


Dementia care facility opens

Elkhart Rehabilitation Center hosts open house

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Kevin Clem, executive director at the Elkhart Rehabilitation Center shows the group on the tour the new nurse's station at the Elkhart Rehabilitation Center's Auguste's Cottage on Thursday, Jan. 11, 2018.

Elkhart Truth photo / Paige Mallory Passman



ELKHART — The now open Elkhart Rehabilitation Center is one of the few all-dementia communities in the state, serving people with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

An open house was held from 4-6 p.m. Thursday, Jan 11, allowing the public the opportunity to tour the center.

The facility has an interactive decor, dedicated activities space where residents can participate in engaging in purposeful activities, full showers, full bedrooms, and laundry facilities and different areas for congregation, according to Kevin Clem, executive director at the Elkhart Rehabilitation Center.

For people who need full-time memory care, Auguste's Cottage will provide a homelike lifestyle in a secure setting. Programming at the cottage will be person-centered and will focus on a resident's abilities, not the person's challenges.

"The nice thing about this service is that this is their full focus," said Clem. "The entire facility is what we consider a 'special care' unit, that is fully dedicated to the services of individuals suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia. While some facilities have an Alzheimer's unit or wing, our entire facility is dedicated to Alzheimer's and dementia patients, which made the grand opening a unique to the market because we are the first dedicated Alzheimer's and dementia skill nursing facility."

The only programming they have at the rehab center is called Meaningful Day Program, according to Clem.

"All the activities that we do are designed around helping each individual resident to find meaning in their life. Some example may be cooking, normal house work like folding laundry is a possible one, as well as engaging in elder yoga, musical events, such as Elvis, and religious practices.

"This is a skilled nursing facility, so it has long term care, skilled needs, short term rehab. We have an Alzheimer's and dementia designation center, so we are a secure unit, which gives residents with this disease the ability to be free in a secure environment," said Clem.

They aren't an adult day care, but they do offer what is called Rested Stay. It is for when caregivers need small vacation, or maybe they need some time out of the house. The facility does have the ability to provide a rest for those individuals. Individuals can stay at the center and be provided food, while engaging in the social environment, according to Clem. Typically Rested Stay isn't a program that insurance covers.

According to Clem, people with Alzheimer's and dementia need the facilities like this one because as people progress in their diseases, they often go to traditional skilled nursing facilities that don't have the specialized programming, and they don't have the structure that is required for individuals to be successful in dementia care facility.

Clem said, “Sometimes when people progress in their dementia, they progress to the point where are quite confused, so sometimes with that confusing environment, orientation becomes a problem. They get confused where they are, and at times they attempt to exit their surroundings. A facility like ours is a community that is fully dedicated to Alzheimer’s and dementia, so we have the ability to allow people the freedom to ambulate freely and to help themselves in a secure environment.

“As a skilled nursing faculty, we have 24 hour care. We have certified CNAs, and certified activity aides, and we have nursing staff, both registered nurses RNs, as well as licensed practical nurses, who provide care for individuals on a 24/7 basis. We also have the skilled environment, is a therapy peace, so we also have a full therapy department,” he added.

Located at 2600 Morehouse Avenue in Elkhart, the center is operated by American Senior Communities, which operates senior health communities with Auguste’s Cottages statewide. Elkhart Rehabilitation Center will continue offering short-term and long-term care in a secure environment.

The Auguste’s Cottage was named after Auguste who was the first person to be diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease form of dementia. He was diagnosed by Eloise Alzheimer’s, according to Clem.

“If we fill up fast there will be a wait list. Right now we have quite a bit of capacity. We just completed our construction project at 1.5 million renovation, so we just completed about 90 percent of the work, so currently we are hoping fairly quick growth in our census, and there will be a waiting list,” said Clem.

For more information, contact Elkhart Rehabilitation Center Executive Director Kevin Clem at 574-295-8800. Visit ASCCare.com to learn more about Auguste’s Cottage.