



The Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board Report

Fall 2010

**Division of
Alaska Pioneer
Homes**

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**Alaska
Pioneer
Homes**



**Alaska Department of
Health and Social Services**
Governor, Sean Parnell
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Mission Statement

The Mission of the Alaska Pioneer Homes is to assist older Alaskans to have the highest quality of life by providing assisted living in a safe home setting which promotes positive relationships, meaningful activities and physical, emotional and spiritual growth.



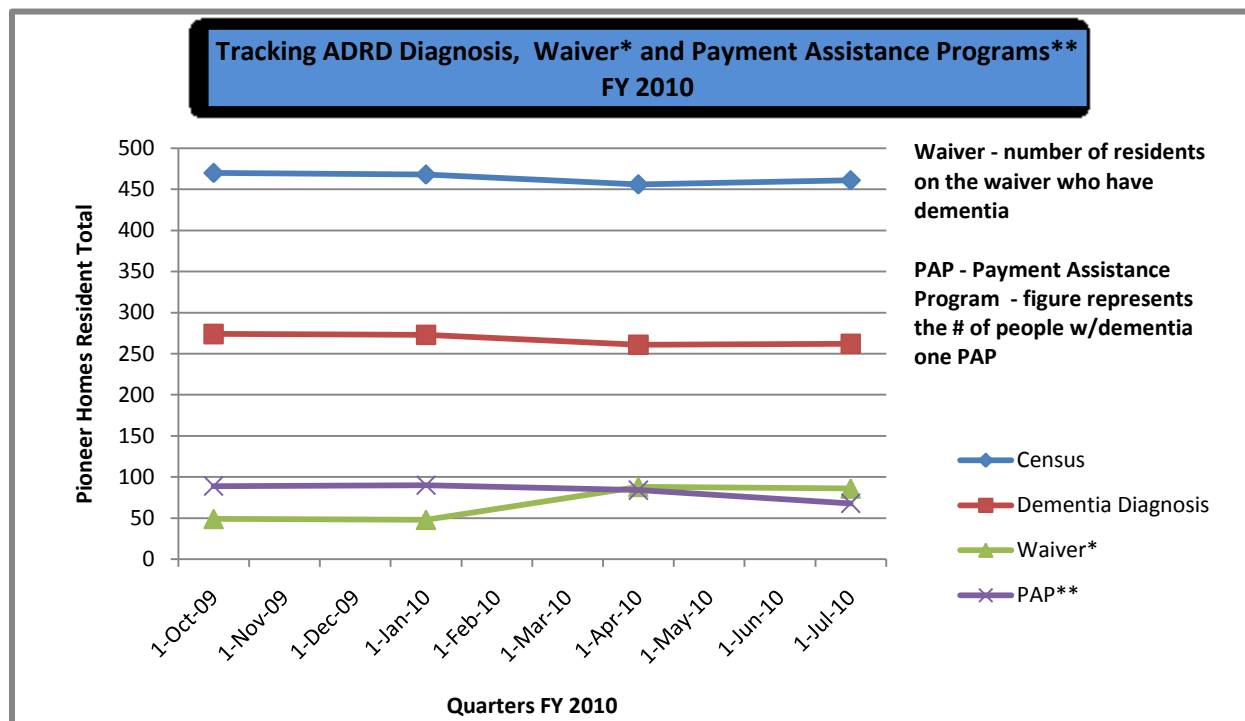
Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board President, Banarsi Lal and Director Dave Cote with Governor Sean Parnell and his wife, Sandy Parnell

Governance

The Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes, in the Department of Health and Social Services, manages the six Pioneers' Homes. The Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board (Board) tours northern in the spring and southeastern in February and makes their recommendations to the Governor. The Pioneer Homes are licensed assisted living homes. The Pioneer Homes are licensed for 508 beds and operate in accordance with the statute and regulations pertaining to assisted living. They are managed on-site by administrators appointed by the Governor. There is a clear distinction between the management functions assigned to the division and the advisory function of the Board. The Board is the established link between citizens and policymakers, and as such provides community feedback to policymakers from the public. The Board gathers information and discusses issues at public meetings held during the annual Board tour of the Pioneer Homes. From the information gathered at their meetings, the Board develops policy recommendations that are forwarded to the Governor.

Consumers

The average age of current Pioneer Home residents is 85.6 years. As of October 1, 2010 we have 232 residents on the Older Alaskan's Medicaid Waiver or the Divisions' Payment Assistance Program and 231 residents who are full pay or private insurance approximately 50/50%. As of December 15, 2010 the Pioneer Homes has 318 female residents and 139 male residents.



Services

In the spirit of resident directed care, Pioneer Home care teams involve a resident's family, friends, and advocates in assessing and planning a resident's service needs during the admission process and periodically thereafter. At the conclusion of the assessment, a service level is determined based on the resident's needs and abilities. Services available to residents of the Homes may include:

- ❖ Meal preparation
- ❖ Emergency call systems/assistance
- ❖ Assistance with bathing, dressing, and eating
- ❖ Assistance with medications
- ❖ Health assessment
- ❖ Recreational opportunities
- ❖ Social work services
- ❖ Opportunities for spiritual worship

Of the general types of available services listed above, certain services have been grouped into categories called service levels. There are three different service levels and each resident receives services within one particular level of care. Monthly charges are based on the service level of care. The three service levels available to residents of the Pioneer Homes are as follows:

Level I services	The provision of housing, meals, emergency assistance, and opportunities for recreation; level I services do not include staff assistance with activities of daily living, medication administration, or health-related services, although the pioneer home pharmacy may supply prescribed medications;
Level II services	The provision of housing, meals, and emergency assistance; and As stated in the resident's assisted living plan, staff assistance, including assistance with activities of daily living, medication administration, recreation, and health-related services; assistance provided by a staff member includes supervision, reminders, and hands-on assistance, with the resident performing the majority of the effort. During the night shift, the resident is independent in performing activities of daily living and capable of self-supervision;

Level III services

The provision of housing, meals, and emergency assistance; and
As stated in the resident's assisted living plan, staff assistance, including extensive assistance with activities of daily living, medication administration, recreation, and health-related services; assistance provided by a staff member includes hands-on assistance, with the staff member performing the majority of the effort; the resident may receive assistance throughout a 24-hour day, including the provision of care in a transitional setting.



Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board
Southeast tour Oct 2010

Initiatives from Central Office

Results Based Accountability Project

This past year we have joined an initiative by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services and the Alaska Mental Health Trust in developing performance measures called “Results Based Accountability”. This initiative is designed to graph and track data and use the information as a feedback regarding implementing program improvements. Below is an excerpt:

End Result:	Provision of safe accessible housing for elder Alaskans who choose to live in the Pioneer Homes.
Headline Performance Measure:	Increasing the availability of beds in the Pioneer Homes will provide safe, accessible housing for Alaska seniors.
How is this related to the result:	Decreases in the number of elders on our Active Waitlist will measure and indicate an increase in safe and accessible housing in the Pioneer Homes.
The population of Alaskans ages 65 and older is predicted to grow significantly as baby boomers age. The projected Alaska Pioneer Homes Active Waitlist will parallel the same upward trend. Currently, the numbers on the Active Waitlist are outpacing the ability to provide assisted living beds and services to Alaska elders who choose the Pioneer Homes as their home.	
Baselines:	As of June 2010 there are 466 elders 65 and older on the Pioneer Home Active Waitlist. That number is expected to reach 707 elders by 2015; almost doubling in 5 years. Increasingly the people who are at the top of the Active Waitlist and offered admittance are much older and have more acute needs.
Story:	<p>H&SS emphasizes the Medicaid Waiver program which enables elders to stay in their homes for longer periods of time. This reduces Alaska’s costs for care. In the event an elder cannot live independently the department values a spectrum of care which includes the state run Pioneer Homes. In addition, the department values private sector solutions for elders who need assisted living services. The Pioneer Homes proposal for expansion is to assume responsibility for only a portion of the assisted living services projected future need.</p> <p>Frequently, our Homes receive desperate calls from family members for placement of their loved one when an elder’s safety and well being are in jeopardy living independently and we cannot respond to the elders who are in a serious emergency for housing. In addition, when people finally are at the top of the Active Waitlist their acuity is usually high. Our residents with ADRD parallel our Active Waitlist. And projections indicate both cohorts will continue to increase.</p>
Action Plan:	Expand and build bed capacity in the Pioneer Homes

Pioneer Home Expansion

LOOKING FORWARD, Alaska Pioneer Homes

The Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes has developed, in conjunction with NorthWind Architects, Steve Fishback, Architect, a proactive plan to understand the need and develop a course of action to add 205 beds to the existing inventory over the next 10 years. While this increase surely will not satisfy all the demand, it will reduce the impact while maintaining a fiscally responsible operations budget.

Electronic Medical Records

For some time now staff at the Pioneer Homes has been requesting we explore and purchase a new resident management system/Electronic Medical Records. Our current system ACCU-Med & Risk Plus is wholly inadequate for our needs. We are using two systems plus duplicating everything first on paper and then entering this information into ACCU-Med and/or Risk Plus. ACCU-Med is not “user friendly” and it is costly to have to have repeated trainings due to its complexity and lack of program intuitiveness. In addition, the current program is time consuming to enter information, to run reports and thus we are using paper because this is the preferred and easier method, thus we are duplicating medical information. The Pioneer Homes endeavors to implement a fully functional integrated electronic medical records (EMR) system that integrates our resident records, pharmacy, Medicaid billing and data generation into one seamless electronic medical records system.

This past year we have created a group with representation from most of the homes. The group is comprised of “super users”; employees who use ACCU-Med on a regular basis and fully understand the paper/work flow required in relation to an electronic medical records system. We hope our system will be web based which will enable central office to easily run reports system wide. Our system will interface with the larger state-wide transfer system being put into place this next fiscal year. This transfer system will enable the Pioneer Homes to send resident medical records to doctors, hospitals and other health care providers in a secure manner. We have not identified a funding source at this time and thus we are slowly organizing our project.

Anchorage Pioneer Home Introduction

The Anchorage Pioneer Home, the largest of the six Alaska Pioneers Homes, is appropriately located in the heart of the largest city in Alaska in the historical community core. We've worked very hard to make the Anchorage Pioneer Home a hub of activity and integral part of the downtown community. With our prime location right next to the Park Strip, the famous Anchorage reindeer "Star" and our beautiful grounds covered in flowers in the summer and sparkling white lights in the winter, the home is an attraction for visitors and neighbors. The home is an important component of the local community and hosts not only activities which are fun for the whole family such as concerts and parties but also business meetings such as local homeowners associations, and also serves as a voting station.



Lucky Wells and Acting Anchorage Pioneer Home Administrator, Josh Shaver looking at Lucky's South Carolina Collards

The Anchorage Pioneer Home provides licensed assisted living care for Alaska resident elders sixty-five years old or older. The home has a capacity for 168 elders and provides care at three different levels including care for persons with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia (ADRD). In 2000 the home became registered as an Eden Alternative® Home. The goal of the Pioneer Homes Eden Alternative program is to overcome the three issues that elders in long term care face: loneliness, helplessness and boredom. We combat the three elements that plague an elder's life by creating a natural home environment where elders, caregivers, support staff, family members, friends and volunteers all participate in elder-centered care. The Eden Alternative is an ongoing process and so the Anchorage Pioneer Home devotes resources to ensure that we are experiencing growth on an annual basis. A recent example can be found in our dementia care neighborhood which has left behind the institutional moniker of "1 North" and been re-christened Delaney Garden, this neighborhood has also recently adopted a cat "Lucky" who is enjoyed by many of our elders.

