the radio you haven't heard in a long time? For most, it brings you back to a time and place when you first heard the song, you start singing it. On the other side, it can bring back memories of sadness which is why personalizing an individual's music helps prevent songs that can trigger sadness.

How do we personalize music? Occasionally the individual can assist in identifying music, we look towards family and friends for music preferences and even staff are able to identify preferred music while engaging in conversation. We will sit with the individual and ask questions about their favorite type of music, songs, whether they played an instrument, sang in a choir, favorite sports, movies etc. We also request your involvement. We ask a questionnaire be completed with anything you may regarding the individual's musical preferences. The more personalized information we have the easier it is to narrow down their personalized playlist. There are no right or wrong answers and the more we know the better the playlist become. Once we have a place to start we sit with the individual and play the music for them hear. If the individual has a positive response the song is added to their playlist, if not we go to the next song. This process is continued until we have playlist just for them, removing songs that did not provide a positive response or indicator of enjoyment. Through non-verbal communication any by watching the reactions of individuals, we are able to provide this program to people who are no longer able to speak. Once a playlist has been created this list is download on an IPOD or Bluetooth headset (this is provided at no cost) and we begin offering the music. Some people utilize *Music and Memory* at scheduled times; examples would be someone who responds unpleasantly at a particular time of the day, before meals if they are losing weight or prior to care for residents who do not respond positively to receiving assistance. All residents are able to participate in *Music and Memory* even if they do not have dementia. Numerous individuals have participated simply because music has always been an active part of their life.

Since the start of the program we have seen many positive improvements from those participating. A few examples have been less responsive behaviors, providing the resident enough comfort to participate in a preferred activity of their past, decreasing pain, improving mood and assisting in preventing weight loss. Music has led to many positive outcomes by unlocking special memories in your loved ones while reconnecting their emotions and feelings. If anyone would like more information on Music and Memory or have questions about the program, please feel free to call Kimberly Reardon, Memory Care Director at 603-752-1820 or email at stv.alzdir@nh-cc.org.