

CASE STUDY: ENHANCING DEMENTIA CARE: TRANSFORMING PERSPECTIVES AND EMPOWERING STAFF AT TERESIAN HOUSE CENTER FOR THE ELDERLY

Teresian House has been providing staff with dementia training for many years but decided to implement an approach that would focus on sensitivity training as opposed to academic training.



CHALLENGE:

Since 1974 Teresian House Center for the Elderly has been a beacon of Catholic health care in valuing the beauty and dignity of old age.

As a community, they had two primary challenges:

- Increased number of resident falls
- Family feedback that staff does not know how to relate to people living with dementia

RESOLUTION:

A house-wide Dementia Live kick-off was hosted by the five trained Coaches of Teresian House just after Thanksgiving 2022. Two Experience rooms were set up and staff from all departments were encouraged and enabled to go through the Dementia Live experience.

An AGE-u-cate consultant was brought in to assist with the event, which included snacks for all attendees, a raffle of generous gift baskets provided by each department, and special "I Survived Dementia Live" chocolate bars. It even attracted the attention of a local news channel who sent out a reporter to go through the experience and highlighted the event.



"Dementia Live has been a game-changer. All of the content in the world can't compare to the impact Dementia Live has on a person's understanding of and response to someone living with dementia."

K. Hawver, Director of Activities

OVERVIEW:

Organizational Background- Teresian House is a faith-based organization sponsored by the Albany Roman Catholic Diocese and served by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. They strive to provide the highest quality continuum of services to enhance physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being. They also strive toward a leadership role in the shaping and delivery of services and programs of care for the elderly in our community.

OUTCOMES:

A total of 167 staff members went through the Experience. The unanimous responses from those completing the experience indicated a significant change in their outlook on what a person with Dementia faces and what they need to do differently to support them. A former family member saw the feature on the news and was so happy to see this kind of training being implemented, he donated \$3,500 to the facility to assist with programs/services.

Since the event, Dementia Live has been incorporated into General Orientation for all new employees. It is also offered to family members as part of the Dementia Family Support Group.

Generous funding through the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation has enabled Teresian House to greatly advance its Memory Care services, especially in the area of training. Dementia Live has enabled them to reach the educational targets of the grant without negatively impacting staffing on the unit. It provides high-impact training in a short amount of time.



KEY BENEFITS:

- Enhanced staff empathy and understanding of dementia and the challenges for those living with it
- Improved resident safety
- Strengthened Family Relationships
- Heightened community recognition and support
- Implemented a scalable and sustainable training solution