

New Directions

Winter 2016

GUELPH
Independent LIVING

Quarterly publication for GIL clients

www.guelphindependentliving.org



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Great Opportunities!

Would you like to volunteer for GIL's 50/50 Draw at the Guelph Storm Game? See page 6 for more details.

Would you like to have your home professionally cleaned? See page 8 for more details.

Winter Wonderings....

By Janet Redman

The Christmas season saw some unusually warm temperatures (with people in shorts and riding bicycles on Christmas Eve) but now we are experiencing some more seasonal winter weather. Hopefully everyone had the opportunity to enjoy time with family and friends over the holidays. A huge 'thank-you' to all GIL employees who worked one or more of the statutory holidays to make sure that clients were assisted with their daily routines.

There were a number of festive celebrations prior to Christmas, including:

- Staff/family party at Woodlawn Bowl on November 28th – although the numbers were smaller than last year, the competition was fierce and laughter plentiful, especially amongst the “little girl brigade”!!;
- Board of Directors/Senior Leadership dinner at Einstein’s on December 15th;
- Program team celebrations including Cookie Exchanges and Secret Santa; and,
- Agency/Client Christmas party at the Elliott on December 10th where everyone enjoyed a scrumptious turkey dinner served by the Admin ‘reindeer’ and sang along to Christmas carols accompanied by a wonderful fiddle player!

In addition to the holiday celebrating, GIL also completed Medication training for all Workers/ Supervisors and Managers with the help of facilitator, Rhonda Vanek, from March of Dimes. Now that the training is complete, the policy and procedures will

be rolled out to the GIL clients over the next few months. Our goal is to have Authorization forms and procedures finalized with all clients by March 31, 2016. Please watch for memo(s) and a visit from your Program Supervisor in the near future.

Our Quality Assurance project is also well underway. With the leadership of project lead, Carla Henderson, the committee’s project aim is to improve the agency’s response to client inquires and concerns brought to the Administration office. The project team includes representatives from the Board, Admin, front-line staff and client family. Our learnings and quality improvement tools can then be utilized to look at other areas of quality improvement throughout the agency.

Stay warm everyone – only 2 ½ months until the first day of Spring!



GIL Board Meeting Highlights

On September 23, 2015, the GIL Board of Directors held its first meeting since the Annual General Meeting in June; highlights included:

- Welcoming a new Board member, Joanne Doyle;
- Updates on matters related to the building at 238 Willow Road including the meeting with Precision Property Management to review the 5-year capital project plan, upcoming one year evaluation of Precision's contract, and completion of the Make-Up Air unit project;
- Approval of financial statements through July 2015 (Health portfolio) and August 2015 (Housing portfolio);
- Executive Director's one year evaluation;
- Distribution of Governance Skills matrix forms to compile information and assist the Board in recruiting new Board members;
- Board work on the development of the Strategic Plan and performance standards for 2015-2018; and
- Executive Director updates on the 40th anniversary party, Quality Advantage project, attendance at fall conferences (OAILSP, ONPHA and OCSA), policy development for medication assistance and Transportation project, and discussions with the WWLHIN about GIL's performance in our various programs.

And from November's meeting:

- Updates from the building at 238 Willow Road including the one-year contract review with Precision Property Management, awarding of a 2-year snow removal contract, annual RGI review as required by the County of Wellington and new communication tools for the Superintendent/Property Coordinator;
- Approval of financial statements through September 2015 (Health portfolio) and October 2015 (Housing portfolio);
- Completion of Governance Skills matrix forms (good representation in all categories), to be used in recruitment of future Board vacancies;
- Information from Board members who attended the WWLHIN Governors' Symposium and ONPHA Conference; and,
- Executive Director updates on the WWLHIN second quarter target report, Quality Advantage project, Medication policy training and policy roll-out plans, endowment fund request, completed assignment for CIH Housing course, and Mobility Services presentation at client Town Hall meetings.

I also wanted to thank all of the clients and staff who completed our annual satisfaction surveys. We are in the process of compiling the data; results will be shared in the next newsletter.

GIL'S NEW MEDICATION POLICY

By Janet Redman

GIL is now in the process of rolling out our new Medication Policy to guide our Workers' assistance to clients within all agency programs. **The policy permits the provision of medication assistance in the least intrusive manner possible to maintain client independence and safety, while ensuring consistency and staff knowledge.**

As outlined in the memo distributed in early January, the policy development has been a result of a pattern of reported errors and lack of consistent direction for both clients and staff. The draft policy was introduced at Town Hall meetings in May 2015, with another client meeting held on October 29, 2015 to provide an opportunity to ask additional questions before staff training was completed in November and December.

GIL recognizes that the policy may result in changes in routine for some clients; If a client's medication routine will be affected, the Program Supervisors will contact him or her in the near future and work alongside them to make the changes necessary to ensure that GIL can continue to assist with

medications. A reminder that the purpose is not to 'penalize' clients, but to ensure their safety as well as ensure confidence that Workers are delivering medication assistance in a consistent and knowledgeable manner.

Policy highlights for assistance with medication (prescription and over-the-counter) include:

- Workers can assist with medications taken from the original labelled bottle, pharmacy-dispensed blister packs or dosettes filled and signed off by a Regulated Health Care Professional (RHCP) such as a doctor or nurse;
- A new Authorization form must be completed annually by clients who wish to have assistance with any type of medication;
- Verbal or written confirmation is required from the doctor for any alteration to medication dosages;
- Documentation of all errors so follow-up and corrective action can occur; and
- Employee training requirements.

