

THE POWER OF EMPATHY TO TRANSFORM CARE

POLICY OF ELDER SHADOWING PROGRAM

It is the policy that all new employees participate in the Elder Shadowing Program in order to gain a better understanding of what it is like to live in long term care

All new employees will be assigned an elder to shadow by their immediate supervisor. You must shadow an elder on each shift: Days, Evenings and Midnights.

During your Elder Shadowing experience, you must 'live' like the elder you have been assigned to. This means eating the same foods, attending the same activities, and having the same level of dependency they do. After you have completed your program, please write a short paragraph on what you learned and how it will affect how your relationship with those living in our long-term care community.

TIPS ON HOW TO SET UP THIS PROGRAM IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Set expectations and goals for what you want to accomplish through the program.

Decide what the rules of the program will be for staff in your community.

Include everyone in a conversation about the participants' expectations as well as those of the staff who will be responsible for caring for them.

Meet with your resident council and include their family members in the conversations as well.

Let your state surveyors and your insurance company know what your community is trying to accomplish through the program.

Find out how many staff want to participate and pick a move-in date.

Make up diagnoses

Involve a staff participant's family

Move-in day!

Decide how you want to set up the challenges.

Ask the participants to write down how they are feeling every day.

Have cameras ready!

Ask a lot of questions of the participants, the elders, and the families while the program is going on.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leslie Pedtke, L.N.H.A., created *Through the Looking Glass* while working as Administrator for Aviston Countryside Manor. She is now Educator for Quality Improvement for King Management Company. Through her experience of more than 20 years, she has built a foundation of person-directed care at Aviston as well as at King Management's other long-term care and assisted living communities.

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