

# **I LOVE MY LIFE**

An essay by Tim Conroy

Ingham County Medical Care Facility (Dobie Road) Room 318-2

My life is full and worth living. The quality of life I enjoy is very high. I believe the quality of life of an individual in a nursing home is as important as other medical needs. Without a reasonable quality of life there is little motivation for nursing home residents and to keep on living. Motivation to keep on living is necessary for medical treatments to be effective.

## **Recreational therapy**

Here at Dolby Road the quality of life seems to be a priority. We have a dedicated, well staffed, complete recreational therapy department. The recreational needs of individual residents are met even when it requires a good deal of staff time. Even the maintenance department attends to quality of life needs. Representatives of the recreational therapy department frequently go to resident's individual rooms to encourage and remind residents to attend recreational activities. Nursing technicians (certified nurses aides) make sure residents can attend any and all activities they wish. Notification of activities is stressed and the recreational therapy department posts of a calendar of activities on each resident's bulletin board. The department conducts or coordinates most of the activities.

## **Nursing staff**

At Dobie Road our nursing staff is not intrusive while still meeting the needs of residents. The nursing technicians (certified nurses aides) are always cheerful, caring, polite, and attentive. Frequently, residents can bond with a nursing technician. This is especially helpful for residents who do not have friends or family near by and do not have many visitors. In this case frequently the nursing technician becomes like family. The majority of nursing technicians are very dedicated and do much more than just go through the motions of a job.

## **Dietary**

Since I am a real chow hound the quality of food is very important to me. Our dietary department goes to extremes to provide great food. They attend to every detail. The food is provided is better than that of most restaurants. The menu is constantly varied and extremely appetizing. The cooks, I call them chefs, provide a different soup every day. I really like the soup. When I first came to Dolby Road I was 50 pounds underweight now I'm 2 pounds overweight and having difficulty keeping my weight down. The dietary department is to blame for my being overweight.

## **Physical and occupational therapy**

The physical and occupational therapists were very

demanding of me but, they taught me to walk again, to use my hands, and feed myself. They are always available to answer questions. Like all staff at Workers are super problem solvers. They are available to assist residents with personal projects, physical, environmental, and emotional needs and desires. When a resident has a particular need or desire they act as liaison with various departments within the organization. They work with families to explain and teach families how to meet particular needs of a resident. They are aware and well versed in resources that resident may use or need outside of Dobie Road. They facilitate and coordinate these resources. These wonderful people are trained counselors and assist residents and/or their families by providing counseling during impossibly difficult times.

### **Housekeeping department**

Housekeeping is constantly working to keep Dobie Road immaculate. You could literally eat off the floor though that would never be permitted. They constantly clean and sanitize everything I can think of.

### **Business office**

The people in the business office are always helpful with any business or financial needs.

### **Maintenance department**

Our maintenance department is constantly repairing things and make sure the residents and staff have a safe environment. They install extra electrical outlets so fired hazardous power strips don't have to be used. Maintenance personnel even help residents with special projects.

## **Physicians**

They always have a geriatric physicians take care of residents. The physicians here are ever watchful of residents every medical need. If a treatment the physician orders is not offered at Dobie Road alternate treatment is provided off site, appointments are scheduled, and transportation is arranged.

## **Other departments**

There are many other departments that provide me with help and support that I am not even aware of.

## **Shortcoming of Dobie Road**

The nursing staff seems to be constantly reassigned to different residents. This destroys any bonds between staff and resident. I am told these constant changes are because of changes in the designation of halls or floors from long-term to short-term and vice versa. I wish there was a way they could maintain the consistency of nursing staff.

## **Cheer-leading Squad**

With everything being considered. If staffing inconsistency is the only shortcoming I can think of or have observed, Dobie Road still achieves the highest level of care possible.

For over a year I have been trying to organize a Dobie Road Cheer-leading squad consisting only of residents. No one has ever even tried out for the squad. I wonder if the requirement to tryout are too demanding since all candidates are required to do 4 cart wheels, 2 back flips, and only 1 forward flip.

I have often heard people concerned about living in a nursing or their loved one going to a nursing home. But if they are lucky enough to come to a place like Dobie Road they will be very happy and well cared for.