Serving the Aging Homeless Population: Supportive Services and Building Design

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Affordable Housing and Healthcare Portfolio

- 308 senior housing communities/30,052 units
- 16 family housing communities/1,764 units
- 17 permanent supportive housing communities with 1,182 units (owned, managed, serviced)
- 1 student housing community/255 units
- 8 Assisted Living / 5 Skilled Nursing Facilities
- 10 Residential Health Care Communities

PSH Portfolio
A PERMANENT SOLUTION FOR ENDING HOMELESSNESS
As a leading provider of both Affordable Housing for seniors and Permanent Supportive Housing for formerly homeless and disabled individuals, we have noticed that these populations are beginning to look more alike.

1. More mental and/or behavioral health concerns and increased substance use issues in our senior population
2. More age-related physical, medical, and cognitive conditions in our Permanent Supportive Housing population

Understanding how to meet the complex and blended needs of these populations will be critical to helping them age in place with the dignity and support they need.

Understanding the individual and collective needs of residents in our communities is critical to informing the types of physical spaces and supportive services needed to ensure their success.

To that end, we have customized an electronic Care Management Platform called “Care Guide” that enables us to understand and plan for the specific needs of each individual resident, as well as the demographics and shared characteristics – and ultimately – the collective needs of each community.
Our Primary Goal: Aging In Place

Meeting Basic Needs
- Eating, Bathing, Ambulating, and other ADL's
- Health Education, Prevention and Disease Management
- Transportation Options for all Ages

Long-term Housing Stability
- Apartments and facilities that anticipate the physical and medical needs of residents so they can "age in place"
- Robust and varied social, recreational and therapeutic programming targeted to residents of all ages

Focus on Health, Safety, and Social Connectedness
- Onsite Medical, Behavioral Health, and Recovery/Peer support staff
- Safety Captains on each floor to help mobility or cognitively-impaired residents during emergency evacuation or drills
- Innovative technology to promote social connectedness and self-care

Lessons Learned From A Design Perspective

• National Church Residences has been building and operating housing for seniors for more than 50 years, and we first started developing and operating permanent supportive housing about 17 years ago.

• We learned then that designing welcoming and functional spaces for younger people with mental, emotional and substance use disorders was very different than designing ideal spaces for seniors.

• Now that our PSH population is aging and our senior population is changing, we are re-thinking some of those differences and are adapting and blending our PSH and Senior Housing design standards to meet the evolving needs of both populations.

OLD PSH DESIGN
- Less parking for automobiles
- More storage for bicycles
- 4+ stories to optimize space/efficiency
- Storage for carts
- Bathrooms for children and babies
- No trash chutes to avoid messes
- Intercom communication system
- Employment, computer, and job centers
- Fitness centers for working out (free weights, resistance machines, etc.)
- Doorbells and peep holes
- Electronic entry to reduce duplication and enhance security
- Rear parking/entry to appease NIMBY neighbors
- SRO, studio or efficiency apartments to maximize space utilization
- Signage for donor recognition
- Limited seating to discourage socializing

NEW "SENIOR-FRIENDLY" UNIVERSAL PSH DESIGN
- Additional parking for home health aides and family visitors
- Wide rooms for special needs transportation vehicles
- 1-3 stories to accommodate mobility impaired
- Storage for wheelchairs, canes and walkers
- 100% Handicap Accessible units
- Hall is planned for grandmas and grandpas
- Teach study, and environmentally sensitive recycling and composting programs
- Integrated emergency call/intercom systems
- Multi-use technology centers with assistive technology + telehealth access
- Therapeutic fitness centers that can accommodate physical and occupational therapy equipment
- Electronic doorbells with cameras
- Key fobs for ease of entry and shelves outside doors to place belongings while opening the door
- Enclosed courtyards for outdoor enjoyment with the ability to monitor for wandering
- One bedroom apartments with ample space for a hospice bed and/or room for a caregiver
- signage for way-finding
- Meditation gardens and benches to encourage physical activity and socialization
Lessons Learned From A Programmatic Perspective

• When we first starting operating Permanent Supporting, our focus was on services that promoted housing retention to avoid a return to homelessness, such as case management, employment services and eviction prevention.

• Now that our PSH population is aging, we have shifted and expanded our service focus to include community psychiatric supportive services, onsite primary care including medication management, and education around disease prevention and management.

OLD PSH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

SOAR program to link clients to Medicaid and Food Stamps
AA Support Group and job fairs
Mental Health Education for residents
Harm Reduction
Using Facebook to get a job
Mental Health First Aid Training
Food Pantry and Grocery Store runs
Behavior Plans to address MH symptoms
Strategies to deter excessive visits that can spread bed bugs
Strategies to reunite clients with parents and siblings
Onsite Primary Care and Consulting Psychiatry
Monthly Housekeeping Inspections
Community groups for job seeking and recovery support
TB testing and Hepatitis screening

NEW “SENIOR-FRIENDLY” SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Programs to help residents understand and apply for Medicare and Supplemental Health Plans
Tai Chi and Yoga classes to help avoid slips and falls
Diabetes, Dementia, and other Health Education Programs
Smoking Cessation classes
Using Alexa for reminders to take meds, learn about social activities, scheduled, etc
Training on how to recognize and manage Dementia and Medical Conditions that mimic Psychiatric symptoms
Nutrition Education and Cooking Classes to promote healthy eating
Behavior Plans to address symptoms of Dementia
Strategies to promote social connectedness and family visitation
Strategies to reunite residents with children and grandchildren
Onsite Home Health Care and Consulting Podiatry
Periodic Wellness checks
Community groups for pain management support and Opioid Addiction Education
Flu shots and Diabetes Testing

Questions?

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