



Grant Application to Friends Foundation for the Aging

Name of Project: The Montessori Inspired Lifestyle®

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Problem. Loneliness and isolation are the social equivalent to physical pain as it triggers the same pathways in the brain that engage in processing emotional responses to physical pain.¹ Isolation can worsen cognitive decline and increase risk for Alzheimer's and dementia.² Isolation is not just solitary living. Isolation occurs in groups of dementia residents as they gather but are not participatory. Those with memory decline often fail to follow directions for an activity or to verbalize questions; they are easily disoriented.

As cognitive decline rises there is a notable increase in the use of psychotropic medicines. Additionally, there is a positive corollary to the number of incidents and injuries: as cognition fails negative results escalate. Respectively, family interaction decreases while staff turnover and burn-out increases.

Innovation in treating this population is imperative as the number of seniors with dementia and associated diseases increases and the established method of caring for these individuals does not promote a productive life within the limits of the disability. The ultimate goal is to have residents largely control and maintain community elements and the environment (e.g., maintaining libraries, posted schedules, setting up for activities and meals, etc.) Equalizing the decision making creates the inclusive atmosphere necessary for diverse viewpoints to be heard; residents are critical contributors of establishing their care.

The residents of The Hickman Friends Senior Community of West Chester (The Hickman) Darlington Memory Care Neighborhood of 22 residents will benefit from this innovative program.

Solution. The Montessori Inspired Lifestyle® is an evidence-based training and implementation program that increases participation in community activity, reduces use of psychotropic drugs, decreases responsive behaviors, increases census, and improves the quality of life for residents and care givers alike.

¹ <https://theconversation.com/the-loneliness-of-social-isolation>. 2020.

² <https://theconversation.com/the-loneliness-of-social-isolation>. 2020.



Grant Request. The Hickman respectfully requests \$41,800.00 to institute Montessori training, credentialing, and implementation to the Darlington Memory Care Neighborhood of 22 residents. The Montessori approach will reduce isolation, improve participation in activities, increase self-reliance, develop creativity, address family communication, reduce use of psychotropic drugs, advance staff qualifications, and soothe staff burn-out while creating an inclusive and intentional community. The Hickman’s goal is to be the leader in innovative dementia treatment and serve as the standard bearer for improved outcomes, in this population in Chester County.

Actions. The Montessori Practitioner Certification trains supervisors and staff to approach residents with a disability framework rather than a disease framework.³ Care givers are taught skills that engage residents by implementing an “Ask, Why, Try” method of inclusion. Asking why a resident is responding in a certain way (or not responding), gently probing for the ‘why’ of a response and then offering an alternative, “let’s try this,” builds trust and lays a foundation for further success.

Corresponding affects for care givers are improved job satisfaction, reduced burn-out and an educated, qualified, and certified staff that are prepared for career advancement.

The 18-month program introduces staff to the concepts of autonomy and independence in the demented population as a way to increase residents’ quality of living while stabilizing their environment. Staff learn about creating activities that foster engagement and community while relying on the strengths of remaining cognition.

Residents are guided to create cognitive ramps. Cognitive ramps can be signs, drawings, terms, and other external aides, written in their own handwriting when possible, and placed in conspicuous places, to prompt an appropriate response. For example, staff guide residents to draw a picture of a table setting that includes plate, utensils, cup, etc. The residents place his/her name on the drawing then follow the drawing to set his/her place at the table. While this example is simple at its surface, the activity builds confidence as rudimentary acts convert to expertise and trite interactions become deepened rapport with care givers. The resulting self-sufficiency and connection to staff break away from traditional methods of dementia care.

Specialized, dynamic programing will follow the cognitive ramp theory. The remaining strengths of individuals are evaluated, and goals are set as appropriate. Additionally, cognitive ramps support the “Ask, Why, Try” method of engagement. Once an individuals’

³ Center for Applied Research in Dementia. Credentialing Handbook. <https://www.cen4ard.com/live-training/>.2022



base line ability is established, interactions are styled to the individual's cognitive ramp. "Ask, Why, try" is molded to language and actions that are more easily understood.

The Hickman strives for innovation in practices and principals that are sustainable and transformative. The Montessori method for dementia residents is an evidenced based, state of the art methodology for expanding productive, interesting lives.

The Hickman would stand as a highly regarded valued resource offering exceptional quality of life and standard of living for those in this population.