The goal is to have Program Supervisors visit all clients by the end of March 2016 to sign Authorization forms (this may be done as part of the annual Service Agreement visit) and discuss any changes to procedures to ensure consistent and safe service delivery.

If you have any questions, please contact your Program Supervisor.



Discounted Guelph Storm Tickets

GIL is selling discounted tickets for the following games of the 2016 Guelph Storm season as a requirement to qualify for the proceeds of the 50/50 draw in March:

Friday January 29 VS North Bay Batallion

Friday February 5 VS Saginaw Spirit

Ticket price is \$14 (Regularly \$19-26)
Cash sales only. Accessible seating tickets available.



Contact Carla in the Guelph Independent Living Administration Office to purchase tickets (519) 836-1812, ext. 33.

Would you like to volunteer at the GIL 50/50 Guelph Storm game on

Tuesday March 15 (game time 7:00pm)

Contact Carla at (519) 836-1812 ext. 33 by March 1, 2016.

WINTER LESSONS: HOW TO WALK ON ICE



Energy Conservation Tips

Eliminate Phantom Power

Phantom Power or Standby Power is the electricity drawn when an electronic device or appliance is not in use but still plugged in. This can account for up to 15 per cent of a household's electricity use, or as much as \$20 on the average household's hydro bill. Using a programmable power bar to charge your electronics during off-peak hours can cut that cost in half.

Change your lights

Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) use up to 75 per cent less energy than standard bulbs. By replacing five incandescent bulbs with CFL bulbs in areas that require more than three hours of light a day, you can save up to \$30.00 a year. LED lights save you even more.

Use ceiling fans

Use your ceiling fan all year round! In summer, run a ceiling fan at the same time as an air conditioner and you can raise your temperature setting by 2 degrees C, reducing your energy use by at least 10 per cent.

In the winter, reverse the motor and operate the ceiling fan at low speed in the clockwise direction. This produces a gentle updraft, which forces warm air near the ceiling down into the occupied space, creating more even air circulation.

Dishwashers

Run your dishwasher during off-peak hours and only when it is full. Use the air-dry setting or leave the door open to naturally dry the dishes. Running your dishwasher during off-peak hours can save you about half the electricity charge than running it during peak hours.

Washers

The most important thing to do to save money is run your washer using cold water, which cuts back electricity 85 to 90 per cent if you have electric water heating. Wait to do a full load of laundry, and do it only during off peak hours or weekends. When buying a new model, look for an ENERGY STAR qualified front-load model to reduce water use by almost 45 per cent and energy use by about 65 per cent.

Dryers

Dry your clothes during off-peak hours or weekends. Remember to keep the lint trap clean. Moisture can more easily pass through a clean lint trap making your dryer more efficient. Forego the cost of drying and hang your clothes on an outdoor or indoor clothes line/rack to dry.

Refrigerators

The refrigerator is one of the biggest electricity users in your home. While it may be convenient having an extra refrigerator for refreshments, an old, inefficient refrigerator can cost you \$150 a year to operate.

If you are purchasing a new refrigerator, look for the ENERGY STAR symbol. This means the refrigerator will be at least 15 per cent more energy-efficient than the minimum federal standard and will use half as much electricity of a fridge that is 10 years old.

Eliminate Air Leaks

Drafts around windows, doors, air vents and electrical outlets can account for as much as 25% of your total heating costs. That means there are significant savings available if you caulk and weather-strip

Windows

Window treatments - blinds and curtains - can reduce heat loss in the winter and keep out the heat in summer.

Would you like your home cleaned?

Guelph Independent Living will contract with outside agencies again this year to offer our clients the opportunity to have a thorough cleaning of their homes done – please **contact your Program Supervisor by January 31, 2016 to express your interest.** Preference will be given to clients who did not receive this cleaning service in 2015.



January is Alzheimer Awareness Month

KNOW THE 10 WARNING SIGNS OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

1

MEMORY LOSS THAT AFFECTS DAY-TO-DAY ABILITIES
Forgetting things often or struggling to retain new information.

2

DIFFICULTY PERFORMING FAMILIAR TASKS
Forgetting how to do something you've been doing your whole life, such as preparing a meal or getting dressed.

3

PROBLEMS WITH LANGUAGE
Forgetting words or substituting words that don't fit the context.

4

DISORIENTATION IN TIME AND SPACE
Not knowing what day of the week it is or getting lost in a familiar place.

5

IMPAIRED JUDGMENT
Not recognizing a medical problem that needs attention or wearing light clothing on a cold day.

6

PROBLEMS WITH ABSTRACT THINKING
Having difficulty balancing a chequebook, for example, or not understanding what numbers are and how they are used.

7

MISPLACING THINGS
Putting things in strange places, like a dress in the refrigerator or a wristwatch in the sugar bowl.

8

CHANGES IN MOOD AND BEHAVIOUR
Exhibiting severe mood swings from being easy-going to quick-tempered.

9

CHANGES IN PERSONALITY
Behaving out of character, such as becoming confused, suspicious, or fearful.

10

LOSS OF INITIATIVE
Losing interest in friends, family and favourite activities.

For more information, contact your local Alzheimer Society or visit www.alzheimer.ca

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Alzheimer
Society