

Governor's Gold Seal Site Visit
The Pavilion for Health Care

At Penney Retirement Community
3465 Caroline Boulevard
Penney Farms, FL 32079

November 14, 2022

Conducted by Panel Member Judith Plaut, MSW

The Pavilion for Health Care is a 50-bed facility that is part of a not-for-profit CCRC owned by Penney Retirement Community, Inc. It is in the upper 4th percentile of skilled nursing facilities both regionally and statewide covering the period of January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022. The facility has previously been awarded the Gold Seal nine times continuously since the Gold Seal was first awarded in July 24, 2002.

Entrance Meeting with Key Staff (number of years with facility)

Jamie Standley, Administrator (4); Billy Kersey, Maintenance Director (21); Ricky Vicciardo, Certified Dietary Manager (10); Christie McGurer, Director of Nursing (5); Colleen Leebove, North Unit Manager (3); Cassandra Clark, Social Services (3); Timber Turner, MDS/Infection Control Program (2); Blaine Hilton, Activity Coordinator (2); Amanda Patterson, Billing Coordinator (2); Lori Jones, South Unit Manager (1 week)

Ms. Standley gave a brief overview of the facility. The larger Penney Retirement Community was established by J. C. Penney in 1926 and has a very large campus of homes in a wooded rural community in north Florida. It is a non-denominational Christian CCRC with strong spiritual values to love God and your neighbor with core values of volunteerism. The Pavilion provides short-term rehabilitation, as well as long-term care for residents. It has 10 shelter beds, but during the COVID-19 pandemic it served CCRC residents, only recently has again been able to admit others for rehabilitation.

The facility moved into their new building three years ago. It has historically always had strong volunteer and community involvement. With the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and state restrictions on visitation, which started in March 2020, the 90 member staff had to quickly do a lot of creative thinking and make fast changes to be able to continually provide excellent care to the residents and develop new infection control strategies to adapt to the lock-down challenges of the pandemic.

Their strong sense of being a “family” and caring for each other meant that it was an “all hands-on deck” situation with staff being flexible and willing to do whatever was needed to support each other, take on new roles, come up with ways to help the residents communicate with their families and friends now that they and their usual volunteers could no longer visit in-house and social distancing limited group activities. The North Unit was designated for any positive cases with a temporary barrier installed in the open hallway to create a one-way entrance to the unit with a separate exit entrance out at the other end of the building with a changing room and laundry for staff working in the unit so they could reduce the fear of taking home the virus to their families with potentially contaminated clothing. In addition, staff were fed meals in the unit and also provided with take-home food for their families so they would not have to go out for groceries. Nurses on the unit learned to draw bloods so the outside lab personnel need not enter the unit. Flexible schedules were developed to meet the needs for coverage and for care/comfort of staff and their families. When the CDM became very ill, was hospitalized and out for 1 ½ months, his staff and others stepped up to cook the meals and manage all the details in successfully running the kitchen.

When residents had to be isolated in their rooms, staff came up with new activities to reduce their sense of isolation, loneliness, and the chaplain became an employee to provide spiritual support. Examples of new activities included such things as residents sitting in their doorways for Hallway Bingo, window visits with family and friends, more computers were obtained so staff could assist with Skype visits to family, smart TVs were added to provide a wider range of programs and staff provided teaching and help to access these programs, golf cart parades were held outside windows to celebrate birthdays, and families received e-mail update twice weekly to inform them of what was happening in the facility. Additional outside activities were planned at social distances and heat lamps were obtained for the outside covered courtyard so residents could visit and eat with family/friends. Staff took residents out for walks to enjoy the fresh air and get exercise, go to the duck pond. At Thanksgiving, tents were set up outside and each resident allowed to invite 2 guests for dinner at socially distanced tables. A masked and shielded Santa Claus visited at Christmas. A large poster of individual faces with the names of staff below was posted in the main hall so residents could see what the staff looked like without masks and shields. Local school children wrote letters to residents since they could not come for intergenerational visits. During this difficult pandemic period, the staff turnover rate was an impressive 10.94%, and they never needed to hire agency staff.

The facility has an excellent relationship with the Clay County Department of Health. As soon as vaccines became available and there were adequate supplies, the health department not only vaccinated residents and staff, but also gave staff the option to have their families vaccinated.

