

## **2007 NOMINATION**

### **CHHSM ANNUAL AWARDS PROGRAM**

#### **EXEMPLARY PROGRAM AWARD**

##### **BRIDGEWAYS RENEWAL PROJECT PHOEBE HOME NURSING AND REHABILITATION CENTER**

Phoebe Home's Bridgeways Renewal Project team examined in detail the current state of Phoebe's dementia care unit to make improvements in every facet of the program's care and services.

Phoebe Home's special care dementia unit has been in existence for over 20 years. As a secured unit, Bridgeways provides a safe place for residents to wander without risk of leaving the facility. Over the course of time, the unit has not had any major changes in its design or decor. In addition its programs and services had not evolved with the needs of the current resident population.

The Bridgeways team studied the situation with an eye for every detail of design, decor, service delivery, and staff development. They made a series of significant changes that were recently completed and have been received with high praise by trustees, families, and staff alike.

The team focused on the dining experience and replaced tray service with decorated table settings. Food was served restaurant style by the staff in a social atmosphere and on red plates, known to increase food intake. As a result, the team noticed a significant increase in the amount of food consumed and meals completed.

As part of the re-design, hallways that were a bland color were repainted with subtle green to promote a sense of calm and serenity. Large photos of life in the 1930's and 40's encourage reminiscence. Hanging displays of textures and colors and large murals of porch scenes add to the homelike ambience. The team also developed a relaxation corner with aromatherapy, meditative music, and soft textured blankets to hold. Live plants and cats round out the environment that reduces external stimulation.

A third element of the project was redesigning the bathing experience. The team started with bathing rooms that looked very much like a hospital institution. These were repainted with pleasant colors. Homey pictures, pleasant scents, calming music and fluffy towels create a more relaxing atmosphere.

Staff training was another key initiative the team worked on. They brought on a licensed psychologist with expertise in behavior management and an RN Unit Manager with dementia care experience. With focused training, the staff has increased its effectiveness in working with the residents.

Finally, the team redesigned the activity program, allowing for more types of activities familiar to the residents. Chests of drawers for rummaging, clothes lines with various items to hang, and other household activities make for a busy day to combat boredom and frustration. Styled after the Montessori method of education, these innovations have created a set of meaningful activities appropriate to the special needs of the residents.

The results of the program have dramatically improved the quality of life for all the residents on the Bridgeways unit. Increasingly, staff members are coming forward with their own ideas for new programs and activities to take these changes even further. This team has accomplished a complete revamping of Phoebe Home's dementia care program. We see it in the smiles on the residents' faces every day.

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