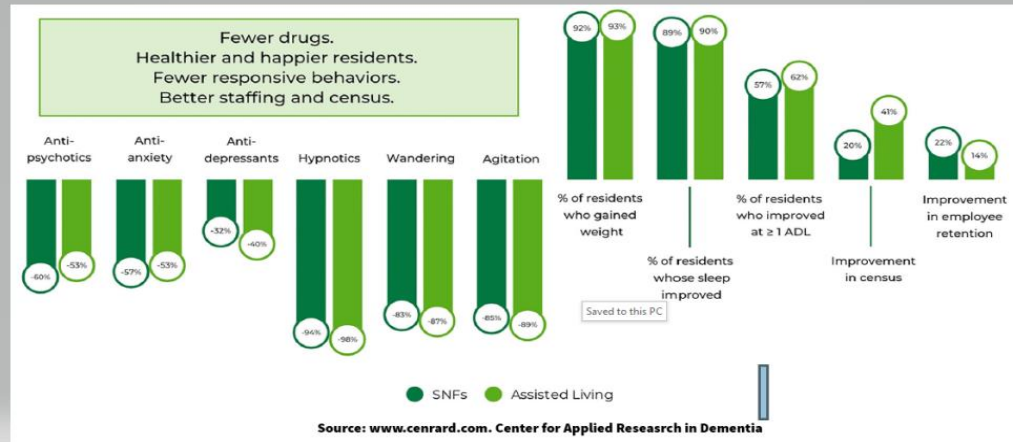
The extended positive effect on families cannot be overstated. Families report willingness to visit more often, engage in more activities and overall feel a sense of hope and resilience that was not accessible prior to the Montessori engagements. When the facility staff becomes more involved with families of their residents and help them make visits more meaningful, (through Montessori modalities), the families feel more satisfied with the visits. ⁴

Partners. The Hickman's primary solicitation for this project is from Friends Foundation for the Aging (FFA). Secondary partners may include other potential Quaker funders, e.g., Scattergood Foundation.

Impact. Training and implementation allow the care team to speak to the dignity of whole resident, integrate the family in meaningful ways, reduce chemical interventions, ease agitation, improve employee engagement and retention, and avoid responsive behaviors.

Intrinsic to the adoption of the Montessori strategies is an on-going plan for continued training. Specific staff members will be certified as trainers to assure new staff complete competencies. The Montessori system is, by definition, self-sufficient and sustainable as intake evaluations will use the Montessori scale of abilities and strengths.

⁴ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18519113/>



History. The Hickman was founded in 1891 and continues its mission of providing affordable care to seniors of modest means.

Two women of the West Chester Quaker Community identified the need for housing among the population of widowed, senior women and began raising funds to rent, then build, a home of safety and security. Early benefactors provided endowment funds in addition to building funds that set the path for a future of service to those of modest means. It was not long until men and couples joined the 'family'.

The Hickman is a senior living community in the heart of West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The Hickman provides individualized care and assistance to older adults who seek a safe and affordable living environment. The Hickman is committed to diversity. Quaker values lead to a policy of inclusion, seeking diversity, and nondiscrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, age, ability, or sexual orientation. Friends believe that there is "That of God in every person." This conviction shapes over three hundred years of action towards equality, respect for difference, and the dignity of all people at every age.



The Hickman is uniquely poised to execute The Montessori Inspired Lifestyle®. The supervisors of the activity’s unit boast a combined 40+ years of hands-on senior living experience. Both the Executive Director (ED) and the Director of Admissions (DOA) offer certifications in Aging Services Leadership and Activity Leadership. The Hickman’s Executive Director is a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) , Personal Care Home Administrator (PCHA), Certified Professional in Aging Services Risk Management (CPASRM), Certified Dementia Practitioner and Trainer (CDP) who has served the geriatric population for more than 30 years. The Director of Admissions, to whom the activity staff reports, claims certification is all areas of geriatric dementia care including but not limited to specialized dementia training, CPR, and advanced Emergency Medical Technician proficiency, and notably, she is a Certified Activity Professional. The DOA has proudly served The Hickman for over 17 years. The ED has served the senior population for over 30 years and has served The Hickman specifically for more than 4 years. The Hickman’s Activity supervisor is proud of her Bachelor of Science and Certifications and Licenses as an Occupational Therapy Assistant.

The Hickman’s unique qualifications include its 130-year history of serving senior adults. Since 1891, professionals have collaborated to offer state-of-the-art personal care, therapies, and housing. Our professionals discovered the Montessori Program as part of ongoing research into cutting edge modalities to assist our residents. The goal is and has been to support and treasure each individual’s potential for a long and productive life.

FRIENDS FOUNDATION FOR THE AGING
Montessori Inspired Lifestyle® Training
Budget: 18 Month Credentialing Journey

Supervisor and staff training	\$ 28,500.00
Credentiailling Assesment	\$ 7,500.00
Strengths Assessment Kit for persons living with dementia	\$ 2,000.00
Subtotal	\$ 38,000.00
The Hickman Administrative Expenses @ 10%	\$ 3,800.00

Total	\$ 41,800.00
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