

# GREENWOOD HOUSE GAZETTE

FEBRUARY 2017

## Greenwood Heroes

For nearly five years, Trish O'Brien, LPN, has worked for Greenwood House (GWH) as our only External Case Manager. Trish facilitates the admission process into GWH and makes everything as easy and stream-lined as possible. By liaising between GWH and local organizations, hospitals and doctor's offices, Trish simplifies the process of admitting new residents into GWH and removes a lot of stress from family members.

When local doctors and hospitals have patients that are in need of our care, the first person they speak with is Trish. This is where her job begins. She schedules a visit with the patient and performs an assessment which determines if he/she would be a good fit for GWH and if we are a good fit for him/her. She makes arrangements with insurance companies, family members, doctors and the resident to ensure that move-in day runs effortlessly. She also assists family members in filling out paperwork and assuring that they are meeting all of the admission requirements.

Her job does not end after a resident is admitted. She maintains strong relationships with residents and family members during their time here and follows up with her short-term rehabilitation patients on a weekly basis. If a resident goes to the hospital, she visits them and evaluates the level of care that he/she is receiving. She is truly an advocate for all of our residents.

Trish loves coming to work each day because she knows that her work is benefitting family members and residents greatly. If she is informed that someone is unhappy, she does everything she can to resolve the issue. She said, "I don't hold back when it comes to resident needs." Though no longer a floor nurse, Trish still has a hand in providing care for residents and forms very special bonds with them and their families.

Trish has the unique perspective of not only being a staff member, but a family member as well. In the spring of 2016, Trish's father was admitted to GWH for three weeks for short-term rehabilitation. After having a loved one here, Trish is even more passionate about the exceptional



level of care that we provide. "Everyone was so involved in his care. I left here at night knowing that I did not have to worry about him. His stay here re-affirmed everything that I already knew and loved about working here."

Trish is a mascot of sorts- honored to represent our organization and all that we do. "Greenwood House really provides the best care in the area and our standards are above and beyond. I would not promote something that I do not believe in and I would not put someone else's parents in a place where I would not put my own."

Since she was a young girl, Trish knew she wanted to be a nurse. She spent much of her childhood caring for her sick grandmother, which inspired her to help the elderly in the community. She graduated as an LPN from Mercer County Health Occupation Center in 1986.

For the first eleven years of her career, she worked as a floor nurse in a local nursing facility. She then became the head of a Sub-Acute Rehabilitation Unit and discovered that receiving new admissions was a very difficult process. She knew that there had to be an easier way. She began to assess all potential new residents before they came in and her position quickly transformed from floor nurse to External Case Manager. She has worked in this field for twenty years and is the first person to have this position at Greenwood House.

Thank you Trish for being the first friendly face that residents and family members see at Greenwood House.



Greenwood House

## Purim with PJ Library!

Join a multigenerational celebration of Purim hosted in collaboration with the PJ Library, a partner organization of the Jewish Federation of Princeton Mercer Bucks. On March 5, at 2 PM at the Abrams Assisted Living Residence enjoy an afternoon of crafts, treats, storytelling and festivities. **Space is limited. Please register with Erica Lewanda at [elewanda@jewishpmb.org](mailto:elewanda@jewishpmb.org).**

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## Have You Had The Conversation?

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute and Jewish Family and Children's Service of Greater Mercer County are sponsoring a kosher lunch followed by a discussion led by Janet Hayden, LCSW, Administrator, Greenwood House Homecare/Hospice, and the film screening of "The Bucket List" to highlight the importance of discussing your end-of-life wishes with friends, family and your doctors.

**Tuesday, February 21, 2017 • 11:30 am-2:00 pm**  
**Beth El Synagogue • 50 Maple Stream Road, East Windsor, NJ**

R.S.V.P. to Beth Englezos at JFCS by **Thursday, February 16, 2017**  
at [bethe@jfcsonline.org](mailto:bethe@jfcsonline.org) or 609.987.8100 ext. 126.

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## Hear To Understand

Our new Audiologist, Olivia Van Wagner, MA, shares tips for interacting with those experiencing hearing loss:

1. It is important to understand that hearing loss does not just affect volume (audibility) but also understanding and clarity (intelligibility) which is processed through the auditory cortex.
2. If you find that your loved one wears hearing aids but still cannot understand you, it does not necessarily mean the hearing aids are not working. When a person has normal hearing, their auditory cortex is able to differentiate between speech and background noise. As the cortex ages, it loses some of its ability to do this. Hearing aids will increase all sound (including background noise), not just speech, which can be confusing for someone whose cortex is not fully functioning.
3. It is important to use basic communication for your loved one with hearing loss. Speak with them face to face, reduce as much background noise as possible, and get his/her attention before you begin speaking. You can also introduce your topic before you make your comments. Though this is not how we normally speak, it can be much easier for you loved one to follow a "story format."
4. If your loved one has not heard what you said, do not repeat it back to them word for word. Try re-stating your words. Different ways of saying things may be easier for him/her to understand.
5. Make sure your loved one is wearing his/her hearing aids on a regular basis. Hearing aids are not just a "quick fix" that can be used as needed. It takes time, sometimes 3-5 days, for the brain to adjust to hearing with aids. They will work much more effectively if worn on a regular basis.

Olivia regularly evaluates of all of our residents with hearing loss and ensures that their aids are functioning properly.

Feel free to contact her with questions or concerns at [ovanwagner@gmail.com](mailto:ovanwagner@gmail.com) or 609.954.8417. **Stay tuned for an upcoming family session about dealing with hearing loss and hearing aids.**