

HEALTH & FITNESS

– Advertorials

Culture Change in Elder Care

What Is Culture Change?

According to the Pioneer Network, “culture change is the common name given to the national movement for the transformation of older adult services, based on person-directed values and practices where the voices of elders and those working with them are considered and respected. Core person-directed values are choice, dignity, respect, self-determination and purposeful living.”

What is Person-Centered Care?

In the 1980s, consumer groups exposed substandard care in some U.S. nursing homes. These revelations led the Institute of Medicine to issue a report recommending major regulatory changes and, in 1987, Congress passed a sweeping set of nursing home reforms that required facilities to provide individualized, or “person-centered,” care. As a result, some providers began to move away from the institutional model of nursing home care and toward a more homelike environment.

In 1997, leaders in the industry formed the Pioneer Network to advocate for person-centered care and create a movement for “culture change” in the nation’s nursing homes and assisted living communities. The Eden Alternative, a nonprofit organization also started guiding organizations through the journey of culture change with the mission of eliminating the plagues of loneliness, helplessness, and boredom which account for the bulk of suffering among our elders.

Culture Change in Action in Colorado

For the past ten years, the Colorado Culture Change Coalition has been leading the transformation of culture change in the long term care continuum. Their goals are to strengthen the collaborative partnerships among all stakeholders, establish a statewide network of resources, identify and work to change issues that undermine the delivery of care, to promote the values, principles and practices of the culture change movement and offer new performance standards throughout Colorado through the identification and dissemination of innovative models of care and facility management.

An ideal care community would feature:

- Person centered or person directed care
- Decision making returned to residents
- A home-like environment
- Recognition of the potential for growth
- Appreciation for the uniqueness of each individual
- Staff who are loving and compassionate, working in empowered care teams
- Consistent staff assignments in order to learn residents’ routines and needs
- Buffet, restaurant, and/or family style dining giving resident choice of meals and meal times
- Welcoming resident animals and birds for companionship
- An abundance of living plants inside

and landscaping and foliage outside

- Integrating the presence of children in daily life
- Gathering a community to discuss things of mutual interest and concern, to celebrate, to remember, and to mourn

Cliffview Assisted Living, a Senior Housing Options Residence has embraced these concepts and is working on initiatives aimed at supporting resident choice and self directed care, and offering a place where staff wants to work and residents wish to live and grow.

Sources: www.pioneernetwork.net, www.edenalt.org, www.coculturechange.org

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www.seniorhousingoptions.org

