

July 28, 2011

## **Husband and Wife Actively Age – Together – with the Help of Windsor Essex CHC Program**

Regina, a client of the Windsor Essex Community Health Centre, struggled with her weight and high blood pressure. On the advice of her primary care provider she joined the centre's Active Aging and Health Management Program and began participating in their exercise classes.

The Active Aging and Health Management Program, funded by the Erie St. Clair LHIN, provides supervised Walking Track/Exercise and Aqua Fit classes to people over 50 years of age, as well as specialized care to clients with COPD to help them to manage their condition and live independently. A team of health professionals supports participants, helping them to manage their health and wellness by developing goals, plans to reach them, and monitoring their progress. The team includes a nurse practitioner, nurse, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, recreational therapist, speech language therapist, fitness instructor, social worker, and personal care workers.

Through Regina's participation in the program and the assessment of the staff social worker, it was revealed that Regina was not the only one in need. Her husband David, a stroke survivor, had not received any rehabilitation in four years and was isolated at home without means of transportation causing him to become de-conditioned. At this point, efforts shifted to helping both Regina and David with their needs.

David received an in-home-visit and consultation from a social worker and a physiotherapist. They determined that David would benefit from attending Aqua Fit classes. Transportation was arranged and David was able to attend classes three days a week, with his wife by his side acting as his supporter and caregiver.

Regina has tackled her exercise program with enthusiasm. She has become much more fit, being able to walk over five miles in a single exercise session. As well as losing weight and inches, Regina has improved her blood pressure and feels like she has a better handle on diet.

When David joined the program he could only walk 10 feet. Now he can walk 100 yards. His balance, strength and pain control are all better. Most importantly, when asked what this program did for him; David commented that now he was no longer alone in his apartment, he had friends and people want to talk to him.

Both Regina and David continue to participate in the program and pursue their health goals.