

# *A Facility That Gets It !*

Nestled in the north woods of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan is the Iron County Medical Care Facility, a skilled long-term care facility that “Gets It” when it comes to caring for the elderly with dementia. Staffed with only employees who are certified as Dementia Care Practitioners, the Iron County Medical Care Facility has a Memory Care Unit specifically designed to meet the needs of caring for those with dementia.

Taking into consideration all aspects of the needs of the residents, the facility provides an environment that is calming, aesthetically pleasing, and promotes optimum functioning potential of each and every resident in the neighborhood.



Being one of the leaders in addressing memory care issues decades ago, the facility has learned from past experience the importance of environment, trained staff, and evaluation of appropriate residents to benefit from the programs when designing its’ current state of the art memory care neighborhoods, respectfully known as “Willow Living Center”.

*Some of the initiatives taken to improve upon the Facility’s Memory Care neighborhoods include:*



The Facility did extensive research to incorporate colors and schemes to promote calmness and reduction of behavior problems.



Continuous walk areas, with no beginning or end were put into the design and have almost diminished the desire to elope. Walking is easily promoted with a deliberate walk path designed into the flooring, looking like a wood walk path.



vintage décor that once again the resident can relate to.



Artwork decorating the neighborhood includes pieces created from local photos obtained from area museums depicting many of the local towns and industry, architectural design, and past history and cultures of the area that is familiar to residents. In addition, artwork included shadow boxes with genuine mining and logging artifacts to spark memory and conversation, as well as

*Other benefits of the environment include:*



A beautiful country kitchen for community breakfasts, baking events, and home cooked meals that will promote a sense of family and fill the air with the aroma of home.



*There is nothing like homemade pie!*



Neighborhood design allows for multiple small group gatherings, so many activities can be going on simultaneously with appropriate supervision, which also includes an outdoor, contained courtyard with gazebo and wheelchair height garden beds, all visible to staff.



Activities throughout the day and night are appropriate and individualized and include such activities as sensory nurturing and life task activities in groups and individually. All staff working in this unit take part in resident's daily activities. Children and pet interaction is a regular occurrence and very popular with the residents.



Creating the perfect environment was not the only focus when the neighborhood was designed, but just as important was education, change in philosophy and staff input. Every employee within every department working directly within the Memory Care Unit was certified as a dementia care practitioner. Onsite certified trainers keep this a priority when placing new staff into the neighborhood.





*The Memory Corner*



Residents who have passed are remembered respectfully with a moment of silence and a memory rose on display, acknowledging the loss in the community.



*Wide open spaces to walk and socialize*



Just because a person has dementia, does not mean that their environment should be restrictive, clinical and/or sterile; but rather an inviting environment infused with beautiful flower arrangements, fireplaces, lamps, couches, and rich finishes, all helping to create a design that makes the residents feel safe and welcomed.



Iron County Medical Care Facility is truly a special place to live and have impressed all who visit, who can't believe how beautiful, relaxed, and calming it is for their loved ones.

*This facility truly "gets it".*



*A successful gardener shares her "crop"*

