Adopt a Resident for Christmas

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External Relationships Project

BACKGROUND
• The quality of resident care in US nursing homes has been a concern of public policy since the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987.
• One aspect of quality in nursing homes is culture of care. Providing residents with meaningful activity, stimulating environments, and social relationships can improve the culture, ultimately improving quality of care.
• At Crossroads, some residents have families who live far away and others don’t have family at all. Not having visitors can be especially hard during the holiday season.
• To increase the holiday experience for all residents, I organized a program called: Adopt-A-Resident For Christmas. Giving residents the opportunity to not only celebrate the holiday season, but also connect with those in the community will give residents a sense of meaning, joy, and increased satisfaction.

GOALS
• Provide happiness and increased satisfaction for all residents, both short term and long term
• Build community involvement in our nursing home
• Improve community members’ perceptions of nursing homes

METHODS
- Discuss project idea with interdisciplinary team
- Individually ask each resident what is on their ‘wish list’
- Ask residents excitement level before Christmas gift exchange / party
- Broadcast adoption program through flyers, word of mouth, Facebook
- Match each adopter with a resident
- Ask participants experience with nursing homes
- Have a holiday party – invite local community members to pass out gifts
- Send survey to adopters regarding experience / would they participate next year
- Ask residents about Christmas experience post gift giving & party

RESULTS
• Goal number of adopters: 80
  Actual number of adopters: 168
• Graph 1: % of residents looking forward to holiday season
• Graph 2: % of residents who were more satisfied with Christmas than expected after gift exchange / party
• Volunteers given survey regarding prior experience with nursing homes on a scale of 1-5: (1 = bad / worst, 5 = good / best. Not everyone responded to survey)
• Volunteers asked if they would participate in event next year: (not everyone responded to survey)

CONCLUSIONS
• The main purpose of this program was to provide happiness / increased satisfaction for our residents during the holiday season while building community involvement.
• Through personal interactions, thank you cards and the data collected, this project was appreciated by more people than I could have imagined. It is the small things that can make each resident feel important and remembered during the holiday season.
• This is a project my interdisciplinary team wants to continue to do each Christmas after I leave.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES
“I have worked long term care & know how much gifts brighten people’s holidays. Thanks for organizing this.” – adopter

“The look on my residents face was priceless. I loved being a part of the fun” – adopter

“This was the best Christmas I have had in years. Thanks for putting it together - resident

RECOMMENDATIONS
- Involve staff: There were so many community members that participated, but it would have been cool to encourage participation from those who take care of residents.
- Better organize gift opening by sections & times: When community members came to open gifts, some had to wait to watch their ‘resident’ open their gift. Determining who will open gifts at what time will make the process more efficient.
- Educate adopters about long term care rules prior to attending event. For example, I had to tell multiple people that photographs were not allowed unless consent was given.

RESULTS

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CONCLUSIONS

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