Our History

The Anchorage Pioneer Home building was constructed in stages beginning with the five story tower in 1977 and completed in 1982. The Elders of the Anchorage home include many of the great pioneers of the first half of the 20th century including homesteaders, miners, authors, teachers, former television stars, bush pilots, and families who turned Anchorage from a railroad tent town to Alaska's center of commerce and culture. We prominently display books written by our elders and hunting trophies taken by our elders as well.

We have also had the privilege of providing homes for many former clergy including a sister from Nome and ministers from point Hope. The Anchorage Pioneers' Home has served elders ranging in age from mid-60's to over 100.



The Anchorage Pioneer Home's new awning

Accomplishments

This year the Anchorage home has once again been the site of construction improvements to the home that provide a better quality of life for the Elders. As would be expected in any facility after 30 years of service, particularly one that involves hundreds of staff serving 168 Alaskan Elders; maintenance upgrade projects are a regular part of the schedule.

Most of the ceiling tiles and lighting in the common areas has been significantly upgraded to provide a more attractive presentation; higher quality lighting which has been shown to benefit elders, and improved cost efficiency. Another area of unseen, but necessary improvement

occurred in our heating system with the replacement and re-plumbing of the majority of all mechanical fixtures in our hydronic system. We had our entire parking lot resealed and we have moved our sheds to allow for more valuable visitor parking. Also, our Northside bathing rooms are being significantly remodeled to provide better access, equipment, and a more comfortable bathing setting. Not only have the capital projects been accomplished but our maintenance continues to upgrade our resident rooms with new lighting and carpeting.

Challenges

As would be expected in any facility after 30 years of service, particularly one that involves hundreds of staff serving 168 Alaskan Elders, there are many maintenance challenges. Unfortunately our maintenance staff is unable to keep up on important preventive maintenance issues as well as routine maintenance needs. Their time and talents are spent on important life safety issues that take priority. APH has a real need for more maintenance staff due to the age and condition of the building as well as the increase in maintaining equipment necessary for the care of the elders we serve.



Mercy and Ed Meyers visiting in the Raspberry Café

Unlike nursing homes and hospitals, our assisted living home license requires us to chart on a resident only if something unusual occurs. However, Medicaid standards and regulations require our nursing and activity staff to document at a similar level as nursing home/hospital documentation. These additional documentation requirements naturally result in less elder contact and less care time. Due to the Medicaid regulatory requirements the Anchorage Pioneer Home is continually struggling to keep up with mandated documentation. In addition, non compliance may result in interruption of revenue streams as well as monetary fines. Next fiscal year we have requested positions for neighborhood medical records assistant for each area of the home, which would alleviate valuable nursing time spent on documenting and increase their time with residents. In addition, a neighborhood medical records assistant will increase our ability to be in compliance with both state and federal regulations.



Southside residents enjoying Christmas cookies

Another area of challenge for the home is our housekeeping; APH has the same number of housekeeping and laundry staff today as nine years ago in 2001. However, during that same time frame our census has increased from 120 to 168 residents in 2010 and with coinciding increases in resident acuities. As a result the housekeeping and laundry personnel have been stretched beyond reason. This all important function is the bedrock of our Home; keeping the Home sanitary and clean.



Bertha Westphal playing games with staff in Denali Garden

The APH staff feels very strongly that we are stewards of the Home and the Home belongs to the people of Alaska. As stewards we strive to keep the Home at full capacity in order to meet the needs of as many elders we can in a safe environment. Year round, our available occupancy remains at close to 100% and only dips briefly during the process of admission. This will always be a high level of emphasis for the home.

We continue to adjust to the trends of the industry. Since the inception of the Medicaid Waiver program increasingly most elders are able to stay in their homes. Typically, elders are now entering our Home when it becomes a medical necessity.

We regularly have to deal with frantic, heart wrenching requests from elders and their family for immediate placement in level III rooms. It is our policy and promise to current residents who move in at levels I and II that when their needs change they will have first priority for level III care. Other ideas would be to find ways to reach out to the community with education about the importance of “not waiting” until the last minute. This translates into long waiting lists for level III beds and empty rooms in our Level I assisted living portion of the building. Finding creative uses for the approximately 40 rooms is a challenge for the facility, creating a stepped level between level 2 and 3 which would require less expensive upgrades such as resident monitoring systems for elders with dementia and bathing remodels is one way this could bring full utilization to the building. Other physical needs for the Home includes the South building which does not currently meet building codes, particularly earthquake requirements that have been previously estimated to be in the 8-12 million dollar ranges for repairs.



Chuck Slajer and Barbara enjoying an outing at the fair

The good news is that the elders who live in the Anchorage Pioneer Home receive outstanding care in a safe and loving environment from staff of highly qualified professionals. We received a deficiency free licensing evaluation this year which reflects on the high standards that we strive to maintain. It is flattering to know that we are known by the ombudsman’s office, assisted living licensing, and other agencies as a great place for elders to live. We are also proud that APH is a teaching facility with a continual flow of students from local and out of state universities. APH continues to participate in the University of Alaska Apprenticeship Program and we have pharmacy students from USC on an ongoing basis.



APH enjoys a great reputation in our community, among our elders, and their families. We are excited that our volunteer program brings literally hundreds of volunteers into the Home each month. But most of all we are honored and proud to be a part of the lives of the elders we serve.

Jane Belhke and a volunteer decorating Easter eggs

Sitka Pioneer Home

Introduction

The Sitka Pioneers' Home campus of today is a diverse community consisting of an assisted living home able to accommodate up to 75 elders, a preschool and an independent 501(c)(3) volunteer organization called Braveheart Volunteers. The central location of the Home, in downtown Sitka, allows for ample opportunity for community interaction and vibrant, robust activity opportunities.



