

Nursing Home Adopts Consistent Caregiver Assignments

“For me as the caregiver, I can pick up on conversations where we left off from the day before and they still remember what we were talking about.”

“You can tell by the look on the resident’s face that they’re comfortable and glad to see a familiar face on a day to day basis. They remember your name and things about your life. We feel like a family.”

“The residents come to know you better and trust you.”

These statements are from nursing associates at Wyndcrest Nursing Home in Clinton, Iowa, when asked how consistent caregiving has impacted them and their residents.

Deb Pascoe, Assistant Administrator, admits the associates were reluctant at first. “They needed to understand the benefits of consistent caregiving.” The first step was to provide staff with information on the benefits of this change. Julie Eggers, Unit Director and Pat Woods, Nursing Supervisor, researched long-term care journals for information to share with staff. The introduction to this philosophy took time, as did implementing consistent caregiving.

Wyndcrest pilot tested the change on one shift for several months before introducing it on other shifts. “It’s important to remember that change takes time. Pilot testing provided us with an opportunity to work through problems before implementing it facility-wide,” says Deb.

Staff chose their neighborhoods and divided resident caseloads. Julie and Pat met with each neighborhood weekly to work through barriers and answer questions. Soon consistent assignment was benefiting both residents and staff.

Deb also attributes consistent assignment to improvement in their clinical measures, especially with pain management and pressure ulcers. “It enables our staff to know the residents’ needs and respond quickly,” says Deb. Wyndcrest also has an active quality improvement team that regularly reviews care practices and incorporates best practices. Staff recently celebrated having no facility acquired pressure ulcers for six months.

Leadership’s commitment to person centered care was key. The administrator demonstrated support by attending staff unit meetings and reinforcing the benefits other homes have seen from consistent caregiving. Deb also attributes the positive attitude of leadership, “Julie and Pat did a beautiful job of implementing consistent caregivers. The staff have ownership and they are loving it.”

Wyndcrest’s most recent Resident Satisfaction Survey results were all above the state average. Residents are happier with the new culture. A more positive staff has led to more positive residents.