

Report on the 2nd ARRC Webinar, July 26, 2023

The second ARRC Webinar was hosted by Penny MacCourt on July 26, 2023. The presenter was Jenna Johnstone, MA, CTRS, the B. C. Therapeutic Recreation Association Co-President and Director of Education. Twenty-seven people were in attendance for this webinar and some thought-provoking questions were posed by audience members during the Q & A period.

Jenna began her clear and persuasive presentation by describing the person-centred nature of recreation therapy in long-term care – recreation personnel work collaboratively with residents to identify their strengths and needs. She also shared valuable lessons learned from front line care staff who saw the negative impact of the pandemic on quality of resident life. Meaningful and poignant quotes from caregiving staff gave voice to the difficulties people and organizations faced.

Jenna's presentation defined the negative outcomes of COVID-19 as residents were challenged by isolation resulting from restrictions implemented to lower risk of infection. For example, during this period, large group activities were cancelled. Church services could not be held.

However, as recreation staff began to re-focus and pivot, navigating the new environment, good things started to happen. Entertainers who couldn't come into the building began to sing outside the facility. 1:1 activities were offered. Staff increased their use of technology, for example WiFi, and ipads for virtual visits with family.

In conclusion, Jenna reviewed several "calls to action" and shared research study citations. Penny concluded the Webinar with an overview of ARRC activities and vision, sharing ways for participants to get involved. The next Webinar presentation will be held at 7:00 p.m. on August 23rd and is entitled "What for Dinner? Hoping for the Best". Future Webinar dates: October 25, November 22, 2023, and January 10 and February 7, 2024. The link is available from arrcbc@shaw.ca

ARRC thanks Jenna for an excellent presentation. Thanks also to Penny for hosting and to everyone who attended. Best wishes for a great summer!