The Sitka Pioneer Home

In 1920, the Superintendent of the Sitka Pioneers' Home (SPH) H.G. Morton wrote: "Difficulty was experienced in securing trained nurses and for a short period it was necessary to get along with but two and even one nurse, instead of the usual number...Very few changes were made to the staff of the institution during the period covered by the report and all employees have proved to be loyal to the institution and the inmates thereof...A number of improvements have been made to grounds and buildings during the past biennium, among them the building of a hospital and laundry, the painting of all buildings...a great number of improvements are still necessary and will be gone into further in this report."

It's interesting to look back in history, some 90 years ago, and see that the Home was experiencing many of the same challenges we have today; difficulty in obtaining qualified staff, and ongoing, necessary improvements to an aging facility. And achieving many of the same successes; currently we are fortunate to have qualified staff that genuinely care about our residents and our Home in the same manner written about 90 years ago; "loyal to the institution". This past year, like in 1920, we have also made a number of improvements to the grounds and the various buildings on campus, but "a great number of improvements are still necessary".

Accomplishments

Building maintenance and renovations:

This past year the renovations, including new paint, flooring and cabinetry, of one third floor and one second floor dining area which, are now complete. In addition, this past year, the second floor medication room renovation is also complete. And the boiler room ongoing upgrade is expected to be completed by November 2010. After the beginning of 2011 several dining areas in other parts of the home are scheduled to be renovated as well. And, SPH has designed a new security system which, is currently out to bid for installation.



Fall 2010 Pioneer Homes Advisory Board
tour of the Sitka Home

Totem Square Project:



The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) awarded \$307,910 to the contractor CBC Construction of Sitka to make improvements to Totem Square, located in front of the Sitka Pioneer Home. The Totem Square land is owned by State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and by memorandum of agreement the Alaska Pioneer Homes/DHSS is responsible for maintaining it. It is in statute that DHSS cannot own public lands and DNR may, thus the multi-department initiative. In addition, the Sitka Pioneer Homes is on the National Historical Registry, which includes Totem Square and there are historical guidelines and considerations that must be adhered to.

The original intent for the Totem was to commemorate the peace treaty that Alexander Andreyevich Baranov helped broker in 1805 after this battle between the Russians and the

Tlingit Indians. The pole was commissioned by the U.S. Forest Service 135 years after a pivotal battle that ushered in the peace talks. The pole was made at the request of local Tlingit leaders of Sitka's Kiksadi clan as a project of the Civilian Conservation Corps, a work program that was part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 'New Deal' launched during the Depression to put people to work. The pole was carved in Wrangell much to the disappointment of the Sitka tribes since Wrangell and the Sitka tribes had a long history of conflict. This resulted in a long standing controversy over the appropriateness of naked image depicted on the pole.

The current project will bring the square up to safety codes, improve access for people with disabilities, upgrade a fence along the existing seawall, improve drainage and add two sidewalks, new curbs, landscaping and lighting. In addition, the unstable Baranov Totem Pole will be brought down as part of the safety upgrade.

During construction, the totem pole will be displayed at the Geodetic House, 210 Seward St. A wood conservator will do a condition assessment on the pole while it is horizontal to determine if the original pole can be restored and erected again, or whether it needs to be replaced. Whether or not the original pole is reinstalled in Totem Square remains to be seen. There are many interested parties in this project and the final fate of the historically controversial totem will be decided by local Sitka tribes and the historical society.



Totem pole designed in 1940 by George Benson stands in front of the Pioneer Home in downtown Sitka's Totem Square

Partnerships:

This year SPH continued and created several partnerships. SPH has partnered with local elementary schools to provide multigenerational activities for the residents and with the University of Alaska Southeast to provide clinical rotation for CNA students. SPH also continues to partner with Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium's Community Health Services to provide clinical rotations for Community Health Aide training with a focus on chronic disease.

Challenges

Our staffing challenges in the SPH, as with most eldercare facilities, is a significant area of focus. As with other long term care facilities, SPH faces multiple layers of required paperwork that periodically taxes the limits of our current clerical capacity. There is a nationwide and rural Alaska shortage of nurses. We have limited ability to staff for needed escorts for residents to and from providers, such as doctor and dentist appointments, in the community. The escorting requires essential staff to leave their duties within the home and drive a resident. A staff member not on site lowers our resident/staff ratio and corresponding care. A part-time driver/escort would help ease the burden on essential staff.

As a result of the Alaska Medicaid Waiver program, which enables more and more elders to stay in their own homes the Pioneer Home system is experiencing elders, with increasingly higher acuity rates, when they select to enter our Homes. At SPH the acuity of residents and proportion of our population with higher acuities continues to increase which, create an extra burden on the direct care staff. Additionally, factoring in the higher acuities adds a level of complexity to planning staffing ratios and discussions regarding staffing.

The existing Pioneer Home was opened in 1913 and with any older building the ongoing maintenance is continual. SPH struggles to provide maintenance for the SPH grounds as well as the cemetery is ongoing. Maintenance staff is only able to provide minimal maintenance to the cemetery 2-3 times per year.



Al Gordon raises the flag in front of the
Sitka Pioneer Home

Juneau Pioneer Home Introduction

The Juneau Pioneer Home was built in 1988 and is currently home to 45 incredible elder Alaskans. The Home is nestled in the wetlands along Juneau's Egan Drive and has breathtaking views of nearby mountains and the channel that divides the mainland from Douglas Island. The home is divided into four neighborhoods that serve as mini-communities.



Gladys offers the radiant beauty of her smile, matching the beauty of flowers grown at the Juneau Pioneer Home.

The Juneau Pioneer Home promotes the Eden Alternative. Within the Eden philosophy, family, friends, pets, and plants all contribute to creating a “human habitat” by revitalizing relationships and encouraging residents to be involved in a vibrant community. Central to the Eden philosophy is that decisions are made by teams which are comprised of the residents and the people closest to the residents. The team members sustain each other and are committed to providing compassionate care to our residents in a manner that nurtures the human body, mind and spirit while preserving the dignity and individuality of our residents.



