

Model Programs for Family Involvement in Assisted Living Communities

Program	Key Features for Families
<p>The Eden Alternative www.edenalt.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright, homelike environment with plants and animals is appealing to both families and residents. Residents are guided and prompted to interact with environmental features. • <u>Surveys</u> of family opinions assess community communication, the environment, and staff responsiveness. • Family members are ‘voices for the residents’ in the community. • Collaboration with staff on <u>teams</u> gives families the power to influence change.
<p>The Family Project tpeak@hass.usu.edu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in <u>support groups</u> leads family members to perceive less stress in their lives. • Social support for family caregivers provides positive effects for the resident. • Support groups used to provide education, accurate information, and a <u>safe environment for practicing visiting techniques</u>. • Emphasis is placed on ‘advertising’ group meetings. Staff may refer family members to the support groups. Invitations are issued by mail. • Informal monthly dinner meetings are held (resident menu served) where families can discuss concerns and receive new information.
<p>The Family Visit Program mcclion@albany.edu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a training program for families that focuses on verbal and non-verbal communication, use of memory aids, and responding to problem behaviors. • The program is taught over 8 weeks (4 ½ hour sessions and 3 one-hour family conferences). • Family members make signs to label important locations, and develop personal memory charts or albums to assist communication with their loved one. • Families learn to assess resident needs when faced with a behavior problem. • In a research study, success of the interventions was influenced by the quality of the trainer.
<p>The Family Stories Workshop Hepbu001@umn.edu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus is on techniques used to prepare family members to tell staff members their loved one’s life story. • Training and story-telling occur soon after admission to the community. • Family members are in the spotlight as authorities about the resident. • The story-telling acts as a ‘rite of passage’ to bridge the gaps between home care and residential living. • Family members participate in exercises as they learn to gather information and craft it into narratives. • Family members are helped from a disease-oriented focus to a story that affirms the resident’s life and remaining abilities. • The process taps the wealth of stories that families possess. • The workshop process needs facilitators; that role can be filled by family member ‘graduates.’

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<p>Family Involvement in Care Meridean-maas@uiowa.edu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intervention consists of four stages: orientation of family member to the unit; education about dementia; negotiation of partnership agreement; and evaluation and renegotiation of partnership. • Focuses on mutual development of expectations and responsibilities for the resident's care. • A written agreement is negotiated and signed. • Staff helps family members choose the type and frequency of care activities they will participate in, without any pressure or expectations.
<p>Partners in Caregiving Vetolb2@uky.edu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a structured training program for families that focuses on learning and practicing effective communication skills. • Classes are held for both staff and family members. Topics include conflict resolution, effective listening, and making clear statements. • Another aspect of the program is participation in a change-oriented meeting between families, care providers, and administrators. • Educational strategies include: 'minilectures,' brainstorming, small-group discussions, and role plays.

And for the most recent research in this area you might want to look up this resource:

The National Investment Center for the Seniors Housing and Care Industry (NIC), with assistance from Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging, produces the Seniors Housing & Care Journal as an open access journal. This means that all content is freely available without charge to a user and/or his/her institution. Users are allowed to read, download, copy, print, search, or link to the full texts of the articles in this journal without asking prior permission from the publisher or the author.

The 2013 Seniors Housing and Care Journal and previous volumes are available at:
<http://www.matherlifewaysinstituteonaging.com/research-resources/seniors-housing-care-journal/>

Topics for the 2013 Seniors Housing and Care Journal included:

- *Families Matter* in Long-Term Care: Results of a Group-Randomized Trial
- Family Involvement and Well-Being in Assisted Living
- Effects of the Physical and Social Environment on Resident-Family Member Activities in Assisted Living Facilities for Persons with Dementia