

November 2016

In This Issue

- Community Inclusion at Communicare
- Dinners at Utica Lodge
- Communicare Communications Studio
- Communicare on Canvas
- Clinician's Column

Words to Live By

“Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm possible!'” -Audrey Hepburn

Communicare in the Community

Our members realize how important it is to give back to the communities in which they live. This year we participated in “Operation Good Cheer”, a statewide program that matches children in need with those in a position to provide some Christmas cheer. Communicare adopted a two-year-old girl and members had fun budgeting for gifts and shopping for them. Gifts aren't complete until they are wrapped, so we did that too.



Community Inclusion at Communicare

It's who we are! Our members can be found accessing the community every day. Communicare's outings are group activities like trips to the movies, a museum, or participating in a service project. Also, a certain magic happens when our members participate in an outing in the community with staff one on one. It may be cup of coffee at the neighborhood barista, lunch at their favorite deli, or a little pampering with a pedicure. Our outings, whether in a large group or one on one, provide cognitive rehabilitation outside of the traditional therapy schedule.



Dinners at Utica Lodge

Weekly on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5-7 pm Communicare Michigan hosts dinner for our members as part of the Recreation Program. This is community inclusion at its finest. Cognitive therapy related to meal prep, following a recipe, serving and social skills are developed while having fun. Dining out in the community or preparing healthy meals can be overwhelming for TBI survivors due to overstimulation or memory recall issues. Our members are treated to a dinner out in the community or a delicious home cooked meal where cognitive rehabilitation takes place in a relaxed atmosphere.



Communicare Communications Studio

In Utica, at the *Communicare Communications Studio*, members continue to explore the online “community” by practicing safe social media as they create blogs, navigate Facebook and Google searches, as well as learn about creating websites. Employment searches, mock interviews and resume development are also practiced as part of Occupational Therapy.

Work on the Communicare Cookbook is in full swing. Recipes were collected all fall from members and staff. Now we are having fun working with the clinical team on testing the recipes out. Members are cooking each other's recipes, taking pictures of the prepared recipe and offering reviews.

The *Communicare Communications Studio* plays host to our holiday gatherings. Our Day Program staff loves to spoil our members with a Thanksgiving feast. Our Thanksgiving celebration was held the Friday before the actual holiday on a very sunny and warm day. The weather was more welcoming than when we held our summer picnic! Members ate outside and played bag toss-In NOVEMBER! Only in Michigan!



Communicare on Canvas

Wreaths, wreaths, wreaths, everywhere! The studio is covered in ribbons and bows. Members have been creating gorgeous winter and holiday themed wreaths using wire frames and Deco-Mesh. Four large wreaths were donated to the Rochester Festival of Trees. The Festival of Trees is the city's fundraiser for the Big Bright Light Show.



Twenty additional wreaths were created as gifts for friends of Communicare; recipients have been impressed with the creativity and craftsmanship of these gorgeous wreaths.



It hasn't been all work at the studio. Members have been getting into the holiday spirit by trying to impress each other with their baking skills. The smell of cookies and pies is lingering throughout the studio.

Day Program Locations

Multi-Disciplinary Outpatient
Therapy Facility
40800 Woodward Avenue
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304

Communicare on Canvas Art
Studio
426 W. University Drive
Rochester, MI 48307

Communicare Communications
Studio at Utica Lodge
44612 Davis
Utica, MI 48317

Contact Information

PO Box 2712
Birmingham, MI 48012
Phone – (248) 291-8380
Fax – (248) 792-6718

Email:

info@communicaremichigan.com

Website:

www.communicaremichigan.com

Find us on Facebook at:

Communicare Michigan LLC

Clinician's Column



Word finding difficulty is a common challenge for individuals who have acquired a traumatic brain injury. This issue can present itself in a number of ways and situations. Some people may have trouble with requesting common objects, such as asking for a spoon or a fork (anomia). Others, word finding presents itself in more subtle ways, such as when you are having a conversation with someone and, ‘just can’t find the right word’ to describe what you want to say. Whether your word finding difficulties occur more frequently, or occasionally, it is always good to schedule an evaluation with a Speech and Language Pathologist to see if there is potential for correcting or improving this condition. Some common, ‘tricks of the trade’ that someone may be able to utilize while they are awaiting their evaluation would be:

- 1). Talk around the word or describe it in a different way. Let’s say you want to request an apple, but cannot think of the word, ‘apple’. You could say, “it’s red, it’s a fruit, you can make pie with it, it’s the piece of fruit on the counter. Think about an object’s semantic features. Where is it located, what does it look like, or what do you do with it?”
 - 2). Give yourself some time. Sometimes, all people need is a brief moment to slow down, and the word will come. Time pressure may cause anxiety which will make word finding difficulties worse. It’s okay to come back to a topic at a later time.
 - 3). Start with letters of the alphabet and work your way through. Does it start with an A, does it start with a B, etc.
 - 4). Draw it! Sometimes, the simple act of beginning to draw something out, or starting to write a word down, will help the word pop into your mind. Keep a small notebook handy for these types of situations.
 - 5). Gestures. If a word continues to evade you, if it’s in the room, point to it. If it’s something more complicated, can you, ‘act it out?’
 - 6). Substitute the word you want with a similar word, or even try saying the antonym or, ‘opposite’ of the word you want. Sometimes, saying the opposite word will make the word you want come to you.
 - 7). If word finding continues to be challenging, work with a trained Speech Pathologist to teach you and your loved ones more strategies on how to provide cuing to make the words flow more freely during conversation.
- One last tip: Avoid letting others speak for you. Nobody likes having words placed in their mouth! The best thing you can do for a healing brain is to continue to work on the areas that have been affected by your injury. It is important to let family and friends know that the best thing they can do to help, is to support your use of the above mentioned strategies and allow you to speak for yourself.

--Mary Jo Armstrong, MA CCC-SLP