

The Boulder Times



December 2023

Hello Everyone,

It's hard to believe that it is already December. It won't be long and we will be looking at 2024.

Please remember that even though your loved ones may not remember you were here, they do remember how you made them feel.

Please take a moment to check out the Boulder Creek Holiday Event Calendar at the End of this Newsletter so you know what is going on each day.

1. If you have not dropped off a **stocking for your loved ones** please do so. We are requesting each family to provide a red and white felt stocking for their loved one. Please decorate and put their first name on it. Turn it into Jan by December 11th. These stockings will be filled and given out on Christmas Day.
2. **RSV Vaccines clinic is scheduled for December 5th** in the morning.
3. **If family or friends are sending gifts through the mail** that you would like saved for Christmas please mark "Save until Christmas" or "Don't open until Christmas".

4. Please let us know if you plan on taking your loved one out for **Christmas Eve/ Day**.
5. Thank you to everyone who has attended the recent care conferences. We really appreciate your taking time out of your busy days. If you have not been scheduled yet, please know that Mary will be calling to set one up soon.
6. **We voted during "Family Council". There will be no Family Council or Dementia Support Group in December. Jan is not available Jan 9th so we will plan on Jan 16th Weather permitting.**
7. If you have multiple family member who want to visit, please set up a time with Jan to use reserve the community room. Families are welcome if the room is not being used for business meetings.
8. **Holiday celebrations** are in the near future with family gatherings. We all want to make wonderful and lasting memories. Please think about what is best for your loved one when planning. Don't make it too large of a gathering, don't travel too far, and don't make it for too long of a period of time. Don't expose them to any unnecessary illness.
9. If you would like to **reserve the community room** for a family gathering, please check in with Jan. She is taking reservations. A list of days and times taken is provided at the end of this newsletter.
10. At this time, we will not be serving guest meals until spring due to covid concerns.
11. **Hearing Aid Checks** will be on December 11th in the afternoon.
12. December we will be back to our normal **resident birthday celebration** on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. This will give you as family member the opportunity to celebrate with your loved ones without fear of them missing out on the facility birthday party.
13. **Rate increase** discussed in November Family Council will take place in February 1. (notification will be given with this month's billing)
14. In January we will be starting another round of **modified Tai Ji Quan** that has been adapted specifically for those with dementia.
15. Feel free to make your residents room festive, but use non-breakable stuff. Not any precious heirlooms.
16. It's that time of year where we will need to start locking the sunroom doors. Residents can be let out if weather is permitting.
17. Make sure when you stop by that you **check for mail at the Aides Office**. We aren't putting up little letters any longer because the residents are taking them down and hiding them.

18. We again this year will be putting up our **"Giving Tree"** again in the lobby this year. We will decorate with handmade or store-bought outer wear. (Hats, scarves, mittens, socks) Then underneath we will be putting non-perishable food items. Everything on the tree will be given to United Community Action to give to those in need. Everything underneath will go to the Marshall Food List. Some of our "snowbirds" have already dropped off their donations.
19. **December 15th we will be having a Family Christmas Bingo** and more. Christmas cookies and cocoa will be served and there will also be a photo opportunity.
20. Staff will be **adopting a resident** again this year for Christmas to help bring them a little extra joy. We will have Santa give out their gifts on the 22nd.
21. **Candle Light Christmas Eve Service** at 3pm on 24th. Family may attend within reason. Should last about 30-40 mins.
22. Please make sure you check out our Facebook page at **Boulder Creek-Marshall MN**. We will be celebrating several events this month.

Sincerely,

Jan Mason



Oh, What A Wonderful Time of the Year!



Welcome to Mary 's Corner

BC's Nurse Supervisor/Case Manager

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did,

But the feeling you leave them with will linger on.”

A person with dementia is more likely to have accidents, incontinence or difficulties using the toilet than a person of the same age who doesn't have dementia.

