

How to Visit Your Loved One in a Nursing Home:

- 1** Call and ask what time is convenient for you to visit. The staff may provide you with the best times to come when the resident is more receptive to company. You would not want to interrupt meals or other regularly scheduled events. You are welcome to eat a meal with your loved one for a reasonable charge. Please notify a staff member if you would like to be a guest for a meal.
- 2** Knock before entering their room. Remember to treat it as if you were visiting them at their own home.
- 3** Be sure to be honest with your loved one about their other family members or friends. It is important they are included in details as they were when they lived independently.
- 4** Look beyond their physical impairments, confusion and disorientation. Simple, loving gestures like holding hands and looking into their eyes really makes a difference. You can probably remember all of the stories that they love to tell, but listen intently as if it is the first time you have heard it. They often come to life when telling about their life experiences.
- 5** Bring along their favorite music or movies. Think about the activities they enjoyed before becoming a resident. Try to incorporate some of these things into your visits.
- 6** Share photographs and home movies. Help them prepare letters to other family members. Doing these things will help maintain the relationship with your loved one and keep them involved in family life events.
- 7** Encourage your loved one to be involved in activities offered at the nursing home. Bethany provides a monthly calendar of events to each resident and it is also available on the website. Look over these events and help them get excited about participating in them.
- 8** If their health permits, take your loved one out of the nursing home for an afternoon. If they grew up in town, take them by some of their favorite spots in the area and let them tell you stories about what they remember about

these places. Seeing the places might spark memories and leave a feeling of contentment.

- 9 Do not over visit. Be sure to leave time for yourself and for them to establish their own routine and relationships with their fellow residents.