

## And the Season is Finally Here

It's been slow in coming, but the weather this week leaves no doubt that the transition to autumn has fully arrived. And the slowly resolving aches and congestion in my body make it very clear to me that *cold season* has arrived as well. I have plenty of reports in my box of residents suffering with symptoms too. I hope that by now all have received their annual flu vaccine. And as I do every year at this time I write to remind- the most fundamental way to prevent the spread of colds and flu is to wash hands often. There is hand sanitizer in dispensers spread throughout the INN which is easy and effective. Of course, please be conscientious about protecting others when you do have cough and other symptoms. It's best to stay home when you have a fever, but don't suffer in silence. Let family, friends or Wellness staff know when you come down with something so they can have the pleasure of nagging, I mean keeping a loving eye on by now you!

## Wellness 101

With the addition of Nurse Tammie to our Enhanced Living Care team, I have the time to refocus on our fundamental Wellness Support program. The nurses at the INN are busy meeting their residents and working together with them in assessments and Care Plan creation. These plans identify how and when services might help a resident live life at Lathrop more fully and in alignment with their goals. The Wellness approach is based on assessment and goal setting. It's fair to say that for most the goal is to live long and well. And though each may define "living well" differently, there are basic agreements about what a balanced life looks like at any age and plenty of research to support what's most essential as we age. For me, the essential aspect of the latter is having the quality of *resilience*, the ability to adjust to the changes that we know will come.

What we offer at Lathrop is support and hopefully access to many tools for you to have a Wellness Plan of your own design. I'll write more in coming weeks to review our *Six Dimensions of Wellness* model. But for now I'll remind that the core of the program we've developed for independent residents is the Annual Wellness Review. Each month I send out invitations for residents to sit with me to reflect together on how life has been for them in the year past and look for ways in which new energy and supportive changes might be made going forward in service of current life goals. In Independent Living this is a service that is available but not obligatory. I am hoping you will take advantage of the opportunity, and I hope that you have found the conversations and feedback useful.

Whether or not I or the other members of the Wellness team are part of your process, what is essential is that folks commit to regular and honest self-reflection about what's most important. That becomes the heart of your wellness plan. The choices that arise from that are varied, but hopefully serve to keep you engaged, active and vital! You needn't wait for an invitation; and if you've chosen to defer until the next round and life throws you a curve, I am always available to schedule a time to talk. First we develop a plan. Putting it in action and keeping it up, let's call that *Wellness and the Community Spirit*, an upper division course.