

Volunteers Needed at Books Revisited

Do you like books and meeting new people? Do you have three hours of free time a week? If so, Books Revisited needs your support. We are looking for volunteers for our Old Orchard Beach, Biddeford and Sanford locations. The stores, operated by HomeHealth Visiting Nurses, sell gently read books and are staffed entirely by volunteers. The success of Books Revisited is made possible by the generosity of community residents, local businesses and volunteer support. All proceeds support home and hospice care. If you'd like to become a volunteer, please contact Diane Carstens, Volunteer Coordinator, at 1-800-660-4867.

Raising Readers Comes to Books Revisited

Raising Readers is a not-for-profit organization whose aim is to support children's literacy through a love of stories, books, friendships and fun. The organization holds a series of reading circles for children of all ages and provides quality books in all subject areas. Reading circles include story telling, book presentation, time for quiet reading and an opportunity for children to respond to stories through discussion, writing, drama and art. At Books Revisited, volunteers will lead reading circles using books donated by Raising Readers. This is an exciting opportunity for volunteers to help children discover the fun of language and reading!



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www.homehealth.org

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HomeHealth Visiting Nurses Inside



Summer 2007

Biannual Newsletter for Patients, Families and Friends

Intake Services Take the Lead in Customer Satisfaction

In our continued effort to improve customer service and ease of referral, we recently hired a consultant to conduct a survey of our key referral sources to include physicians, hospitals and nursing homes. We sought to learn more about overall satisfaction, ease of referral, experience with our agency and the referral process. We were pleased to find that 90% of respondents rated high levels of satisfaction with overall services at HomeHealth Visiting Nurses. Comments included:

- "Can Do" Attitude
- Staff are easy to work with
- Referral process is quick and easy
- We take complex and problem cases
- Get the job done

Another question was asked specifically about customer service at Intake. Comments included the following:

- The nurses are very professional-they ask good questions
- They are polite and interested
- Intake staff knows the customer's needs

Areas that we will focus on for improvement include providing more educational programs for our referral sources. Thank you to survey participants and thank you to our Intake staff for a job well done!

What's New at HomeHealth Visiting Nurses

The "Enjoying Life with Diabetes" self-management program was awarded continued Recognition from the American Diabetes Association. The program offers high-quality education services to patients with diabetes. In addition, we are pleased to offer in-home nutrition education by a Registered Dietitian. These services are provided to patients with nutritional risk factors including diabetes, non-healing wounds and heart disease. Personalized nutrition counseling can help the healing process and improve recovery time.

For more information about our diabetes or nutrition programs, contact **Faith Thibodeau**, Registered Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Educator, at 284-4566 or 1-800-660-4867.



In an effort to reduce complications after surgery, our therapists have created and printed an 18-page "Joint Effort" program informational packet to be distributed by therapists to new patients at pre-operative and/or postoperative visits. This will give our patients useful information to help them understand the surgery and recovery process.



Hip Replacement Our Patient's Success Story

In meeting Ed, you would never guess that he had total hip replacement surgery less than 6 months ago. At 57 years old, he is a model of good health and enjoys a full and active professional, social and family life.

But not too long ago, his normal life began to unravel when his left hip started bothering him. He dismissed this as an old sports injury, or maybe the result of "getting older" and coped with escalating pain by taking over the counter pain medications. "What you come to accept daily for chronic pain is amazing," Ed reflects now; "it's insidious, the way it takes over your life. I wouldn't want to live like that again. My quality of life declined dramatically, and I started crossing things off as being physically unable to do them."

His health declined to the point that he was falling, unable to ride his motorcycle or walk short distances. An avid fisherman, the last straw was falling down hard while fishing in a stream and being unable to get up for several minutes because the pain was so severe. "I didn't want to be that old, decrepit man who sits fishing alone by the side of the stream while my buddies walked all over, searching for the best fishing spots," says Ed, "it scared me to realize that, if I had fallen into deep water, I might not have ever made it out alive."

Ed made an appointment with his physician who immediately recognized that Ed's hip needed replacement. The cartilage was completely worn away inside the joint, causing the bones to rub together when he moved. After discussing his options with his wife, Ed opted to replace his left hip with a ceramic ball in a plastic joint and a titanium rod that extends down his leg.

To help Ed prepare for surgery, Physical Therapist Amey Wieting of HomeHealth Visiting Nurses reviewed therapy options and home adaptations. The home was inspected for safety concerns, including stairs, the location of the bedroom and bathroom, threshold heights, rugs and carpeting.

