



# FRIENDS OF THE RUSSIAN BILINGUAL SERVICES PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

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## Staying Engaged and Connected

It has been exactly five years when we came up with the idea of starting a family newsletter with the information and updates on the Bilingual Russian Program and Hebrew Senior Life. Never did we imagine that it would become such an important connection among our patients, families, staff and the community at large. The Newsletter is a wonderful tool for information sharing and providing you with a glimpse into the life of your loved ones and showcasing our remarkable staff. All of these became so much more important now when all other traditional ways of communication are restricted due to the pandemic.

While it has been a very difficult period of time, we want you to know that life continues to improve here in Roslindale. Over the last months we have been doing our best to reintroduce programming and activities that have always been so vital for those who live here. They help our dear patients/your family members combat any sense of isolation so that they preserve sense of purpose and stay engaged. We have made a lot of progress by allowing visits and bringing back small group programs. Our staff works hard to creatively utilize technology: broadcasting programming from the Synagogue to the floors, continuing with FaceTime calls and Telehealth. With the cold weather upon us, we will do our best to accommodate indoor visits following the Department of Public Health guidelines. Your patience and understanding with this process are much appreciated. Our number one goal is to keep patients and staff safe while supporting the family connections that are so important for the overall well-being of your loved ones.

**Alexandra Dashevskaya**, Director, Russian Bilingual Services Program.



## OUR FEATURED STAFF: **Elena Batchilo, RN**



Elena is originally from Minsk, Belorussia. She is trilingual: Elena speaks Russian, Lithuanian from childhood, and English, which she learned on her own so well that was able to do technical translations. Elena started working at HRC in 2003 as a Nursing Assistant. It was quite a leap from what she did before, but Elena needed a job to support her family. In a very short while it became clear that she was ready for a new career in nursing. She smiles and says, "Alexandra convinced me that job security was my number one priority and that a nursing degree would give me just that." In addition, she had always been interested in medicine and science, so that was a natural fit.

Elena has always been a quick learner. In almost no time she earned her Bachelor's Degree in

Nursing. She advanced from a Nursing Assistant to Registered Nurse to a Charge Nurse position, where she oversees care for 62 patients and has a team of RNs and PCAs reporting to her. Team management is a challenge but Elena meets it head on. She loves her evening shift, and enjoys great relationships with her co-workers who appreciate her fairness. Being on the same page with the staff, Elena is able to prioritize, use systematic approach, and provide help and advice when needed. Elena prizes quality and teamwork and expects the same of her team.

Elena finds that working for the Russian Program is very gratifying. She acknowledges that being bicultural and bilingual helps her find the best approach to providing high-quality care to her patients.

## OUR FEATURED STAFF: **Vasilina Karyakin**

Vasilina is honored to work at Hebrew Rehabilitation Center. Every day she makes a difference improving patients' quality of life by creating a comfortable environment for them. She feels that people have entrusted her and other staff members with taking care of their loved ones' lives and that nothing can be more important than this. She shares, "A person always remains a person in whatever state he/she is, no matter how constrained his/her body or consciousness is. The soul is the center of everyone's personality and it remains in a body to the end. When I read or sing to my patients, I appeal to their soul. I look into their soul's eyes and warm it with

my love." Vasilina says that it is especially important to her patients on the Memory Care Unit, so they feel that they are needed and have a loving support.

Vasilina is proud to be part of the Life Enhancement Team at HRC. It is also essential to her that HRC is a non-profit organization. She sees that the organization invests in a constant improvement of patients' services and growth for staff. Vasilina's dream is to find a way to maintain a patient's identity and personality for the rest of his/her life. She is confident that her dream will come true and believes that she is going in the right direction in her life and career.



## OUR FEATURED PATIENT: **Yelizaveta Pyatkevich**



Yelizaveta (Lisa) was getting too weak to live at home independently and was admitted to the Russian Program at HRC where she immediately felt at home among her own. Lisa used to perform for her friends and family playing the piano. Now she has to pause before pressing the piano keys. Sometimes she wakes up at night and reminisces about, Duke Ellington, Petr Leschenko, Frank Sinatra, and others. She shares that once she recalls the musician's name, the melodies come to mind and her hands want to play again. "At HRC I play the piano, which I wasn't able to do in any other facility before.