Accomplishments

We have had many blessings and accomplishments this year in the Juneau Pioneer Home. We have enjoyed accomplishing our goals to further the enrichment of the lives of our residents and our commitment to staff development.



Nick, Robert, Millie, and Olive show off their hearty catch after a successful fishing expedition

The Juneau Pioneer Home involved staff and elders in creating a new mission statement this year. Our new mission statement is this: "The mission of the Juneau Pioneer Home is to cultivate a caring, vibrant, and engaging community where elders are the heart of the home."

We received monies, the result of a request to the legislature, to put a new floor in the kitchen. During the project, we had to completely move out of the kitchen and main dining room. The kitchen staff cooked lunch and dinner at the high school. All staff helped cook breakfast in the neighborhoods. Staff and elders handled the project with great flexibility and humor.

This year we advanced our commitment to the Eden Alternative approach to care. Our Foundation provided the funding for three staff members to go the Eden International Conference, where two JPH Certified Nursing Assistants helped with the opening ceremonies, and our administrator co-presented a session on distance delivered Certified Eden Associate training. In order to deepen our understanding of the Eden Alternative philosophy, our Administrator is now an Eden Mentor.

This year we began a regular gathering of all staff entitled "Conversations". This is a time when we have a dialogue about topics and issues that are important to us. So far we have had Conversations about preventing falls, our mission statement, and decision making. It has been a great way for us to hear everyone's views and ideas.

Partnerships

Tlingit and Haida Central Council operate a Head Start program in our home, which offers great opportunities for developing relationships between elders and children.

This year the Head Start program had a federal audit. The auditors were so impressed that they featured this program as a national model. They are hoping to encourage people to replicate this model in other assisted living homes and nursing homes. And, if that wasn't enough then our Head Start teacher, Lisa Arehart, was named Teacher of the Year.



Bob Stutte teaches Nick Mehrabad how to dance

We continue to serve as a clinical site for students working to become Certified Nursing Assistants. There was a period of time where it looked like we would lose our ability to serve as a clinical site because of regulatory issues. But we worked closely with the Board of Nursing, and were able to continue this mutually beneficial program.

Challenges

Our facility design is presenting many difficulties and limitations in serving our residents. The provision of successful and humane residential care for people with Alzheimers' Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD) requires careful planning, skilled staff, and physical environments that reduce the effects of the disease. Improperly designed environments result in increased behavioral disturbances (including agitation and aggression), higher rates of resident injuries, and increased staff injuries. These injury rates are costly to the system and heartbreaking for residents, families, and staff. In order for confused residents to safely negotiate their environment, the facility must have small home-like neighborhoods that favor centralizing resident activity and allowing for closer staff observation.



Robert Parker enjoys an old car that a friend brought to our home.

Bathing rooms must have certain safety features for confused residents. Outdoor areas must allow for safe, protected wandering paths, which significantly reduce agitation and aggression, and make it possible for residents with ADRD to go outside without assistance. Successful redesigns maximize functional independence, decrease excess disability, improve safety, improve mobility, decrease resident falls, and result in improved quality of life. The number of residents in the Juneau Pioneer Home who have ADRD averages 85%. We have submitted

a capital request for a planning and design project to hire an architect with expertise in dementia care and facility design. This architect will work with our staff, residents and families to create a re-design that will provide the best possible environment for people with ADRD.

We are also experiencing additional challenges in serving residents who are over 350 pounds. Our doorways are not wide enough to accommodate larger wheelchairs. Our bathrooms are too small to safely negotiate the space with a large resident, a lift, and a couple of staff members. Our shower stalls, and toilets cannot handle the weight. Our lifts and transferring equipment are inadequate for larger weights. We are researching changes that need to be made and will need to find funding for facility renovation and equipment purchase.



Administrator Jill Sandleben meeting with the Alaska Pioneer Advisory Board and Deputy Commissioner Pat Hefley

Ketchikan Pioneer Home Introduction:

The Ketchikan Pioneer Home (KPH) is licensed to care for 47 assisted living residents. The Home is situated on a garden hillside that neighbors the Alder Park, Sea View Terrace, the Alaska Marine Highway Ferry Terminal and the Inter-Island Ferry. Resident rooms are located on the two upper floors of the three-story building and are divided into neighborhoods based on resident level of care. The average daily census is 41 and the average resident age is 85.

KPH is proud to offer a Respite Program, which allows applicants on the waitlist to stay for 14 days while their primary caregiver receives medical treatment and/or much needed rest. This essential program is the only one in our community and is critical to many of our frail, elderly friends. Another point of pride for our staff and residents is the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Fawn Mountain Elementary Indian Education Preschool program. This preschool is housed on the 2nd floor and fills our halls with the laughter of children.



Anastacia Ylanan and Nurse IV extraordinaire, Allis May Davis, enjoy the sights while on the Allen Marine and Holland America/Princess Alaska Harbor Cruise of

Accomplishments

This past year we renewed our emphasis on wellness with an increase in activities geared toward the resident's spiritual and physical well-being. We offer church services, gospel singing, outdoor walking clubs, swim therapy through the Arthritis Foundation, a specialized exercise class and a restorative aide program that has become vital to the residents. This increase in physical activities along with monthly massage therapy and spa days leads to a stronger and more balanced elder. The Gerontology Institute through Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, Oregon is now a resource to KPH residents through the telemedicine project. A number of KPH residents are now receiving geriatric assessments and treatment for issues such as change in mental status, mood or behavior changes, multiple medication interactions, and gait and balance disorders.



KPH resident Bessie Comiskey and KPH Administrator Julie Sande during a recent Breast Cancer Awareness event

We continue to remain committed to improving our process of Assisted Living Plan meetings so that all disciplines are able to contribute to the care plan process as well as the resident and residents loved ones. We have also maintained improvement in our resident charts and recent OSHA and Assisted Living Licensing audits were very complimentary of the care provided.

