



Lifestyle Options/Choices in Community Living 'Life my way. Living well with dementia'

My name is Carmen Metz. My father, Kurt Adam, was a resident in Rose Garden until November of last year. His health had taken a significant turn and he passed away at the end of November, shortly after arriving at Villa Caritas. It was quite shocking how quickly that all went. When my brother first went to gather some of dad's belongings at Lifestyle Options, he was given the beautiful thing that was up beside Dad's door (with his name, interests, etc.) and I now have that beautiful picture of me and my dear Dad, I love it. There were a few times when I took Dad upstairs with your group to enjoy some music and dancing, (and snacks of course!) and I have to tell you that those were some of my most beautiful, recent memories of my dad, and I will treasure those times forever. Dad was so happy then! Dancing with him and seeing him clap to the music was such a joyful experience, for both of us.

I would also like to express my gratitude for all that you do. My father's time at Lifestyle Options was fairly brief, perhaps 6 months. His decline was quite rapid, and in that time we tried whatever we could to bring him joy, and help him to feel loved. The experiences that you and your team provided were golden. The music and the dancing were at the top of my list! For a while during those precious times, my dad was joyful, and I believe he felt loved. During those times we were able to escape the difficult reality for a while, and just be present together feeling free and happy. Thank you for including my father in so many wonderful experiences and outings, even though I know it took extra work on your part to make them happen.

So for all you do for the people who walk this journey with dementia, I want to thank you. These special people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be given rich, meaningful experiences, and that is what you do. Thanks for all that you did for my Dad.

Sincerely, Carmen

Narratives

Perspectives

Accounts from some of the key people whose work contributed to the success "Life My Way: Living Well with Dementia" throughout the innovation implementation

The Site Managers: Implementing change on the front-line

Chelsey Smith - Legacy Lodge

"As a Registered Nurse who worked on a Geriatric Rehabilitation Unit prior to becoming the Site Director at Legacy Lodge I was incredibly excited to hear that we would be a part of changing the culture of dementia care in Canada. The project took a lot of hard work and determination however, it was worth every minute when you see the improvements and happiness in the residents, their families and the staff. The first 6 months were the most challenging as we were all growing together and developing a better understanding of the butterfly house hold model of care. The last 6 months of the project is where we really rose to the challenge and created better dementia care. It took every team member involved to make this such a success; the staff (HCA's, LPN's, Housekeeping, Recreation, Maintenance, Kitchen, Administration and Management), the families, and of course the residents."

Yuric Marquez - Lifestyle Options Leduc

"When I heard the Butterfly Project was implemented at Lifestyle Options Whitemud almost 3 years ago, I told myself that it's another added job in our busy work lives; there is a hesitation inside me because of the challenges we already have meeting the needs for our clients.

But, all this changed overnight when the Butterfly Project was implemented at LSO- Leduc in October 2016 with the first audit completed by Dementia Care Matters. Now with the commitment of the staff to 'do the Butterfly', it was heartwarming for me seeing the residents more excited engaging with staff. The residents are not only baking but they are baking as if it's their first time; when they involved in

painting you'll see in their eyes as if it's their first time; when you see them engaging with co-resident as if they know each other. A year ago this was not the picture of their home, you would see more of them pacing endlessly, some were in the entrance wanting to go exit, and some were fighting.

Even for staff you'll see a vibrant people coming to work, you'll see excitement in them, you'll see a totally revamped attitude and character from the staff. We even have the housekeeping staff sitting with our resident and having meal with them! Where in the world you'll see this kind of environment r this is totally different from just two years ago where staff would just walk pass resident often saying nothing at all because they were engrossed in finishing their tasks."

The Educators: Emotional Intelligence

Dorthe Flauer –Lifestyle Options Leduc & Whitemud

"As the Butterfly 'Being a STAR' Educator, I have seen beautiful butterflies everywhere ...staff flitting from resident to resident creating such wonderful moments each day. This project has allowed a new growth for a culture change that has impacted both households as staff have gained many new 'butterfly skills.' Throughout the past year, staff have shared special moments with each other during their workshop training sessions.

The journey includes eight full day workshop sessions where staff from different departments including nursing, housekeeping, recreation, kitchen and dining, all come together to share their life stories, their hopes and dreams which then allows them to learn in an open, honest, and confidential

environment how to truly make a difference for residents in the Butterfly Households. Each workshop focuses on various themes from DCM that help the staff understand that:

- Feelings matter most
- Working with heart and being real
- Looking for the spirit of the person living with dementia
- How to be in their reality and to be in the moment
- People living with dementia are not deliberately trying to be difficult
- Behind every motion is an emotion
- The importance of 'doing with' not 'doing to'
- Creating meaningful engagement and occupation with residents
- Importance of mealtime experiences

It has been a humbling experience to learn and grow with staff in each session of the workshop. After each first workshop I would ask the staff to reflect on their work since their introduction to the Butterfly Approach and without question, each and every one of them, stated that work was more fun; they enjoyed coming to work more, loved not wearing uniforms, and that they would never want to go back to the way it was before the Butterfly."

