

A day in The Hogeweyk

Meet Sanne, care worker in The Hogeweyk

I finally stayed dry on the bike again today. I park my bike in the racks in front of The Hogeweyk, opposite Oosthoek 2. The curtains there are still closed. After two days off, I'm happy to be back. It's strange, but I start to miss the residents a little after just two days. It is still early—let's see who's on night shift. I walk through the entry area to the neighbourhood. I meet two night team members, Tim and Nel. Nel fills me in on the night's events. Mr Hendricks slept on the sofa in the living room, as he often does. Mrs Stijnen is back from hospital after breaking her hip, but she had a good night. I can hear the acoustic system rattle. It's always busy at this time, around 6:45 a.m. Tim listens carefully and communicates with his colleagues by walkie-talkie where necessary. The Hogeweyk's early risers are awake.

Let's see how my house is doing. Most of the residents usually sleep a little longer here. I take the front door key from the placard at the reception and greet my neighbourhood manager, Ton. The morning is always a focus point for him— a quick check to make sure the staff members are at every home on time. I walk out into the neighbourhood and am greeted by ducks chasing each other around the fountain. The roses next to the fountain are getting some extra water as it splashes from the fountain. It's not really necessary after days of rain, but they are blooming beautifully nonetheless.

I turn the lock to the front door of Boulevard 15 and quietly step inside. Almost total silence. Oh wait, no; I can hear light snoring from the living room. Mr Hendricks is sprawled out on the living room sofa. I walk quietly to the washroom. I store my phone and wallet in the locker. A dirty towel is left over from yesterday evening. I'll just turn on the machine. In the meantime, I'll make some coffee in the kitchen. I enter my password on the computer in the living room cupboard. The coffee machine is simmering away. I might just descale it this afternoon. I read the reports from the last two days with a fresh cup of coffee. Mrs Stijnen has been in hospital because of a broken hip and has already returned. Mr Hendricks was a little restless for no apparent reason. Mrs Jansen did not want to take a shower yesterday because she did not trust the flex-worker.

Mr Hendricks wakes up on the sofa. He unzips his fly. I jump up and escort him to the toilet just in time. I grab a roll of medication for him from the medication trolley. He is now walking to his room. We pick out clothes together and I lay them out on his bed. He washes himself at the sink. I watch briefly before leaving. Fifteen minutes later, I poke my head through the door. That's not how electric shaving works! I offer to help, but Mr. Hendricks is clearly a bit irritated and grumbles. He'll be a little less shaven today. We'll try again after breakfast.

Mrs Stijnen wakes up and calls out loudly "Nurse!" I walk to her room and call Wendy, the physiotherapist, on the way there so we can check up on Mrs Stijnen together. Wendy comes in a few moments later. The community physiotherapy centre is located opposite Boulevard 15, so Wendy is my neighbour across the street. With a little assistance, Mrs Stijnen sits at the edge of the bed. It's always a good idea to get moving again as soon as possible after surgery. Wendy recommends using a wheelchair today. She will be back again tomorrow to try it without a wheelchair and we will both be there to help.

The doorbell rings quietly. Stan steps in. The practice nurse shows his new trainers to Mr Hendricks, who is now in the living room. Tom also pays a special visit to Mrs Stijnen and advises her to continue slowly reducing the pain medication today. Only take it if necessary, today. Stan's phone rings. It's Jacqueline, from Vijverpark 16. Stan says goodbye and shoots out the door.

We help Mrs Stijnen into the shower chair with the hoist. She is clearly not used to it. Discussing her extensive Swarovski collection, displayed in the glass case in her room, turns out to be an excellent distraction. She proudly talks about the latest piece she acquired this year. On to the shower. The two other residents are still sleeping. Great, that gives me the chance to devote some extra time to Mrs Stijnen today.

The doorbell rings again and my colleague, Yasmin, walks in. She's the familiar face that everyone can rely on. Always present at 8 a.m., 5 days a week. What a relief for residents and family. She, too, puts her coat and bag in the locker. The washing machine is ready, and Yasmin loads up the dryer. The table in the dining room is then set. Yasmin puts a floral tablecloth from the cupboard on the table. Mr Hendricks lends a hand and, with some guidance, puts two plates in their place, but then walks away to the sofa and sits down. A Dutch breakfast with bread, cheese, cold cuts, jam, coffee, tea and milk is served. Yasmin is making porridge for Mrs Smit. As always, she has breakfast in bed. Yasmin helps Mrs Smit. It is now 08:45 and Mr Hendricks and Mrs Stijnen are sitting at the dining table. Yasmin pushes the chairs in and sits down herself. They chat about the weather, and Yasmin lends a helping hand when needed.

Mr Hendricks is really grumpy today and is currently grumbling at Mrs Jansen. I'm wondering if we're overlooking something? I'd better check the reports for the past few weeks. I ask Marleen, the social worker, to conduct an observation in our house. Yasmin changes the subject at the table. I find time to update the morning report on the computer and listen to the discussions at the table at the same time. The bi-annual care plan discussions will take place this afternoon. I had better check whether all the disciplines have contributed their information. It's exciting to be the chair. Fortunately, I can always ask Saskia, the doctor, if I have any questions.

Yasmin writes up a shopping list and invites Mr Bouwmeester to assist. She is on her own today, because he has no desire to help. Obviously in a bad mood. Mrs de Jong and Mrs Dijkgraaf would like to go to the supermarket. Mrs de Jong wants to push Mrs Dijkgraaf's

wheelchair. It doesn't work well at first, but with a little guidance from Yasmin, it works out alright.

Shortly before 10:30, Mary picks up Mr Hendricks. Mary has been a volunteer for years and picks up Mr Hendricks for the jazz club. Five minutes later, Mrs Jansen is picked up for the gym club. Mr Thijssen is also walking towards the door. I follow him, point to his coat and wish him lots of fun. He takes a few walks every day. It is quiet in the living room and I devote some time to Mrs Smit. I can hear Ina, Mrs Stijnen's daughter, in the living room; she is visiting her mother. We smell something tasty, and I walk to the living room with Mrs Smit. Yasmin has just baked a cake and we celebrate Mrs Stijnen's return from hospital.

When everyone has returned from the clubs, it is almost time for lunch. Mr Hendricks is humming his favourite Ella Fitzgerald song. The club has had a positive impact on his mood. While Yasmin sets the table with Mrs Jansen, I walk outside to look for Mr Thijssen. He usually he walks short laps but has been gone for a while now. I meet him on the theatre square, where a group of children from the nursery are playing. We say goodbye to the children, who are also leaving for lunch, and walk home. I talk about today's lunch on the walk back—grilled cheese, his favourite lunch. Mine too!

***All names have been changed**