



The PULSE

FROM THE CEO

Coming changes include pay increases for NACs

On Nov. 13, 2019, information about CHCC's new staff retention plan was shared with all team members – posted near timeclocks and shared via email.

The goal of the plan is to decrease staff turnover, which is a challenge for care centers like ours all across the nation. We're intentionally focusing on recruiting and retaining nursing assistants at this time.

Below is a summary of the positive changes presented in our letter to you earlier this month. We'll, of course, share additional information related to retention and staffing in future issues of The Pulse.

We have a plan. Over the summer months, CHCC hired a third-party human resources consultant to perform exit interviews. The consultant conducted the interviews over a three-month period and reported

her findings directly to CHCC's board of directors. Those findings were used to develop the plan and strategies that are now being shared with you.



by Patrick O'Neill
CEO

Your wage has increased. To bring CHCC's NAC wages in line with the current market, all nursing assistants have now received an increase in their pay, as outlined in the Nov. 13 letter.

A new scheduler is starting. Berta Batres will be stepping into the role of nursing department scheduler this month. She has prior experience with nursing department scheduling; we are so fortunate to have an exist-

Please see **Changes** on Page 4

ACTIVITIES

Gardening program begins



Sensory, therapeutic gardening activities have arrived at Christian Health Care Center. Our new indoor gardens from Eldeergrow are here!

Eldergrow is an exciting program for long-term care centers

Please see **Gardening** on Page 2



Like or share CHCC's Facebook posts with your friends and family to help others learn about job openings, volunteer opportunities, donation requests and more.

facebook.com/christianhealthcare

HOLIDAYS

What an amazing Halloween!

2019 is one that will go down in the books as the most epic Halloween celebration at CHCC ever! The costumes, the decor, the energy, the FUN! Thank you to everyone who collaborated and worked as a team to make the day special – for each other and for those we care for. It's truly amazing to see what can be accomplished when y'all craft a vision and pull together as a team. Wow! #CHCCTeamwork

See more photos at facebook.com/christianhealthcare.



GARDENING

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that helps connect residents with nature. The key to the program is a portable, indoor cart that allows the elderly to bury their fingers right down into the dirt. With its integrated grow lights, the wheeled cart can be inside all year round, providing 12 months of gardening opportunities for all those who live at our Lynnden care center. The garden carts are assembled by disabled veterans and other adults living with disabilities, and they're designed so that residents can garden whether they're standing or sitting. CHCC now has two of these carts.

"We look forward to the hands-on engagement and educational opportunities that the Eldergrow therapeutic horticulture program will bring to our residents," said Josh Friesen, a social worker who runs many of the therapeutic recreation programs in Cedar Cove.

The reason for bringing the Eldergrow program to CHCC here in Whatcom County is to help the

wonderful people who call CHCC home to engage socially, physically and mentally through the tending of and caring for plants. According to the Eldergrow company, which is based in Seattle and nationally known, the system provides benefits seniors by helping to improve motor skills, reduce risk factors for dementia, elevate moods, improve sleep, reduce falls, reduce agitation, improve self-esteem and reduce depression.

The program features a therapeutic sensory garden with plants with

varying colors and textures for tactile, sensory input.

Eldergrow representatives visited CHCC on Nov. 7 to set up and introduce the gardening carts. An Eldergrow educator gave demonstrations for residents, guiding them through the process of planting. The Eldergrow team also armed CHCC staff with lessons they can share with residents during activity times. In the future, an Eldergrow educator will periodically visit our Whatcom eldercare center to provide formal classes and activities for seniors.



NOV. 26 IS HAT DAY.
WEAR YOURS!



HOLIDAYS

**Don't forget!
Christmas
deadlines are
coming**

Secret Santa sign-up ends Nov. 27. Get in while you can! Also, don't forget to drop by the front desk to sign up for the annual CHCC Christmas party, which will be held on Dec. 5.



RECOGNITION

Valentina is a Shining Star

Congratulations to Valentina on her Shining Star award!

Valentina is an excellent and caring nursing assistant certified (NAC) who works primarily on Cascade and Baker in the evenings.

She has worked at CHCC for more than four years and demonstrates compassionate care and real dedication to our residents.

We are so fortunate to have Valentina as part of our CHCC Team! Congratulations, Valentina, and thank you!



Online list of activities

Remember that monthly CHCC activity calendars are online. If loved ones of people living at CHCC ask about what is happening this month, feel free to direct them to the CHCC website at chcclynden.org.

November 2019						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
10:00-11:00 Retirement Plan Meeting 11:00-12:00 Veterans	10:00-11:00 CHCC Coffee Social 11:00-12:00 Veterans	10:00-11:00 CHCC Coffee Social 11:00-12:00 Veterans	10:00-11:00 CHCC Coffee Social 11:00-12:00 Veterans	10:00-11:00 CHCC Coffee Social 11:00-12:00 Veterans	10:00-11:00 CHCC Coffee Social 11:00-12:00 Veterans	10:00-11:00 CHCC Coffee Social 11:00-12:00 Veterans
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CHANGES

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ing team member take on this critical and challenging role.

A technology upgrade for scheduling is being explored. CHCC's HR department is exploring a new technology system that is designed to streamline scheduling, making communication easier for you and for Berta.

There will be onboarding improvements. Starting in January 2020, Mary Faber Wynstra will transition into a new role in the organization. She will make sure that new hires have positive experiences once they are hired and that their training is consistent and individualized.

Communications training is coming. The HR consultant who performed exit interviews last summer –

Kara Turner – has been hired to provide communications training that will help licensed nursing staff, unit coordinators and nursing assistants communicate more clearly.

Lead NAC/hospitality aide roles are being added. In the first quarter of 2020, several experienced nursing assistants and hospitality aides will be asked to help train and mentor new hires. We will be reaching out to individuals who have shown initiative and demonstrated team leadership qualities to see if they would like to advance their career here.

Please know that this is going to be a dynamic and fluid process. Chang-

es will happen along the way as we learn new information and test systems and procedures. We are working hard to make CHCC competitive in the job market, and – equally important – we're committed to making sure that people who decide to work here stay longer.

Thank you for the work you do; thank you for being here and for being a loyal member of the care team. When we work as a team, great things can be accomplished.

Feel free to share your thoughts about employee retention, or any CHCC matters, with me (or any

CHCC leader) by phone, email or in person. I value, appreciate and welcome your insight at any time.

Questions? Comments?

Feel free to share your thoughts about employee retention, or any CHCC matters, with CEO Patrick O'Neill (or any CHCC leader) by phone, email or in person.

360-354-4434
poneill@chcclynden.org

LEADERSHIP TIPS

Grace in the workplace: Welcoming new team members

Being the new person on the job is difficult. You don't know the rules, you don't know the ropes. You're good at the job you were hired to do, but there's so much you *don't* know about your new workplace that it often can feel like you're swimming upstream just to get your job done.

Remember what that felt like? That's not a fun feeling. Instead, how would it feel to be a person who can solve those issues? Here are some simple things you can do to help wel-

come new team members to CHCC:

- **Reach out and say "hello."** A smile, handshake, hug or greeting can go a long way toward helping



new team members feel welcome.

- **Ask if they have questions.** The odds are good that they'll have a ton of questions but aren't sure whom to ask. Be that person!

- **Step in to help them finish work.** Maybe they've got a particularly challenging task that could use an extra set of hands. Perhaps they are in the middle of finishing a certain job during a shift change, and they would appreciate your stepping in to take over. We're all working together toward the same goal of providing excellent care, after all.

These actions may seem simple, but they will help new team members feel welcomed and appreciated. And welcoming others just might improve everyone's day!