Facility Tour

The three-year-old building is very welcoming with a central reception area and large open dining area with two resident wings to either side. The building has soft serene blue-gray colors with very large windows that let in lots of natural light. All of the spaces were immaculately clean and well-organized. The stainless-steel kitchen is huge and superbly equipped for meal preparation, storage, clean-up, and delivery of supplies. The covered outdoor courtyard has garden dining tables and walking paths on the duck pond side of the building. There are also four large, raised garden beds suitable for walkers or wheelchair residents to use for planting. The exterior plantings were planned by master gardeners to be attractive at any season. The wide residence hallways are gently curved with convex mirrors up high to view traffic and have low maintenance vinyl plank flooring easy for maneuverability of walkers and wheelchairs. The walls have attractive framed art, some of which was done by resident artists. There is an exceptionally large activity screen in the main hall which shows the weather during the day and activities for the day. On the opposite wall side there is a "Shout Out" board where residents, staff, volunteers, or visitors can post notes commending staff for going above and beyond in their caring. At the end of each month the notes are entered in a drawing and the winner receives a special reward. The large activity room and the separate large rehab gym both have well equipped spaces and large window walls overlooking the duck pond area and woods beyond. There is a beautiful chapel with a power assist door so residents can easily enter on their own at any time desired. The chapel has a floor-to-ceiling stained glass window which overlooks the historic church for the entire community. There is one living room area with a large TV for group socialization activity. Further down the hall there is another living room area for quieter activities. The nursing station has a front reception area with another area behind a wall for staff charting and meetings.

Thirty-eight of the resident rooms are private and spacious with a large private bathroom and walk-in shower. The other rooms have a shared Jack 'n Jill bathroom with two sinks and walk-in shower. Some friends and couples prefer these rooms. Each room has a built-in dresser, recliner, storage closet, hospital bed, bedside table, and large smart TV. Residents are encouraged to personalize their rooms to feel like home. Some of the couples will set up one room with beds and use the other room for a living area. Staff are understandably proud of the building and their ideas were used in its design.

Private Meetings with Staff and Resident

I met with a newer housekeeper beyond probation who shared that she was initially quite anxious about coming to her position as she formerly had owned her own business over twenty years, and had never had a boss before, but sought the job because she needed benefits. Initially she was paired with a peer mentor for a week. Her mentor's friendliness and that of others helped her feel at home, less anxious. Her boss has been receptive to her suggestions to use a pumice stone to assist with cleaning bathrooms. She feels valued, and that this job is a good fit for her skills. She enjoys the teamwork and loves the residents. Recently she experienced her first Memory Walk which is a tradition where staff line the halls to say scripture and sing Amazing Grace when a deceased resident is taken from their room on a special gurney which gives staff an opportunity to honor them and say a final good-bye. She found this experience to be very meaningful and comforting, as staff truly care about their residents.

I also met privately with the Resident Council President who moved into the facility from out-of-state after the pandemic had started. He had previously visited the independent facility, as he has family living there. The Resident Council meets monthly to discuss any concerns and desires. Concerns are taken to the Quality Assurance committee, and they have been responsive. He reports the meals are pretty good and the kitchen is very responsive to resident requests, although there are sometime residents who don't agree on how vegetables should be cooked. Sometimes the CDM will ask him to try out and critique a new dish. He reports they offer a wide variety of activity options both at the facility, like the recent carnival with multiple games, and day trips, like to the zoo. He has a MAC computer, so the activity director has linked him to a MAC group in independent living to help him with some problem-solving with his MAC. He is in a wheelchair, so especially enjoys when staff take him outside to visit the duck pond and watch the construction going on in a new dining room building for the main campus on the other side of the pond. He does feel the genuine caring of staff about residents as individuals with different needs and interests.

Best Practices

My observations and discussions with both seasoned and newer staff, and Resident Council President validate their application and the exceptional caring and concern for excellence of this staff and the pride they take in caring for the individual needs of the residents. They were able to quickly shift and meet the extraordinary challenges of the pandemic and maintain a cohesive work force with minimal turnover, and mentor new employees into their philosophy of care. Now that the pandemic restrictions recently are much less, there are delighted to re-engage with the CCRC and larger community volunteers to add both former and new activities. A volunteer visits residents with a nourishment cart between meals to provide both snacks and additional socialization. They have started an aqua therapy group to help some recondition muscles that didn't

get as much exercise during the room isolation of the pandemic. They also wrote a grant to get funding for the IN2L simulation programs to add a number of cognitive games to their programming. The activities staff encourage residents to speak up about desires and encourage their many types A staff to be willing to dress up in costumes, like as horses for the KY Derby races, and provide laughter for the residents with fun games. This innovative staff who have a sense of family caring for each other, clearly enjoy brainstorming and working together to make ongoing changes to enhance daily life in their skilled nursing home.

I wholeheartedly support a recommendation to the Governor for a tenth Gold Seal Award to The Pavilion for Health Care at the Penney Retirement Community.