

Respite Care on the North Shore

GUEST POST BY JESSICA ROSENFELD, CEDARVIEW LODGE SOCIAL WORKER



If you read anything about the nature of caregiving for someone close to you, it is guaranteed that it will include assertions on the importance of regular breaks for the caregiver. Take good care for yourself, be compassionate towards yourself, sleep well and eat well, exercise...all great advice that often seems far removed from your day to day reality.

The physical, emotional and financial roller coaster of caring for someone you love is exhausting and there are times when you simply need a complete break from it all.

Respite beds are a community resource, subsidized by Vancouver Coastal Health. These beds provide primary carers with the opportunity to take a rest, go on holiday or maybe go for their own surgery and recovery, while their loved one is looked after by

trained nurses and Registered Care Aides in a comfortable residential facility. Our rooms at Cedarview Lodge are private, bright and overlook pretty gardens which are easily accessible.

If you are looking after your spouse, parent, close friend or relative and are feeling drained, then respite is definitely worth considering.

You may be desperate to see someone out of town, or be wanting to escape on your own for a while. Having a break of several days or more can provide you with the extra boost to be able to continue doing the important care work that you do for a bit longer – until the next planned break. Many of the carers who bring their family member or friend into respite say that they could not keep going if they didn't know that they had this break to look forward to. The break helps them re-charge their own batteries and to take care of things that are important to them.

“Life is now. There was never a time when your life was not now, nor will there ever be” – *Eckhart Tolle*

The thought of relinquishing care and responsibilities to someone else can be very anxiety provoking – for both the carer and the one receiving care. As with many things in life, the more information you have ahead of time the more prepared and confident you feel about what you are doing.

Even if you don't think that you are quite ready to use the respite service, but think that maybe it will be relevant in a few months or next year, then arrange a tour.

Come and visit us to see what the facility and the care is like. Tours information is below. Bring a friend or relative along with you so that you have someone to discuss it with afterwards. If you think it is beneficial then bring your loved one along too. If

you are not sure whether this is a good idea you can discuss this with your Case Manager or call me (Jessica) at Cedarview Lodge for some advice.

Many of our respite residents return, in fact we have some very familiar respite residents who have stayed with us on numerous occasions. We love to have people back here and find that the transition for them and their families gets easier.

One wife of a respite resident told me that she finds the staff very friendly and accommodating towards her husband.

She has been able to go on one holiday and is now planning another, and she recommends doing a tour beforehand in order to know what to expect and dispel fears. Her husband agreed that the staff are very kind.

He said that the first time he came it was hard venturing into the unknown but that it worked out well for him, and that now that he 'knows the drill' it is a lot easier.

Another respite resident noted that it is helpful to bring in a few items from home to help her feel more 'at home' and that she feels extremely well looked after here and enjoys the activities that are offered.

Many of us have a lot of negative images and thoughts about residential care, and coming into a facility – even just for a tour – can be a scary prospect with many mixed emotions. It is a good idea to acknowledge those feelings, even discuss them with your family, friends or case manager.

I believe that you will feel much more confident about using respite care after seeing our facility and meeting with staff.

Respite residential care at Cedarview Lodge is an affordable resource. The daily rate of around \$32 is for full board in a private room and includes all housekeeping, laundry, daily care and nursing. If you are thinking that long term care may be something you will have to consider in the future then respite care can be a great way for everyone involved to ‘test the water’ and begin that journey of finding out a bit more about what it is like to live elsewhere. Some families have seen that, for their family member, spending time with more people and with regular programs on offer can provide the positive stimulation that is sometimes hard to find at home. Given this, respite care can offer some individuals a new lease of life.

Cedarview Lodge is the only facility on the North Shore that offers subsidized respite care:

- We have 6 respite beds in single rooms at a cost of \$32.50 a day.
- Respite is available for up to 30 days a year, with a minimum 7 day stay at a time. Tours are on Wednesdays at 1.30pm and need to be booked in advance. Please call Jessica at 604 904 6421 to book a tour.
- Respite bookings are arranged through your Case Manager. If you would like to request a Case Manager please call 604 986 7111.
- Visit the website: <http://www.vch.ca/locations-and-services/find-health-services/residential-care/north-and-west-vancouver-residential-care/cedarview-lodge/>