Additionally the KPH has the added responsibility of charting through Peace Health's electronic medical record system which provides better continuity of care for the resident and improved communication with local medical professionals. When KPH residents arrive at the emergency room there is an updated medication list available to the physician through this database.

KPH is committed to ensuring intergenerational activities through the continuation of the preschool on site as well as regular visits from many other committed volunteers in our community who have established relationships with our residents. Since we began our emphasis on

intergenerational activities many years ago, our first young volunteers are now returning to us as teenagers and spending time with the residents at activities such as the pre-prom party where we host 75+ teenagers for appetizers and a photo opportunity with the residents before the prom.



KPH resident Margaret McCombs enjoys the Doll & Bear Tea Party with her Great-Granddaughters



KPH resident Teresa Lapinski and C.N.A II Trinidad Purschwitz dance during the recent Grandparent Day Celebration.

We have made several significant improvements to the KPH building this past year including the exterior painting and window replacement project which was completed in November 2009. The window replacement has allowed our residents in wheel chairs to see out of the windows and this has been greatly appreciated by them. The project included a complete painting/staining of the exterior, removal and replacement of the sky bridge, exterior lighting upgrade and complete removal replacement of exterior windows and doors. Additionally during the past year the following areas have been renovated: Great Room resident kitchen/activity area, Fireweed Dining/Sitting Area, Garden View Dining Area and the 2nd Floor Sun Room.

Food is very important to our elders and this year we continued our offering of fresh fish to our

residents through donations of locally processed fish. The residents have had hundreds of pounds of fresh salmon and halibut donated. In addition to this service, our residents also enjoy fresh bread and pastries baked weekly from scratch.

We continue to find solutions to recruitment and retention of our CNAs. One solution has been the KPH Foundation offering CNA scholarships in exchange for work agreements to the KPH. This has enhanced our ability to capture the best of the CNAs in the class and hire these students before they go out into the community and seek work elsewhere. Thus, we are no longer scrambling to recruit CNA staff. Additionally, we also participated in the creation of a recruitment video hoped to highlight some of the many unique qualities our community and Home have to offer potential candidates.

Partnerships

The KPH Foundation is a non-profit agency whose sole purpose is to assist the residents of the Pioneer Home with services and equipment not provided by the State. This summer more than 200 Pioneers of Alaska graced our halls during 94th annual Grand Igloo Convention held in Ketchikan. We honored the Pioneers with an open house and tea party with tables of handmade pastries and treats. The KPH Foundation paid for the ingredients for all of our wonderful home baked items for our tea party.



Tea Party Pastries!

Fiscally KPH has been increasing its receipt of private funding in order to improve our elder care. Grant funding has been sought and obtained from the Rasmuson Foundation and BP Oil. Private funding has been obtained through the KPH Foundation, private donors, and local businesses. The Rasmuson Foundation has provided a wheelchair accessible custom computer desk and we have accepted a donation of a computer for the new resident media station located on the third floor. This will allow residents a greater opportunity to network and socialize with loved ones despite limited mobility. Recent studies indicate that improved socialization through the internet decreases loneliness and depression among seniors.

KPH is committed to our collaborations within our community through our membership and partnership with many local agencies some of which include: Ketchikan General Hospital, Ketchikan Indian Corporation, Rendezvous, Senior Services, Community Connections, Kayhi Community Service Club and Rotary. We also recently hosted a tea for over 250 Pioneers of Alaska during the Grand Convention held in Ketchikan and continue to host the K.I.C monthly dinner.

Anna Dundas and behind her is Harley Hall and Victor Hanson at the August 2010 outing to the Totem Bight Park Native Dancers.



Challenges

The Tongass neighborhood bathing area and bathroom is in need of an extensive remodel and the Fireweed dining area is in need of a remodel to increase dining and living space. The storage area for equipment is in critical need of updating in every neighborhood within KPH. Currently, there is not an effective way to handle aggressive residents and the only alternative is to evict them from the Pioneer Home system. Additional training has been requested from the staff for Palliative Care training and training on working with aggressive resident.



Ketchikan Administrator, Julie Sande speaks with
Director Dave Cote, and Commissioners Lal Banarsi,
Sharon Howerton-Clark, Bob Sivertsen and Joe
Fields

Fairbanks Pioneer Home



Sarah Jane Hanna posed with the visiting Barber Shop Quartet, who helps the home celebrate the Golden Days of Fairbanks

Introduction

The Fairbanks home is the second oldest Home in the Alaska Pioneer Home system and began serving elders from the community and outlying interior in July 1967. Tucked away in a secluded area, 93 residents call this their home. We continue to strive for quality care and creating a harmonious environment for our residents by commitment to the Eden principals. We continue to promote an atmosphere of warmth and friendships. Building lasting relationships with our residents and their families is a pivotal part in our idea of holistic care.

History

The Fairbanks Pioneer Home was completed in July 1967 and became the second Home in the Pioneer Home system, following Sitka. The Home sits on 16 acres so the residents can enjoy nature while still having quick access to town. The Fairbanks Pioneer Home is the second largest home, following Anchorage, and serves 93 residents and their families.

Accomplishments

The Fairbanks Pioneer Home Foundation continues to support the needs of our residents. They are a very active group of caring and compassionate members from the community. This year, the Foundation was instrumental in purchasing lighting for our walkway. This will ensure the safety of the residents, staff, and visitors as they use the much needed walkway in the darker months.

Last year, we had four security cameras installed within the facility which enables us to better monitor the safety of our residents. The cameras have increased the security of the residents and we have requested and received 23 more cameras. This will ensure further security regarding residents and their safety, both inside and outside the building. The entire building was rewired for cable TV this summer. New cable was greatly needed because it was outdated and could not manage today's technology. As a result, residents can now enjoy cable TV with minimal problems and disruptions.



