

News

Memory center to open in February Cater to special needs of memory-loss patients

By Jayne Hanson

Sunday, August 3, 2008 7:21 PM MST

A new memory care center is under construction on Lake Havasu Avenue and scheduled to open February 2009. The new center will focus on housing and caring for individuals facing the issues caused by dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Lake View Terrace Memory Care Residence is a 25,000-square-foot building and consists of 48 private resident rooms with private or shared bathrooms. The building is designed as four "neighborhoods" accommodating 12 residents each.

The interior design is a strategy that will make sense to patients with memory-limiting diseases. Each wing, or "neighborhood", will have a theme that will be readily identifiable for residents.

"The colors, the furnishings, the carpet, and even the artwork will reflect the theme so residents aren't as reliant on words or numbers," said LRS Architects Director of Marketing Carol Garner. LRS Architects in Portland, Ore., designed the memory care center.

Frontier Management Media and Marketing Coordinator Marc Janssen said patients with dementia and Alzheimer's "have a tendency to want to walk or move around which leads, often times, to the problem of wandering or becoming lost."

Janssen said the design of the different-themed communities within the building, allow residents to freely move through a continuous walking pattern through the neighborhoods and that the themed and colored surroundings "help them to easily find where they are supposed to be."

Lake View Terrace Memory Care Center employs a "personal touch philosophy" that promotes the patient's self-worth. This strategy includes staff members becoming familiar with the life history or accomplishments that make each patient unique. A framed area outside the resident's door will feature an old wedding photo, war medals or another milestone.

"It is very humanizing for the staff," Garner said. She explained that during an individual's elderly years, caregivers sometimes lose sight of the person amidst behaviors caused by dementia or Alzheimer's disease. The wandering, confusion, frustration and occasional outbursts are symptoms of the disease's progression, not a reflection of the patient who suffers from it. It makes the patient's dignity a priority in the progression of their disease. That is the mission of the care center.

The center will offer scheduled activities geared toward memory patients. An Activity Kitchen will be located in each of the four "neighborhoods" and residents will be able to prepare dishes and complete kitchen chores with unobtrusive supervision. Each "neighborhood" will also feature a family-style dining area.

Janssen said that based on a survey conducted by Frontier Management, his company "recognized a need in Lake Havasu for these types of services."

The memory care center will be staffed according to state regulation and in accordance with the care center's license. An activity director, licensed medical staff, medical aids, food service, housekeeping, and business office employees are among the types of jobs the new business will create in the community.

The staff will be trained to understand the behaviors of people with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

The Lake View Terrace Memory Care Residence construction site is located at 320 N. Lake Havasu Ave. There is more information on the Web, at www.frontiermgmt.com.



L.J. Frink/News-Herald Photo (Memory Care Center Photo)
Construction workers are hard at work in this July 22 photo, helping to build the new Lake View Terrace Memory Care Residence that is located at 320 N. Lake Havasu Ave. and scheduled to open February 2009.