

Jewish home at establishes new music program

The Jewish Home at Rockleigh is launching the Dr. Sandra Gold Harp to Heart program with four weekly groups of eight to ten residents in each group to strum small harps together. Dr. Sandra Gold, a past president of the Jewish Home at Rockleigh and a current board member, is a music lover and helped found the JCC Thurnauer School of Music in Tenafly.

Through the gift of Norman Seiden, JHR's recreation department was able to buy ten 12-string baby harps that are 21 inches tall and can stand on a table or be placed in the user's lap and pulled toward the heart. These harps can be played in bed and are easy to pluck. The facility also purchased 10 slat melody harps and a larger 22-string harp.

The program can also be carried out at bedside with residents, helped by the therapist, to maneuver their hands over the strings.

The goal of the program is to promote healing, help build self-esteem, relieve stress and increase social interaction between residents and staff.

Short-term memory may be improved as well as a sharper attention span during the playing of the instrument.

Hand/eye coordination may also be increased as residents play the different strings.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE JEWISH HOME AT ROCKLEIGH

Recreation leader and music therapist Deborah Trabolsi shows resident Elaine Copeland how to play the harp.