Amey Wieting was also there for Ed after his surgery! Ed was feeling overwhelmed by the trauma of surgery and the need to manage a high volume of pain medications. His inability to move his left leg and perform simple tasks like showering and dressing was frightening. Ed worried about his ability to resume a normal life. When therapist Amey Wieting came to his home for post-operative visits, she was like "a breath of fresh air," Ed recalls. Amey's pleasant and encouraging manner helped Ed to take on a progressive therapy regime. As a therapist with HomeHealth Visiting Nurses for almost 25 years, Amey has the skills and history to help her patients recover successfully. "It didn't seem like it was just a job to her," Ed remarked.

Ed had regular physical therapy visits for a month, taking gradual steps toward healing. "When I saw my progress, it instilled a lot of confidence," he recalls. By the time Ed went back for his six-week, post-operative checkup with the surgeon, he was walking on his own and cleared to return to work. Within weeks, Ed was biking again and had enjoyed two fishing trips, wading through streams and hiking almost 3 miles! Ed credits the surgery and his successful home therapy experience with restoring his quality of life; "I've got a second chance! This has me doing things I love again that I thought were gone, which shouldn't happen at 57 years old."

HomeHealth Visiting Nurses "Joint Effort" program promotes faster healing and more successful rehabilitation. If you are considering joint replacement surgery, call 1-800-660-4867 or visit www.homehealth.org for more information.

HomeHealth Visiting Nurses Featured On Healthviews

Please Be Sure to Tune In!

HomeHealth Visiting Nurses will be featured on Healthviews on Channel 4 (available in the Greater Portland area) every Tuesday from July 10th through August 10 at 3:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Meet our patients and learn how our services have made a difference in their lives. For more information, please call 1-800-660-4867

Join Bergen Bus Tours

Madelyn Bergen Belliveau organizes bus tours and donates all proceeds to HomeHealth Visiting Nurses. Last year, she single-handedly raised \$14,000 to benefit patients who lacked insurance and/or the financial resources to pay for care. Madelyn has spent years developing her connections with entertainment venues, and she always gets the best tickets. Even if a show is sold out, she usually manages to get seats for her guests. Some trips have entertainment options while others are transportation only with guests free to do what they choose. If requested, Madelyn will help guests get tickets to specific shows or events.

Upcoming 2007 Bergen Bus Trips include:

MONTREAL, CANADA, October 20-21
with 2 nights at Queen Elizabeth Hotel

NEW YORK CITY, December 18-19
with 2 nights at Sheraton Manhattan Hotel

(see Rockettes perform in the Radio City
Christmas Spectacular)

To thank our volunteers, we are planning a special shopping/sightseeing trip to Boston on September 20, 2007. This trip is free of charge and can accommodate up to 50 volunteers. Invitations will be mailed to current volunteers in August.

For more information about Bergen Bus Trips, call Madelyn at 282-5521 or e-mail at mbb@bergenbus.com. Madelyn will mail you a complete schedule, or you can view it online at www.bergenbus.com.



"Healthy Heart" Clinic Offered to Buxton Residents

HomeHealth Visiting Nurses recently provided a free heart health clinic to Buxton residents in collaboration with MaineHealth's Maine Heart Center. This free clinic was made possible by funds from the Narragansett Number One Foundation.

Our goal was to provide health education with cardiovascular and diabetes risk screening. With appropriate education and screening, we can prevent or delay the onset of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Education is essential to help patients with chronic disease manage their symptoms. Participants completed a diabetes risk assessment and a cardiovascular health risk assessment that included the following testing: height, weight, blood pressure and waist circumference measurements and total cholesterol and HDL cholesterol. A health counselor reviewed assessment findings and provided health improvement recommendations to each participant. Recommendations included goals for healthy weight, exercise, blood pressure levels and smoking cessation. Participants were encouraged to follow-up with their primary care physicians. With permission, a one-page report with the screening results was sent to the participant's physician. Several participants were found to be at significant risk of diabetes and were advised to see their physician for further testing.

We are grateful to the Narragansett Number One Foundation and our partners at MaineHealth for the opportunity to provide this free service to Buxton residents. A second, diabetes-related clinic will be offered in Buxton, at no charge, in the early fall. HomeHealth Visiting Nurses believes strongly that access to routine preventative care is vital to remain healthy and active. Toward this goal, we conduct community health clinics regularly throughout York and Cumberland counties. For a clinic schedule, call the Community Health staff at 1-800-660-4867.