



December 2023

CARE NEWS

Monthly Newsletter of Care in Midstream

Keeping in touch

As we reach the end of 2023, we extend our gratitude to everyone who walked the road with us this year - our residents, families, associates, friends, and staff. Thank you for always being there - through the highs and the lows, the laughter and the tears, on the sunny and rainy days, on the freewheeling down hills and the challenging up hills. We can do so little alone, but together we can change the world.

Let's enter 2024 together with the sole purpose of making the world a better place for everyone!



**Be blessed,
The Care in Midstream Team**



Best wishes for a Festive Season filled with peace and goodwill.

May you experience the light of laughter, the warmth of love, and the joy of gratitude the season and beyond.



We would love to hear from you. If you have any feedback or news that you would like to share, please contact us at marketing@careinmidstream.co.za



THE MOST BEAUTIFUL TIME OF THE YEAR



A visit By ADASA (Alzheimer's & Dementia Association of South Africa) and a wonderful donation of teddy bears for our residents.



Celebrating the Festive Season with gifts, treats, activities, big smiles – and most importantly surrounded by family and friends.

CHRISTMAS
is the spirit of
giving
without a thought of getting



A big thank you to everybody who are contributing to make this Festive Season a special experience for our residents.



WHAT A BLAST!

**THANK YOU FOR
A GOOD TIME!**

DECEMBER 2023



The Care in Midstream staff enjoying a well-deserved end-of-year celebration. Thank you for all your hard work!

How to Have a Conversation with a Dementia Patient



Dementia is a progressive condition that can eventually affect a person's ability to communicate. Trouble with language abilities is often a first sign of dementia. Despite this obstacle to effortless communication, loved ones can still enjoy conversations with dementia patients.

How does dementia affect speech? Dementias, like Alzheimer's disease, are a result of damaged brain cells. As the condition progresses, the patient begins to experience what is known as aphasia, a term which describes the loss of one's ability to speak and comprehend speech. Aphasia worsens as dementia progresses. In the early phases of dementia, seniors may occasionally forget a word or use the wrong word in a conversation. Upon interruption, the dementia patient finds it difficult to resume the conversation. Grasping multiple concepts at once is challenging, so they jump from topic to topic without completing a thought or sentence. Language comprehension is also affected. Seniors with dementia find it difficult to follow someone who speaks with an accent or a high-pitched voice or uses complex language.

How should someone set the stage for conversation? Loved ones should first prepare the environment for conversation with a dementia patient. A quiet place without distractions is ideal. Sit at eye level with the senior and remain in clear view. Body language should be open and relaxed. If feeling rushed, begin the conversation after calming down.

What are the best ways to speak? Communicating with a dementia patient requires some adjustments. Speech should be clear and calm. Speaking slowly allows the senior time to process what has been said. Short, simple sentences are best. Remember that asking too many questions sounds like an interrogation.

When should you ask yes or no questions? Questions that require a yes or no answer should be presented to the dementia patient, especially when seeking information. Asking open-ended questions can be overwhelming. For instance, a family member who aims to start a conversation might ask the senior if he'd first like a cup of tea or coffee. A straightforward question that requires a simple yes or no answer is unlikely to overwhelm the person.

When are open-ended questions ideal? Once the scene is set for a pleasant conversation, begin the talk. Connect with the senior by asking open-ended questions. Keep in mind that, for dementia patients, long-term memories are more easily accessed than short-term ones. Discussing old times, for instance, is enjoyable for them.

Should you avoid asking about specific past events? As soon as the senior starts chatting about the good times, it may be tempting to ask if he recalls a particular person or event. Refrain from asking about specifics since doing so may feel like a test to the dementia patient; the senior may respond with agitation or anxiety.

What are the light and easy ways to communicate? Asking for opinions is an easy way to have a fun conversation with a dementia patient. A family member or caregiver may ask the senior his opinion about a musical melody or a painting. Answers to such questions have no right or wrong answer, which encourages self-confidence. Raising the senior's past accomplishments also lends to a pleasurable talk. If the elderly individual had started his own company, been an excellent cook or built birdhouses from scratch, bringing up these achievements amidst conversation will do wonders to promote self-esteem in the senior.

Care in Midstream provides the following services:

Assisted Living | Frail Care | Dementia & Alzheimer's Care | End of Life & Palliative Care
Short Term Care | Home-based Nursing Services





Gift ideas for frail loved ones - practical presents for the hard-to-buy-for

Friends and relatives of seniors who are housebound or reside in a care facility often find it challenging to come up with practical gift ideas. They must consider, for example, any sensory impairments – such as vision or hearing loss – the recipient may have, as well as dietary restrictions resulting from a medical condition, dental issues or a swallowing disorder. Gift shopping for someone who is mentally impaired due to dementia can also be challenging.

The following is a wide range of ideas, depending on the recipient's situation.

Practical Items

- Toiletries such as moisturizing lotion; bar soap and deodorant; a toothbrush and toothpaste or denture cleaner; conditioning shampoo; facial tissue; a comb or hairbrush and hair accessories; cologne; talcum powder; lipstick and nail polish; a hand mirror.
- Apparel such as tracksuits, pyjamas or nightgowns, underwear and socks. Consider adaptive clothing – such as Velcro-closing dresses and shirts – which can make dressing much easier. All items should be easy-care.
- A 'reacher' (from a medical supply shop) for picking up things off the floor or retrieving items on high shelves.
- Velcro-closing shoes or slippers with non-skid soles
- A lap blanket
- Hearing aid batteries
- A night light - decorative ones can be found in gift shops and crafters' stores
- A rechargeable flashlight that automatically comes on when the power fails
- A gift certificate to a pharmacy or other business that offers free delivery

Other Ideas

- A unique tabletop or window decoration
- A large photo calendar that reflects a favourite interest, such as pets, gardening, or sports
- Family photos, either framed or assembled in an album. Use labels to identify individuals and dates on each photo
- Children's artwork - laminated or framed
- Scented sachets for tucking into drawers
- A beautiful scarf
- Plants – silk is usually best since no care is required
- A small radio or CD player and favourite music
- Food items and treats that take into account dietary restrictions. Bring enough so the person can share with caregivers or fellow residents.

If the person resides in a place of care, staff may be able to provide other suggestions. They can also supply information regarding preferred brands of toiletries, proper clothing and shoe size, and favourite treats.

The Joy Of Giving

By John Greenleaf Whittier

Somehow, not only for Christmas,
But all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others
Is the joy that comes back to you;
And the more you spend in blessing
The poor and lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's possessing
Returns to make you glad.