Resident Carl Heflinger 98, posed in July with the sunflowers that the residents had started in early spring.

We are currently under construction to remodel 26 bathrooms on Moosewood. This has proven to be challenging for residents and staff due to the logistics and length of the project. Some bathrooms will have the tub replaced with a walk-in shower while others will be provided with a storage closet. All tubs will be removed from the Moosewood neighborhood.

In May we went through our recertification process to remain an Eden facility. We continue to do many great and fun things with our residents and have made improvements to the environment that further show we are a home, not an institution.

Partnerships:

We continue to participate in the Fairbanks Senior Services provider group which meets monthly to address issues relating to elders in our community. Our Home is once again partnering with the Alzheimer's Association, this time to offer training to our staff. The training will be in dementia care with an emphasis on how to handle the many challenges care for this population.



Resident Agnes Moore goes for a ride with her son, Will Mayo



Resident Annie Titus shares a hug with Janet.

A more recent struggle we have been experiencing is timely provisional clearances from our Background Check Unit. At times, we have waited five days for a provisional background clearance. This can further delay the hiring of new employees and may cause the applicant to accept employment elsewhere.

Challenges

We continue to have struggles recruiting registered nurses. However, we are able to find and hire licensed practical nurses. We also continue to struggle with personnel issues. The time and energy spent resolving these issues take away from our mission to care for our elders. The state personnel system continues to challenge us in addressing these issues. The lack of understanding elder issues further prevents timely discipline and/or termination.



Take me out to the ballgame...residents enjoy a Gold-panner game.

All in all, this has been another great year! We truly enjoy the work we do and the time we get to spend with our precious residents.



3 generations of "Garage Sellers": Maggie Fairfield (on the right in the chair) her 2 daughters and her granddaughter (on the far left)

Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home Introduction

Our Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home continues to strive to assist older Alaskans to have the highest quality of life by providing assisted living in a safe home setting which promotes independence, positive relationships, meaningful activities and physical, emotional and spiritual growth.

Our History

The Palmer Pioneer Home was built in 1971 on the former site of the Alaska State Fairgrounds. Nestled in the heart of downtown Palmer, the home is surrounded by beautiful views of the Chugach and Talkeetna Mountain Ranges as well as the massive Knik Glacier.

In 1999 the Home became registered as an official Eden Alternative® home. The Home's casual country charm made for a seamless transition to the Eden Alternative approach and to a home environment centered on the residents. There are several resident neighborhoods complete with their own dining rooms and sitting/activity areas that support the Eden philosophy.



Alaska Veteran's & Pioneer Home in Palmer,
Alaska



Governor Parnell Signs two Bills at AVPH June
17, 2010

In May 2004 the Alaska legislature approved development of the state's first veteran's home. After extensive remodeling and program development to meet the requirements of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the facility was certified and renamed the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home in February 2007. Seventy-five percent of the seventy nine beds in the Home are designated for veterans, and twenty-five percent are available for non-veterans. Qualifying veterans are eligible for a per-diem from the VA to offset costs of their care. Today, forty-one percent of our residents are veterans.

Accomplishments

In the past year we focused on meeting the division mission; "...to assist older Alaskas to have the highest quality of life by providing asisted living in a safe home setting which promotes positive relationships, meaningful activites and physical, emotional and spiritual growth" by providing the highest quality of life in a safe home environment for our residents and veterans, operating within budget, and reducing employee injuries. We continue to use the Eden Principles as a guide for carrying out the administrative duties of our operation while honoring residents and giving our employees the resources and support needed to do their jobs well.

The Home's Quality Assurance (QA) Program is the tool that enables us to monitor and measure our progress towards meeting those goals. Division goals were incorporated into this year's QA program goals of improving resident and staff safety and ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements. After a sentinel event in the first quarter of the fiscal year, we formed a process improvement team to analyze safety risks and implemented measures that resulted in positive outcomes in resident and staff safety. We focused on improving systems and processes to maximize efficiency and prevent injuries.

Some of the measures taken include:

- ❖ Implementation of the final phase of the Safe Lifting Initiative. Ceiling lifts were installed in six resident rooms and all of the bathing rooms. Nursing transfer assessment algorithms were developed to provide each resident with a safe transfer protocol
- ❖ Establishment of equipment competency requirements for all direct care staff. Developed troubleshooting guides and posted on patient care equipment
- ❖ Implementation of a system to regularly inspect and replace patient care equipment and supplies based on manufacturer's recommendations
- ❖ Assessment of residents for fall risk upon admission and change of condition utilizing the Morse Scale, a standardized assessment tool used in the healthcare industry
- ❖ Implementation of Maximo software program to maximize the efficiency of the work request procedure. This enables us to measure work and assists the maintenance department in prioritizing repair needs and tracking preventive maintenance due dates thereby ensuring a safe environment for residents



Caring is paramount! Hugs are always abundant at AVPH. C.N.A Richard and resident Joyce Willis share caring hugs.

- ❖ Evaluation and revision of our employee orientation and education program with a focus on topics related to safety risks we had identified through our QA monitoring.
- ❖ Disaster preparedness planning

Our actions to increase safety in our Home have resulted in the following:

- ❖ There have been no sentinel events related to falls in the last 13 months
- ❖ Overall fall rate decreased from 7.7 in the first quarter of the fiscal year to 4.3 in the last quarter
- ❖ From January to August 2010, there has been a 21% reduction in direct care employee injuries and an 11% reduction in employee injuries overall for the same reporting period in 2009
- ❖ Non-perm costs dropped by \$71,269.00 from FY 09 to FY 10

We had a wonderful organic garden this year that the residents planted and enjoyed



Disaster Preparedness

As an off shoot of our safety efforts– we joined the nationwide effort to better prepare for a disaster by following recommendations in the National Continuity of Operations Plan. Our fire and disaster response plan was completely rewritten to comply with those recommendations. A tabletop exercise on minimizing our facility's earthquake risk resulted in the installation of reinforcements to heavy shelving in the kitchen and maintenance shop to prevent collapse during an earthquake.