Here I have a grateful audience. My friends enjoy listening to my music. It makes them happy and cheers me up. I also enjoy little chats with my former neighbors who are here with me."

Yelizaveta is happy that she is cared for at HRC. She says, "It's wonderful here. I am thankful for the care, attention, patience, and time that staff dedicate to me. I appreciate the opportunity to play the piano and enjoy fresh air in the yard. It's very important to me! I wish everyone stays healthy and hope that pandemic ends soon."

## STAYING ENGAGED...

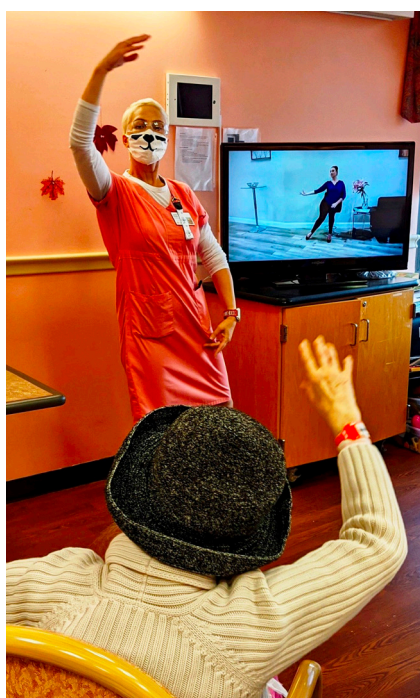
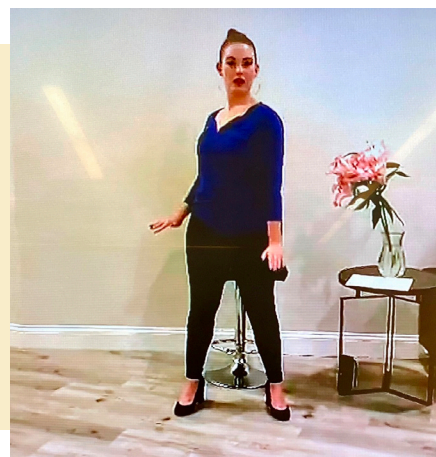
### Personal Touch Via Technology

Our expressive therapies department provides virtual individual music therapy sessions to those who may need additional support to stay engaged and maintain a positive outlook. Patients meet one-on-one via Face time or Skype with a licensed therapist, who sits at the piano while patients stay in the comfort of their room. They sing their favorite songs and participate in breathing and vocal chords exercises. The use of familiar melodies triggers long-term memory and stimulates verbal self-expression.

Therapists tailor the song choice to each individual patient. Participants are also encouraged to make their own choices and to go “down memory lane.” Those who prefer classical music are also offered individually-created playlists which are played off an iPod. Patients often report an improvement in their mood and energy level following each session. Several have even admitted that working on their song repertoire in between sessions helps them to better manage their time.



My name is Vivienne and I have been a dancer my whole life. When I started working at Hebrew Rehabilitation Center, I wanted to bring light and vibrant energy to the patients. Then when the pandemic hit, I started thinking about ways this could happen virtually. Because I know how important it is for people of all ages to enjoy movement and familiar music, we are now broadcasting a dance movement class and a tutorial featuring a new dance every week. The patients are able to move along with me, watch a performance of the dance, and listen to familiar music. I strongly believe that during this tough year, music, laughter, and movement will be what helps us all prevail!



**Enjoying  
the weather!!**

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## Staying Connected!

"I call my Mom every evening and she always asks when I would come to visit her. We all need to have personal communication with those who are dear to us. After family visits were resumed with all the precautions, I am able not only to talk to Mom, but to show her the pictures of her grandchildren and great grandchildren on iPad. It makes her really happy. We are very grateful to the administration and staff of HRC for giving us this opportunity."



"The importance of a personal visit cannot be underestimated. It is not only my impression. My conversations with other patients' relatives confirm that everybody is enormously happy with the well-organized opportunity of seeing their loved ones. I am certain that being with my mother in person helps her avoid depression and has an amazing positive effect on her well-being."



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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

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