For some people, incontinence develops because messages between the brain and the bladder or bowel don't work properly. They may not recognize that they have a full bladder or bowel, or be able to control them. Other reasons include:

- not reacting quickly enough to the sensation of needing to use the toilet, not being able to tell someone that they need to go to the toilet because of difficulty communicating, not understanding a prompt from someone to use the toilet
- not being able to find, recognize or use the toilet. If someone becomes confused about their surroundings, they may urinate in an inappropriate place (such as a wastepaper basket) because they have mistaken it for a toilet
- not being able to, or forgetting how to, do things needed to use the toilet, such as undoing clothing
- not letting others help with going to the toilet or refusing to use it – this could be due to embarrassment or not understanding an offer of help
- not making any attempt to find the toilet – this could be due to depression or a lack of motivation, or because the person is distracted

- embarrassment after an accident, which the person unsuccessfully tries to manage. For example, they may try to hide wet or soiled clothes at the back of a drawer to deal with later, and then forget they've put them there.

Here's how we can help:

- Reducing caffeine intake helps. Boulder Creek offers decaffeinated coffee and tea.
- Some families opt for a waterproof mattress protector, which is very helpful to keep residents' bed clean and fresh.
- By being proactive, we can adjust some environmental aspects including providing a toilet seat in a contrasting color and adequate lighting to assist in locating the toilet. A toilet seat in a contrasting color helps an individual whose dementia has impacted their visual perception to better see where the toilet is, helping them feel more secure as they sit down. We can also anticipate toileting needs by noting typical patterns of urination and bowel movements and bringing the person to the bathroom prior to those times of the day.
- Try to establish a regular routine for having drinks. Many people with dementia forget to drink or no longer recognize the sensation of thirst.
- Reduce the person's fluid intake before bedtime.
- Boulder Creek offers toileting reminders and services. This is an opportunity for staff to ensure incontinence products are changed as needed. We also while monitor skin for redness, irritation or open areas.
- Moisture-associated skin damage (MASD) is defined as the damage occurring in response to prolonged skin exposure to moisture. Older people are at a higher risk of moisture-related skin damage due to a thinning of the overall skin that occurs with age. Irritation and damage can develop very quickly. When incontinence occurs, toilet paper alone is not enough to cleanse the skin. Moreover, dry toilet paper may further damage already tender and compromised skin. This is why Boulder Creek prefers to utilize wet wipes that are soft and gentle to the skin to ensure residents with incontinence are fresh and clean.

I hope you have found this information to be helpful to understand the correlation of incontinence and how interventions are used to keep residents happy, safe and healthy.

As always, it is a joy and privilege to serve and care for your loved ones. Thank you for entrusting them to us!

Please feel free to contact me with any ideas, suggestions, questions or concerns. As a reminder, typically my schedule is Mon-Thurs from 8:00 am-5:00 pm.

Mary Mitzner, RN

Nurse Supervisor/Case Manager

Boulder Creek Assisted Living

Phone: (507) 337-9536



**SEASON'S
GREETINGS**

Employment Opportunities:

WANTED: Home Health Aides

(CNA Licensure Preferred)

Currently hiring for: Day, Evening, and Overnight Shifts

We are seeking staff to add to our team! The right person for this position must enjoy working with the elderly and have a compassionate understanding of their care needs. Position includes every other weekend and a holiday rotation.

Looking for a Full or Part-time Dining Staff. *If you have any questions, please contact Margaret at 507-537-2415

To Apply: Stop in to one of our locations to pick up an application or apply online at boulder-creek.org or boulderestates.org

Boulder Creek
601 Village Drive
Marshall, MN 56258

Boulder Estates
604 Village Drive
Marshall, MN 56258

Benefits include: Competitive Wages, Paid Time Off, Rewarding Work, On the Job Training, Education Reimbursement Programs, Continuing Education, Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Short Term Disability, and more! *If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer at 507-401-3606



Family Council Agenda

December 2023

Family Council Voted in November. Due to the business of the holiday season, there will be no support group or family council in December. Next Family Council Meeting/Support Group will be January 16, 2024



Live every moment to the fullest

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

facebook

Please check out our Facebook Page to see all of the latest things your loved ones have been doing.