Twelve members of the team attended a four day Community Emergency Response Team training session. The Home has stayed active in the Local Emergency Planning Committee which integrates our disaster response plan with the local communities' plan.

We have an agreement in place with a local church to provide shelter in the event evacuation is necessary. We continue to work with the division central office to identify grant funding for the purchase of emergency supplies.

Partnerships

Involvement in community supports our mission of providing a high quality of life for our veterans and pioneers. In addition to our annual events on Veterans and Memorial Days, our residents also participated in the following community events this year:

- Mat- Su Valley Veterans Summit
- Alaska State Fair – Thanks to the staff's fund raising efforts and donations from the American Legion, all residents who were willing and able attended the fair. One of our resident's pie and bread entries won prize ribbons
- Chamber of Commerce Gingerbread House Contest – our residents' and many community entries were displayed and judged at the home
- The Dorothy Page Museum in Wasilla captured a piece of history from our living legends with interviews and videotapes that will be featured at the Museum

The residents' lives are enriched by our plentiful community garden, the support of so many groups in the community, and of course a fabulous staff. This year our Nurse Manager, Phyllis McIntosh was honored with a nomination for the Governor's Denali Award for Leadership. Our emphasis on employee well being has resulted in a turnover rate well below the national average.

The stringent VA standards took a different turn this year when the US Department of Veterans Affairs contracted with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to conduct annual inspections at all state veterans' homes. Our inspection was outstanding and resulted in another year of certification as a state veterans' home. Next year's inspection will challenge us further as the VA adopts the National Fire Protection Agency's standards for building and life safety.

Our maintenance crew has been kept extremely busy with their own projects as well as overseeing the work of contractors. In addition to their day to day work, our crew has refurbished 19 resident rooms. Using materials they salvaged from the gutting of another state building, they completely remodeled the staff break room/resident kitchen, and the Alzheimer's neighborhood living room and nurses' station. Other building projects included the replacement of television cables, electrical outlets, and telephone lines.

The generator electrical switch gear was also replaced as were the doors to the walk in freezer and refrigerator. The kitchen serving carts were replaced with modern carts that ensure proper food temperatures during preparation, transport and serving of resident meals. After a winter's struggle with roofing problems, the roofing on Sunny Loop neighborhood was repaired.

Challenges

Program:

To ensure veterans are able to take advantage of all their benefits, we are required to coordinate their care from multiple providers including the Department of Defense at Elmendorf AFB Hospital in Anchorage, Veterans Healthcare System at the outpatient clinics in Wasilla and Anchorage, Alaska Native Medical Center and numerous private healthcare providers in Anchorage and the Valley. This not only includes medical appointments, but x-ray, lab, and pharmacy services as well. Coordination of care and its documentation takes many hours of nursing time. In addition, we are required to document our compliance with federal regulations pertaining to Veteran's Homes, Medicaid and Medicare Part D and Alaska state licensing regulations that pertain to assisted living homes; all of which require periodic surveys and audits of our program. The intense record keeping for these regulatory entities takes direct care staff away from caring for our residents. Added clerical support staff would help free up nursing and CNA time for resident care.

As a VA facility we are required to provide transportation for medical care for veterans. In FY 10 our Activities staff traveled 5,358 miles providing transports for medical care for our veterans. When a staff person leaves the premises to take a resident to an appointment that reduces our on site staffing ratio. The onsite shortage presents many challenges for our staff.

Although, the Department of Health and Social Services continues in their attempts to resolve the need for residential care facilities for elders with behavior and mental health concerns, we are still challenged with providing care for persons who have behavior issues.

Facility

Our nursing staff continues to deal with the challenge of documenting and providing care from a cramped and poorly ventilated nursing resource center. Our pharmacy closet, located in the nursing resource area, is a source of risk and concern. Medications lose their stability and efficacy due to the high temperatures in the medication storage area. We have not found a viable solution to the problems related to poor ventilation and high temperatures.



Administrator, Lynda Garcia presenting Mary Kay Reindl CNA her 5 year service award. Awards are presented at AVPH annual employee appreciation day which is held in June every year.

Our solution has been to continually monitor the temperatures, which takes away valuable nursing time from our residents. And, we continue to consult regularly with our central pharmacy staff to ensure we are doing everything possible to make ensure medications do not lose their stability and efficacy due to the high temperatures in the medication storage area. A design and cost estimate have been completed to renovate this area and increase medication safety for our residents but has not received funding. In addition to our medication storage issues we are still in desperate need of storage space. There is an inefficient use of labor time used to move stored items from one room to another or travelling back and forth to retrieve necessary supplies or furniture from offsite storage units. Although we still do not have a storage building, some progress was made in the form of a design and cost estimate for the building as well.

We have found that, as a 24 hour facility (and an aging one) operating seven days a week, our maintenance coverage is vital to the safety to the operation of our Home and ultimately our residents. Measuring the time spent on different categories of work has made it evident that we are not able to keep up with preventive maintenance of equipment. Constant reprioritization is necessary to keep up with compliance requirements and work requests to address immediate resident and staff safety issues. Building repair and maintenance needs left unattended lead to significantly higher repair or replacement costs and pose a threat to resident and staff safety. The need for seven day a week coverage results in two days with only one crew member on duty and two days with only two on duty. Many maintenance duties require two persons working together on a particular project or repair, so this further delays the completion of projects and preventive maintenance. Two additional positions in this department would significantly contribute to improvements in building and life safety.

There is a great sense of pride in our accomplishments this year, especially the quality of life we provide for our residents. They are well cared for in a caring, respectful manner by a staff that is committed to fulfilling our mission.



Governor Sean Parnell meeting residents Ed Walker, Harold Newcomb at the signing bills into law that was held at the Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home in Palmer