

MHA Providing Medicaid Subsidized Daily Living Assistance & Medical Care for Disabled Srs.

MILLVILLE — The mood was quietly expectant at a recent Wellness Clinic sponsored by the Millville Housing Authority's Assisted Living Program, Riverview West location. As usual, many residents were patiently waiting their turn to be examined during the monthly clinic.

ALP Administrator Nancy Thompson, R.N., said the response at the events is always very strong.

"We expect a good turnout at our clinics, and we are never disappointed," Thompson said. "We provide comprehensive services for our clients, including RN assessment, blood pressure and pulse checks, and weigh-ins, and we also sit down one-on-one with each client to discuss individual medical conditions."

Thompson added that even if clients are unable to attend the Wellness Clinic, staff will follow up with them to ensure there are no problems that need immediate attention.

One of the ALP clients, Regina Chambers, was happy to chat about her experience.

"The medical personnel take very good care of us," she enthused.

Chambers, 85, has been an ALP resident for three years, and has many reasons to recommend it.

"I have my own private apartment," she said, "and the staff check on me twice a day."

Thompson emphasized that safety checks are completed on all three shifts for ALP participants.

Chambers explained that she has the freedom to come and go as she pleases, always careful to sign in and out so the management knows her whereabouts. She also noted that residents may have visitors at any time, also with a sign-in and out requirement for safety.

Thompson said that ALP residents have the opportunity to join the group's monthly social club, which charges dues and offers door prizes, refreshments and fun as members plan their excursions.

"We go out for lunch fairly often," Chambers said. "Sometimes we have pot luck dinners, where we all make something."

Chambers admitted shyly that her contri-

bution to pot luck is usually her famous broccoli casserole.

When asked about how she's treated Chambers responded with no hesitation.



Medical services are part of Millville Housing Authority's Subsidized Daily Living Assistance for disabled seniors.

"From Nancy (Thompson) on down, everyone takes very good care of us," she said. "They just can't do enough for us."

Chambers admitted that, if not for the ALP, she would be living with a family member.

"But I didn't let it come to that," she said proudly "I knew it would be better for me to live independently. I wouldn't move from here.... I'm very happy."

Thompson explained that the objective of the ALP is to allow frail residents to age "in place" and thus avoid premature placement into a nursing home.

"We offer the desired alternative," she said. "Our residents can stay in their homes affordably and still receive the extra services they require. And in addition to that, ALP activities promote socialization and decrease isolation and depression so often prevalent in the senior population."

"The bottom line is that our clients can enjoy a family atmosphere in their everyday living that involves constant interaction with others, and knowing that they are part of a group... not living alone."

Another resident, Amy Edwards, 75, said that she was initially resistant to the ALP but is very happy now in her home after residing more than two years in the ALP and several more years at Riverview West, another MHA

housing facility.

"I got what I wanted," she said, "an efficiency apartment rather than a full apartment, and it's worked out great."

She went on to say she has the freedom she craves. "My kids are wonderful but they would hover over me and smother me, with all their good intentions."

"Also," she added, "you can't beat this place for a sick person who needs help, but not enough to go into a nursing home."

Lois Wolbert, 65, echoed the sentiments of the other residents. Associated with the ALP for three and a half years, she said, "I have no idea where I'd be if not here - I'm very grateful to have this place."

MHA's licensed Assisted Living Program is open to individuals who would qualify for subsidized senior housing and meet the State's requirements for assisted living. Currently, 61 individuals comprise the Program at two locations: Riverview West (100 River-

side Dr.) and Jaycee Plaza (122 E. Main St.)

The personal services provided residents, among others, include personal care, medication distribution, laundry, arrangement of doctors' appointments and transportation, and access to a round-the-clock emergency response system. When help is needed, qualified, caring staff is available 24 hours a day.

Currently there are several openings available at MHA ALP. Interested persons may call Thompson at 825-8669 for more information.

In addition to its ALP, the Millville Housing Authority offers numerous other services to benefit the senior citizens of the community, including customized aquatics classes at the Holly City Family Center, Senior Services at all MHA facilities and monthly Blood Pressure Clinics at all sites. The Authority also hosts the only affordable Nutrition Site for hot lunches in Cumberland County.