

Trends & Technology

The color green has many positive connotations: money, evergreens, grass, sea glass, “going green” projects and even Kermit the Frog are feel good experiences. It’s also been noted by many that working in a garden and caring for green plants is good for the psyche.

Our featured trend looks at “green” in a new way. The latest and most promising way in which to provide long-term care services is called a “Green House”. It represents life and vibrancy. A Green House offers residents care and security, freedom and spontaneity, privacy and companionship and many other qualities that make life worth living. It is a social living model as opposed to a traditional medical model home.

Imagine an environment much like the home you’ve lived in your entire life. With your own private room and bath, outdoor spaces and open kitchen available as you like. Imagine sitting at the dining room table with your “family”. Imagine feeding your pet or tending to the plants and participating in make favorite recipes just as you once did with your children and grandchildren. “Green Houses provide an environment that cultivates growth and development – it’s a warm environment where residents will enjoy living,” says Lucille, a Green House resident.

Essentially, the Green House model honors residents as individuals and respects their independence. Roger Myers, President and CEO for Presbyterian Villages of Michigan states: “The Green House represents a complete transformation of culture and environment where care to the most frail elderly is provided in a compassionate and dignified manner.”

The founders of the Green House model and its predecessor, The Eden Alternative, are William Thomas, MD; a Harvard trained physician and his wife Judith. Dr. Thomas is a physician in family medicine and geriatrics. His professional life includes patient care, medical administration, research, teaching and writing. Bill and Judith head a consulting and advocacy group committed to improving the care received by nursing home residents everywhere. Their home base is in Sherburne, New York.

Michigan is one of the first states in the country to launch the Green House model of care. Presbyterian Villages of Michigan is a host organization for two such homes at their Redford, Michigan campus.

To learn more about Green Houses, check out www.edenalt.com and www.pvm.org.