



PENNSYLVANIA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY

PHFA's Housing
Services Department
Best Practices

Almond Street Commons Wellness Program

Category: Healthy Living

Outcomes:

Residents at Almond Street Commons benefit by being more aware of their health and learning how to maintain and improve it. This provides them with the necessary tools to lead a stable, safe, and healthy life and enables the residents to maintain an independent lifestyle.

Nursing students in the Baccalaureate program at PA College of Technology as part of their Fundamentals of Nursing course operate a wellness program at Almond Street Commons. Together, the on-site Service Coordinator and nursing students are well positioned to be actively involved in screening residents for a variety of health conditions, including substance abuse and mental health problems. Traditional barriers to accessing medical care are removed by delivering services in the residential setting. Additionally, student nurses are able to evaluate the living environment to tailor appropriate health promotion and accident prevention messages to each specific resident. Early intervention and treatment can dramatically improve the residents' quality of life.

Units: Almond Street Commons consists of 24 one bedroom for residents 62 and older

Management Agent:
Warrior Run Development Corporation

Service Coordinator:
Sandy Suydam
(570) 649-5668
wrdcssuydam@aol.com

Program Components:

- **Meeting of Service Coordinator, Property Manager and College Faculty.** To start the program off on a firm foundation it is important that all parties involved meet to discuss their roles and responsibilities to the program.
- **College Partnership.** It is imperative that a qualified university or college partner become involved in the program. The college professional staff needs to include a part-time or full-time nurse who has the ability to work comfortably alongside nursing students and elderly residents.
- **Memorandum of Understanding.** To provide a comfort level for both the property management company and the nursing students it is necessary to put a memorandum of understanding together. This document outlines the specific duties and responsibilities of the college and the management agency.



- **Informed Participation.** Each participant in the program is required to sign an informed participation form before they are eligible to be a participant in the program.
- **Health Assessments.** Student interns, under the guidance of their professor, perform health needs assessments for the residents in their residence. This includes a physical assessment, taking of the residents' family history and an environmental assessment.
- **Education and Health Promotion.** Based on the students' findings, an evidence based teaching intervention is provided to the resident.

Background:

Almond Street Commons is a senior development for residents aged 62 and older. The wellness program is supervised by the college nursing faculty and takes place in the residents' apartment.

Investment in Services:

The wellness center does not experience any direct costs to either Almond Street Commons or PA College of Technology. The college professional staff is paid by the college and the students do not receive any funding to participate in the program. This opportunity enables the residents to enhance their health care at no charge.

RESULTS

Improved health, fewer injuries, decreased use of the emergency medical system and **stabilized occupancy.**

Improved self-esteem of the residents knowing they assisted students in achieving their career objectives.

For more information,
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