

Tips on Visiting Friends and Relatives in Glenaulin



Maintaining ties with friends and family helps our residents to know that their important relationships will continue just as they did outside Glenaulin.

As you make plans to visit someone living in Glenaulin, remember that this is that person's home, and you should show the same respect you showed when the person lived outside Glenaulin.

If you are coming and want to ring ahead then we can tell the person of your arrival and he or she will have that visit to look forward to, which extends the pleasure.

We welcome visitors at all times to Glenaulin. Please be patient with us around mealtimes as there is approximately 80 people dining here each mealtime. If you would like to join your loved one for a meal please let us know. Regarding treats and goodies, we all love them from time to time. Please check with the care assistant or nurse before giving out sweets etc as someone may be on a special diet or may find some treats difficult to swallow.

Planning a visit

Some people feel that they don't know what to do during a visit to Glenaulin. In this case, simply ask yourself what activities you enjoyed with this person outside Glenaulin. Did you listen to music together? Did you play cards? Did you watch old movies? There is no reason you can't continue to share these same activities here. There are also many other activities that you can try to help make visits rich and interesting:

- If you video family events - ceremonies, communion, weddings, school plays etc. let us know and we can view them on one of our new TVs with USB hook-ups. Together we can make arrangements to show the videos to your loved one if he or she cannot attend these events. This will give him or her a better sense of contact with family and the outside world. Showing your loved one family photographs will serve the same purpose.

- One idea which is always very therapeutic is to bring the family pet to Glenaulin. The benefits to the elderly of contact with animals are widely acknowledged. Seeing the family pet would be especially uplifting. Do let us know and we can organise things here.



- Treat a female resident to a manicure or fix her hair. This sort of physical contact is very important to Glenaulin's residents. Your acknowledgement of her concerns about her physical appearance will mean a great deal as well.

- Elderly people often have difficulty writing letters. You can have a very productive visit by taking dictation from your loved one writing a letter to someone they miss or don't see very much. He or she will most certainly receive mail in return, which he or she will cherish more than you can imagine.



- If your loved one is a fan of games, bring along your checkers or chess set, scrabble board, or deck of cards. If you're ever at a loss for ideas, check with any of the activity team. We can provide you with a whole list of ideas and possibly materials with which to work.



Who Should Visit?

Anyone who was important to the resident outside the Glenaulin should visit him or her in Glenaulin, children included. Young children rarely react negatively to aging or sick individuals. On the other hand, teenagers and older children may need some time to adjust. Staff members will help this process.



There is a variety activity items for young children which you might like to avail of during your time here. It keeps every(little)body happy and occupied while the grownups are chatting.

Communicating with Residents with Dementia

Below are some pointers from WI Department of Health and Family Services "Strategies for Initiating Meaningful, Quality Home Visits with People Who Have Dementia"

Be calm, patient and don't interrupt; be focused on the present and all of the possibilities that you have to communicate meaningfully right now.

Read facial expressions and gestures, for they are likely to reveal more than the person's words; gestures may replace forgotten words.

Enter their world with them. Be an actor in their "play." Remember that whatever they are expressing is actually where they are in time.

(Their past is their present, the present is their future, and the future doesn't exist because they can't store memory.)

Offer comfort and reassurance especially when the person is having difficulty expressing self; offer praise for success in accomplishment (e.g., completing a thought, reciprocating in an activity).

Offer best guess if you don't understand what is said and the person is becoming agitated. Try again if they say "no" to a guess.

Reminiscence is a key ingredient for success. Do things to initiate fond memories such as humming a favorite song, talking about a pet, offering a familiar photo or object for a story. Smells, taste and touch are also strong memory triggers.

Confabulating serves to fill gaps in memory. Persons with dementia may make assertions that are not true to cover for memory loss. Trying to argue someone out of such beliefs is usually futile because the person is not lying.

Refusal to cooperate may be due to sadness, anger, frustration, embarrassment, anxiety. Step back calmly to previous activity and assure the person that he/she is safe.



We have a full timetable of activities which happen every week, such as the Bingo on Wednesdays, Sing a longs on Monday and Thursdays, baking on Thursday afternoons, The Glenaulin shop, Siel Bleu on Tuesdays etc. Please feel free to join in and take part at any time.

We send out monthly letters to family members with dates, times and details of all upcoming events. Everyone loves when there's a big show of family and friends, if you don't received this yourself please let us know at reception and we can post or email it to you.

Health and Safety for All

We do ask for your cooperation at all times towards our health and safety and infection control guidelines. Please refrain for visiting if you have any symptoms of flu until 48 hours symptom free have elapsed. Please always hand sanitisers when coming in and leaving Glenaulin these are clearly signposted as you sign in at reception.

There's always a lot happening at Glenaulin. Looking forward to seeing you as you visit us again!

Many thanks and we hope you enjoy your visits to Glenaulin

Orla Quigg, Director of Nursing & Karen Brett, Activities Manager