

The Changing Face of Long-Term Care

Bethany Manor of Story City has enjoyed an excellent reputation for many years and I am proud to be associated with this facility. This reputation has been built by individuals and their families sharing with others, the stories of excellent care they or their loved ones received from Bethany Manor staff. The thanks that Bethany Manor receives comes in the form of cards and letters to staff from residents, from family members who “give back” through volunteerism and donations, and from our own staff who are willing to go far above the call of duty to assure the quality of service we provide.

Several years ago the management of Bethany Manor recast its vision for the Manor to include “being a comprehensive and innovative aging services provider.” To better reflect our new vision we changed our name to Bethany Life Communities and began to move aggressively into elder services beyond traditional nursing care. In 2002 we opened Timberland Village which provides both independent living as well as assisted living opportunities for our elders and in April of 2005 we began offering assisted living in our HUD units at Cedar Place. In July of this year we will be welcoming our first owners of the Twin Homes at Timberland Village with more construction planned. We are currently exploring opportunities to provide more services even closer to home. All of these changes have allowed us to increase the number of seniors we serve by 15 percent over the last three years.

All of our changes in elder service delivery are driven by our desire to better assist elders in their life journey as well as to adapt to our changing environment. Recent changes in technology, funding, regulations and consumer demand have conspired to move the delivery of elder services closer to the environment of the home. We view these changes to be very positive and beneficial to the quality of life of elders and their families. In most cases, these changes are delaying the need for movement of individual into the traditional nursing home and in some cases are eliminating the need altogether.

Alternative care options have reduced demand for traditional nursing care services nationwide and we are not exception here in Story City. As we predicted, we are seeing a decline in demand at our Bethany Manor nursing facility as demand improves for our services offered at Timberland Village and Cedar Place. This decline in demand confirms our vision and provides evidence that our plan is working.

We are now moving to realign our staff and resources with the decreased demand for nursing services. While we are very excited about the new options we are able to offer, we remain highly committed to the provision of quality care to residents of our nursing facility. In parallel with the development of new services, we have joined with our national service organization to participate in its Quality First Initiative for nursing care providers. As a result of our commitment to Quality First, we have initiated an intensive program for continuous improvement, providing training in team based problem solving, standard operating procedures and performance measures.

We remain very grateful for the support of our staff, residents, and community and we look forward to being a “regional resource’ for elder services here in central Iowa.

Sincerely,
Betsy Warburton, President/CEO
Bethany Life Communities