

# FAMILY UPDATE



May 5, 2022

## COVID-19 update

The MP2 outbreak is ongoing. At present we have 12 cases, though affected residents are doing well. Due to new cases this week the outbreak will continue for at least 14 more days.

## WSO production available to watch

Manitoba Remembers: A Covid Elegy is available to [watch free online](#) until May 28. The April 28 performance by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and a wide range of Winnipeg artists also includes health-care workers and others sharing their stories, including our very own resident care manager Sarah Enzberger at the 29:30-minute mark and again close to the 32-minute mark. The entire presentation is an artistic reflection on how the pandemic impacted people.

## Honouring our residents

Supporting residents and families during the end-of-life process is important to us, and we are always looking for ways to do it well. For example, in the last update you read that we have started placing a violet on the door of a dying resident to remind staff and others that we need to be mindful around the room of that resident.

Another thing we thought of was to have a special covering created to place over residents as they depart their room and the building on a funeral home stretcher, and we decided on using a quilt.



Aliyah from social work, left, and Miriam from spiritual health, hold up the quilt created by Judy Morningstar.

A quilt is something I knew I could get my hands on. My mom, Judy Taylor, was an avid quilter, and through her I had connections to the quilting community. My mom died suddenly in 2018 at the age of 72. She was vibrant and healthy, but a health event ended her life quickly.

I felt like a quilt for our residents would be a way for me to honour my mom and our residents. When observing residents and families in Misericordia Place I often wonder what it would have been like to have my mom live in a PCH. She is always in the back of my head when we need to make decisions that will affect our residents and families. I feel she gives me a clear perspective on what we need to do to add comfort and to strive further to make things better.

My mom was creative and would have loved to be involved to making a quilt, but the next best person was her long-time friend, Judy Morningstar. Judy is a well-known quilter, hailing from Goodlands, Manitoba, and she was thrilled to be asked and to make the quilt. She tells story of showing the quilt to her colleagues and friends, many of whom were brought to tears at the thought of being wrapped in the quilt on their final journey.

The quilt to me shows that our resident was loved, was deserving, and will be remembered. It is an honour to be involved in our residents' and families' lives, and this is another way to show that honour. The quilt is also filled with symbols of Misericordia. Can you spot them?

### **Power of music**

I have attached a page from the Catholic Health Association of Manitoba newsletter at the end of this update that talks about the healing power of music for caregivers and those they are caregiving. I hope you find some inspiration in it.

Yours sincerely, and Happy Mother's Day!



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Music as Medicine

# THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC

Humans have used music since the beginning of time for many different purposes, including as a form of communication, as healing and as a way to connect with the sacred. Instruments and sounds have the ability to transport us, to open our imagination and even move us into action. The effects of music are tremendously valuable to us as individuals and as caregivers.

Music creates a connection and soothes the soul like nothing else can: it opens our minds and brightens our spirits.

Sometimes have you found yourself at a loss? Words are not always easy to find, whether that's in formulating a prayer, conversing with our loved one or putting ourselves in a better mood.

Music is a wonderful tool to connect with the person you care for. It also is a powerful way to reduce stress and lower anxiety - theirs and yours.

Through music a caregiver can pray, relieve stress, and feel more alive and happy. A caregiver can use music to create bonds with their loved one, as a means of recalling memories, of breaking up the monotony of the day or as a way to spiritually connect.

For seniors with Alzheimer's and dementia, listening to music can be incredibly beneficial. A study by the University of Miami School of Medicine found that music therapy increased the levels of melatonin, serotonin, norepinephrine, epinephrine, and prolactin in patients

with Alzheimer's. *Why is this important? Those 'feel good' brain chemicals are associated with improved mood, as well as reduced stress and agitation. This clip shows the impact of music on a gentleman with Alzheimer:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HLEr-zP3fc>

We need to look no further than our everyday experiences to see that music is magical. It opens for us, and the ones for whom we care, glimpses of God's existence in the here-and-now. **Music has the power to create an experience which goes beyond what words alone can do.** The effects of music are tremendously valuable to caregivers and to those we care for. Remember that we can tap into the power of music to:

### *Improve our mental and physical health.*

Science has proven that singing, dancing, and smiling along with music improves brain and body functions. Music can help calm your nerves, shift your mood, and turn your attention to something that is more positive.

**Overcome resistance to an activity.** Whether it's waking up, gathering the energy to run just one more chore or getting your loved one to dress or take a shower, upbeat (or favorite) music can be used to provide the motivation and spur the movement required.

**Pray when we are too exhausted or can't find the words.** Listening to a song that contains messages of faith, is a wonderful way to pray. Sometimes, through a hymn or contemporary Christian song, we hear words that trigger a prayer within our hearts.

Make it an intention to look for ways to incorporate music into your caregiving days. Use it with your loved one or someone you care for. And use it for yourself.