- November 6, 2023

Brain Change and Incontinence

What causes incontinence, and what can we do to offer support more effectively?

Published by



Teepa Snow

Topics

Family/Friends

Brain Change and Incontinence

By Teepa Snow, MS, OTR/L, FAOTA and Polly Logan, PAC Team Member

Although it is a topic that many prefer not to discuss, urinary and bowel incontinence is very common when individuals are living with brain change. Many care partners who support individuals living with brain change often struggle with knowing how to best assist when this becomes an issue.

What causes incontinence, and what can we do to offer support more effectively?

The process of waste elimination is very complex. It depends on many abilities and systems, including the digestive system, the nerve pathways between the brain and the urinary/fecal systems, time awareness, physical mobility, manual dexterity, and more. The process of elimination is also very individualized, with different patterns of timing, frequency, and quantity.

Urinary and bowel incontinence can be short-term, caused by something temporary such as an acute illness or injury. Or, it can be long-term, resulting from changes in the brain due to dementia or another condition.

Since dementia often impacts the nerve pathways between the nose and the brain, many individuals may lose the ability to recognize odors of urine and feces as being something important to notice. The ability to sense wetness may be impacted, as well. So, those living with brain change may have episodes of incontinence and not be aware.

Even before dementia, it would be a good idea for everyone who is aging to consider talking about this private topic. Sharing a little about our own patterns of intake, drinking, and going to the toilet can be very helpful. Consider creating an opportunity to talk about incontinence when it is only a possibility in the future. Try out the feel of incontinence products, so you get a sense of what they are like and how they fit or work. Awareness, familiarity, and empathy can go a long way in maintaining or improving our relationships as skills and abilities start shifting.

In the earlier states of brain change, the focus is typically on *promoting continence*.



This is the process of supporting the individual so that they are able to remain in control of their elimination as much as possible. Typical supportive measures may include reminding/encouraging trips to the toilet, avoiding excessive fluid intake before bedtime, medical management of constipation or other bowel issues, and possibly the use of products to control light bladder leakage. Incontinence of bowel is rather uncommon at this phase and should be explored for other possible causes.

In this stage, it is common for support individuals to find that people living with brain change are not particularly receptive to being reminded to use the toilet. As most adults have been managing their own elimination since they were toddlers, it feels very strange to be told when to eliminate. It typically is best to avoid asking, *Do you want to use the toilet?* or *Do you need to use the toilet?*, as the individual may very well respond, *No, I don't*.

Instead, use phrases such as *Let's stop in here and just try to go*. Pointing out accidents or shaming the individual is typically ineffective and may lead to the person hiding soiled clothing for fear of being shamed. When out and about with the individual, bringing along an extra set of underwear and pants, along with a sealable plastic bag, is a supportive measure to consider.

In preparation for the further use of incontinence products, one recommendation to help people make this transition, is the use of absorbent underwear. Absorbent underwear is a more recently developed product that is quickly becoming widely

used. They look and feel like typical underwear, in a variety of styles, except that they are made of a more absorbent material and usually also contain a thin, extra-absorbent layer in the areas most likely to encounter wetness. This type of product can be exceptionally helpful for men, who are typically unaccustomed to wearing anything padded (unlike women who typically have previously experiences with pads due to menstruation or childbirth

Absorbent underwear can be incredibly helpful for getting people accustomed to wearing something other than the underwear that they have always worn, and can be very effective for light bladder leaks. You might say something like: *Say, they've developed this new type of underwear – I wear them myself sometimes, as my bladder isn't always perfect. Let's try them out and see what you think.* As urinary incontinence progresses, adding an incontinence pad to the absorbent underwear is often an effective option.

In the later states of brain change, the focus shifts to *managing incontinence*.