Comments from Staff:

- "Before...it was like a hospital setting."
- "Your approach with the residents changes, because you learn to be more patient with the residents, you learn to trust your co-workers more."
- "Before the approach came, there was no enjoyment, it was just work. But nowadays, recreation is kind of not only for the residents, but staff are engaged in the recreation. It's staff and residents enjoying it together."

Nancy Cunningham – Choices in Community Living, Legacy Lodge

“We have learned how to be more spontaneous and present in the moment. It is exciting to learn new communication skills to engage people in more meaningful ways.”

“At first, I wasn’t very happy about all of this talk about change. I mean, what was wrong with what we were doing? But now that I’ve gone through the training, the way I view my job has changed a lot. It’s like I’ve been given permission to get to know the Residents better, I mean, really get to know them. I also get to share more of myself – I feel like we’re more like a family now and I love coming into work to see how everybody’s doing.”

These words hold a lot of meaning for me as the Educator of the eight-part learning and development series based on the philosophy that “feelings matter most” in dementia care. They tell me that the learning or educational piece of the Butterfly Household Model is key to making the culture change toward creating a nurturing, person-centered environment for both Residents and staff. Strong leadership is a core ingredient but innovative education needs to reach all members of the team including care staff, housekeepers, maintenance etc.

The Butterfly Training is both the ice-breaker and ultimately the foundation of that culture change. By ‘ice-breaker’, I mean the training is instrumental in starting the important conversations, breaking through inhibitions and tensions and helping people to feel more comfortable and open about themselves and new ideas. Implementing the Butterfly Household Model is truly a cultural transformation process with a clear goal of providing quality of care and life for each Resident. This

goal requires an understanding of an individual’s needs, realities, limitations, strengths, and remaining abilities. The training series starts with the core element of sharing self in order to enhance emotional intelligence and a sense of team spirit which shifts the focus on ‘being with’ not ‘doing for’ people. It they enjoyed coming to work more, loved not wearing uniforms, and that they would never want to go elements that need to change, and putting these changes into action between workshops.

This training is different to traditional dementia awareness training in that it pushes participants to self-reflect and challenge traditional ways of doing things. As the Educator, it also required me to reflect on my own values and beliefs and pushed me to share more of myself in order to mentor staff who were expected to embrace the Model. This meant not only guiding and supporting people in the classroom, but also taking the learning out of the classroom and keeping it real by working alongside and coaching the team in a ‘hands on’ way. This training series challenges, supports and inspires staff. It demonstrates that the way to being person-centered is to improve staff self-awareness and make parallels in everyone’s life journey, with or without experiencing dementia. We learn that to reach people living with dementia who are feeling-based, we need to come to terms with the feelings we have ourselves and recognize that we all have had times in our own lives when we have felt vulnerable or needed comfort.

I found my role as Educator for now two accredited Butterfly Homes to be both challenging and very rewarding. Challenging in the sense that whilst there were staff who were keen to embrace the Model, there were those who were not. Those who were not, often questioned and resisted the ideas put forward such as, no longer wearing uniforms, sitting down and eating together with Residents at mealtimes, and being less task focused. However, the rewards have far outweighed the challenges. Most of the staff have come round and are now great cheerleaders for the change. They have exemplified what quality of life and person-centered care really means – CARE FROM THE HEART! It has been both inspiring and a privilege to be part of this transformation of the lives of both people living and working in the home and I look forward to sustaining this work in ongoing training initiatives.

With environmental changes happening on the Household, we have seen the level of social engagement go up and changes in overall mood of our residents, improve. Less behaviors have been noted on one Household in particular, where environmental changes are happening at the present time. We are also seeing a difference in staff attitude, noting less sick time, more interaction and full engagement with residents. The environmental changes have contributed to a more positive vibe and feel on the Household, which is what visitors comment on so frequently now, when they enter the Household.

One resident: Jack who has rarely played piano since coming to LSO Leduc but whom family describes as a very gifted musician; a few weeks ago, whilst watching staff work on the "Fisherman's Warf" wall began to play New York, New York and other tunes from his past on the electric piano. Other residents began to sing along and some staff began to dance and cheer, which had the resident agreeing to play on. He received a warm round of applause and standing ovation from those listening to the music.

Another resident who is not overtly social and tends to like to keep to herself, comes out every day to visit the Fisherman's Warf area. She will stand for several minutes looking at the fish, touching the wall, staring at the lighthouse then comments "beautiful". I said to her a couple of weeks ago, "Does this remind you of home and being near the ocean?" (With her country of origin being Scotland) and she said "Yes. It's beautiful. Just beautiful. You're doing a beautiful job".

One other resident who can be quite curt and short tempered with staff and people in general, has become less irritable and more social with other residents. Every day she comes out of her suite to see what the staff are working on next, for the environment. I can't begin to count how many residents and families just sit and watch for hours, what we are doing and what themes we are creating within the Household.

With training almost being complete, we have seen differences in staff attitudes and the level of engagement that occurs with our residents even on our other Household. They too are excited as they watch the other Household transform the environment and keep asking "when is our side going to get done", for the environmental changes. There is just an overall level of excitement coming from residents, families, visitors and staff which is nice to see.