

Community Resources to Enhance Quality of Life

Sometime it helps residents to talk things over with other people besides the facility staff or their families. Many times a resident has already developed certain relationships in their community that has had a positive effect on their quality of life. It is important as staff of the facility to help the resident maintain those relationships at some level after admission to the facility.

Additionally, the community has many resources available to the facility and these resources can have a positive effect for the residents as well as the staff of the facility. Many times it only requires the facility to take the initiative to development a relationship. Some examples of resources in the community are:

Alzheimer's Association

They have a network of over 200 chapters and are a voluntary health organization dedicated to research to conquer Alzheimer's disease and to providing support and assistance to people with the disease, their families and caregivers. Two of their missions are to offer programs and services to individuals and families; educate and inform the public and care professionals. Contact you local chapter.

Pastoral Services

Supporting the spirituality of older adults is essential to their wellness and wholeness. It helps them respond to the potential fullness of life despite the problems that arise from illness and longevity. Long term care providers should designate a place for worship in the facility. Contact your community clergyman to develop a volunteer pastoral care program. If this is not feasible, discuss with other area facilities or a local hospice organization about the cost of sharing pastoral services.

Volunteers

Contact your area churches, retirees, high school Vocational Educational programs, about volunteering their time to spend time at the facility visiting with residents, for social interaction, participating with them in activities, reading to them, helping write correspondences, etc. Contact your area Humane Society/SPCA or an animal response/rescue unit. They may provide a program for pet in the nursing facility.

Eden Alternative Programming

The core philosophy of this program is to integrate pets, plants, and children into the daily lives and routines of nursing facility residents. Pets, plants and kids have a palliative effect on long term care environments. Edenization has had a positive effect on resident's that are cognitively impaired and has for some reduce the use of medication.

There is a cost associated with implementing this program and there is a certification-training course available through Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas.

Education/Intern Programs

Investigate you community colleges, technical schools, university to find out what health related curriculum/programs they offer and if there is any opportunity to utilize your facility in their training curriculum or as an avenue to hire students.

There are multiple health organizations that can assist your facility and provide you expertise in their area, such as the Parkinson's Disease Association, American Heart Association, etc.