



## **Observation Day at Alastair House. Kimmel Bay.**

Was greeted warmly by manager Samantha Leuty. The care home is home to 15 residents, and is an EMI Residential facility. I was given a tour of the facility and found the home to have a domestic ethos in decoration, the staff friendly and staffing ratios appeared to be more than adequate. The home was clean, with a pleasant odour and has two ample lounge areas plus a large central dining area. Glad to say that a dog is a resident and well loved by all.

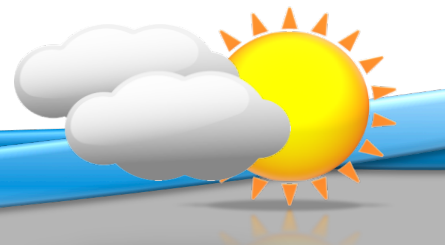
I conducted one training session for the manager and the charge staff, in which I explained the stages of dementia using the Jewels System, and also psychological needs of residents using the Kitwood Flower. The manager and staff were attentive and engaged in the session.

My suggestions and recommendations over the course of my visit were:

- Maximize the dining area by using it as a multipurpose room. During times between the meals, leave rummaging objects on the tables, cleaning items, laundry folding and newspapers. Educate staff on the necessity of an untidy room as residents like to tidy.
- Make sure the craft area/display notice board do not appear too nurse-like.
- The activity notice board outside the med room needs to change in décor frequently. Seasonal or themes, advertising the upcoming large events. Have a dry erase board in the main hall for a list of daily activities, making sure to add any that occur on the spur of the moment. The home needs to take credit for all the impromptu activities they are conducting.
- Outdoor patio/garden needs to incorporate 'work' as well as 'leisure'. Garden and patio area for rest, but a washing line [make sure pegs and some odd bits of laundry are available to hang out and take down] that can be seen from the lounge, a pram which residents could go outside to clean and polish on warm days, plus a men's shed, would all add to the scope of activity on offer.



- Using the Jewels System, know what each resident is capable of achieving. Quiz time may be fine for the diamonds, but the emeralds and ambers need maybe poetry reading or limericks. Reminiscence is good for diamonds but work-related tasks are better for emeralds, and tactile stimulation tasks are best for ambers.
- The Key Worker program was discussed and I explained Kitwood's original thoughts on the idea; that it was about emotional and psychological bonding versus any task related duties. I suggested that staff chose their own residents based on bonds already in place. We discussed the way keyworkers should lead any discussion about their residents and offer suggestions to other team members if problems arise. The manager and charge staff were all receptive and enthusiastic to this idea.
- A lady by the name of **Marie** was discussed and we ascertained she has a personality disorder manifesting in her behaviour since entering the home. On hearing her behaviours and history I felt that she was of the Co-dependant Personality type with histrionic tendencies. I recommended that staff are clear and firm with directions, realise that she fears being alone or making any decision herself, and requires someone to 'lead' her. The staff agreed with this assessment and plan.
- We also discussed **Pat' who has angry outbursts**. It appeared that **Pat** has a history of anger due to her past domestic situation and needs to vent unresolved anger. I suggested some anger management activities which can help Pat vent in a controlled manner. Breaking crockery out on the patio [maybe then brushing it up and making a mosaic out of the pieces in a craft activity] throwing water balloons at a target, and having a session with a staff member where she can complain and vent about her past to a sympathetic listener.
- Another issue was brought up concerning a problem which occurred that morning when a resident with v & d was dressed in day clothes by night staff. She then came down in lift to lounge unsupervised. When manager asked her to return to her room as she was unwell, the resident became angry and non-compliant. The main issue here was that the day clothes had triggered the incident. The unwell resident should have been changed into a new night dress and put back into bed by night shift.



In conclusion, the visit was productive and well received. Alastair House is a pleasant, well run, well-staffed small care home with staff who are enthusiastic and engaged with the residents. I wish Samantha and her staff the best for the future.

Patsy Pope, Dementia Specialist.