During the later states of brain change, individuals often further lose the ability to control and manage their own elimination. Typically, urinary incontinence occurs first, then bowel incontinence. At this stage, the focus shifts to *managing incontinence*. This may involve the use of incontinence products such as larger pads, pull-up pants or briefs, bed or chair protection, specially adapted clothing, and skincare and hygiene products.

When protection is required beyond what absorbent underwear and pads can provide, the next recommended step is pull-up pants, which have an elasticized waistband and pull on and off like underwear.

At the final stages of brain change, briefs are often used, which have tabs to make them easier to remove while an individual is laying down. Or, the choice may be made to use surface coverings that are highly absorbent, reducing the need to move the person as much during hygiene practices.

One important aspect of managing incontinence is working to avoid skin breakdown.

The ammonia in urine, combined with wetness, can easily cause skin irritation and ulceration. Good quality incontinence products wick the moisture away from the skin and also provide a barrier layer to trap in both odor and bacteria. High-quality products also hold significantly more liquid, allowing decreased frequency of changes, especially overnight when changes may be more challenging. Two examples of brands with higher-quality products are: [Seni](#) and [TENA](#).

When trying to introduce a new incontinence product to an individual living with brain change, here are a few suggestions that may improve the chances of acceptance. You may wish to let them put on the underwear/product they are used to wearing first thing in the morning. Then later, in the bathroom, hand them the new item and say something like, *here you go, try this one. The doctor wants us to try these because they help you to avoid bladder infections.* To encourage continued use, try folding the products and placing them in a drawer, if that is how the individual is used to finding their underwear. Keeping some handy in the bathroom is typically helpful, as well.

Even though managing incontinence can be a challenging endeavor, it is an important aspect of supporting an individual living with brain change. Educating yourself about the various product options, and avoiding shaming or telling the person what to do can be incredibly helpful in offering effective support.

Boulder Creek

Holiday Event Calendar



| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Nov 29th | BC Christmas Picture (wear Christmas colors) |
| Dec 4th | Making Belgium Cookies w/ Yvonne |
| Dec 5th | Celebrating St. Nicholas Day |
| Dec 7th | Santa Visits During Lunch |
| | Christmas Caroling with Norma |
| Dec 8th | Watch Movie “The Santa Claus” |
| Dec 11th | Cookie/Candy Cane Tasting |
| Dec 13th | True Light Kids Christmas Program |
| | Christmas Caroling w/ Residents |
| Dec 14th | Christmas Craft |
| | Staff Christmas Goodie Cook-off |
| Dec 15th | Family Christmas Bingo (Santa Visit) |
| | Watch Movie “It’s A Wonderful Life” |
| Dec 18th | Baking Peppermint Christmas Brownies |

Dec 20th Making Lefse w/ Mary

Christmas Cookie Decorating

Dec 21st Christmas Caroling w/ Norma

Dec 22nd Santa arrives to help with staff/tenant gift exchange.

Dec 22nd Watch Christmas Movie of Staff Choice

Dec 24th Christmas Candle Light Service w/ Jan

Dec 25th Merry Christmas!

Residents will receive Christmas Stockings and any gifts that may have been dropped off.

Watch Christmas Movies

Eat Christmas Dinner at lunch time.

Christmas Activity Packets given out

Dec 27th Christmas Caroling with the Residents

Dec 28th Snowman Craft

***Christmas Movies will be shown each night**



Community Room Reservations

- Dec 4 2-4pm New Admit PW
- Dec 6 10:30-12pm BE/BC Activities Meeting
- Dec 13 1pm Quality Meeting
- 3:30pm Nursing Meeting
- Dec 14 11am-4pm Staff Christmas Goodies Potluck
- Dec 15 CPR Class-All Day
- Dec 16 11:30-2pm Streich Family Christmas
- 5-8pm Family Council/Dementia Support Group
- Dec 23 10-2pm Egly Family Christmas
- Jan 18 Staff Christmas Fiesta Party-All Day
- Feb 4 11-3pm Maeyaert Family Christmas
- Feb 13 5-8pm Family Council/Dementia Support Group

