

To: Dr. Erika Paterson

From: Amy Vergouwen

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Subject: Proposal for improving staffing shortages at Glenmore Lodge Care Community

Introduction

Glenmore Lodge Care Community is a long-term care facility that provides 24/7 care and support for seniors with varying levels of dementia. It is owned by the company “Sienna Living”, who owns 83 seniors residences in Ontario and British Columbia, 38 of those being retirement homes, and 45 being long-term care facilities. Due to the facility typically supporting seniors for the remainder of their lives, the care level required is very intense, as some of the residents are nonverbal, unable to walk, have different medical conditions, as well as the majority also suffering from dementia.

The care facility possesses a strong therapeutic recreation team, but the nursing sector, health care aides and the mental health support staff are currently at a problematic staffing shortage that is compromising the care and wellbeing of the residents. If the care facility does not find a solution to their staffing shortage, the residents will no longer be well taken care of and more serious consequences surrounding health and wellbeing will potentially arise.

Statement of Problem

Glenmore Lodge Care Community, owned by Sienna Living, is a wonderful care facility that really values its residents. However, as of the past few months, there has been a staffing shortage, specifically within the nursing staff and the health care aides, as well as the mental health support staff. This is a problem as the residents care is being compromised. The problem not only affects the residents, but their families, as well as the other employees of the care facility as it is a stressful work environment.

Proposed Solution

Although I suspect the issue of staffing shortages in the care facility to be on a bigger level than a solution I am able to provide, I hope that by researching this, I am able to contribute in some form to the betterment of Glenmore Lodge Care Community. Decreasing the amount of recreation activities such as ice cream every week, various outings, and parties throughout the year could reduce expenses that could be used to increase pay for nurses, care aides, and mental health workers. Residents would continue to receive their daily exercise, music, and games

activities, and their level of care and welfare increase, meaning that the reduction in unnecessary recreation would not be missed.

Scope

I plan to use these 5 questions to guide me through understanding the staffing shortages at Glenmore Lodge Care Community and determining the feasibility of improving them:

- 1) When did you start to notice a shortage of staff at the care facility? Has this been a long-term problem or an issue within the past few months?
- 2) Which specific departments within the care facility are currently struggling the most with lack of staff?
- 3) What is the specific reason management speculates this staffing issue? Pay, work environment, benefits, etc.?
- 4) Is the shortage of staff related to the job being too difficult for the majority of individuals? Would increasing the training help bring more care aides and nurses to the care facility?
- 5) Would cutting other programs such as recreation (outings, parties), or unnecessary foods (ice cream and cake every week) help to increase pay for care aides, nurses and other essential staff members?

I would also like to see if hiring more volunteers to help with the healthcare staff at the care facility would be possible, as I believe this would be very beneficial.

Methods

My primary sources of data will be an interview with my manager (director of resident programs) and surveys that have been handed out to my coworkers in the therapeutic recreation team, as well as some of the registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and healthcare aides. If possible, I will try to speak with some of the residents at the care facility, asking them simple questions in regards to their care and whether or not they feel their level of required care is being fulfilled. If possible, I will attempt to go over financing with Heather Owens (director of resident programs) and ask if cutting some recreational activities, such as the ice cream parlour, cake every night, or outings/parties would increase the funds enough to hire more staff.

My Qualifications

I have been volunteering twice a week at the Glenmore Lodge Care Community for almost a year, aiding the therapeutic recreation team with the care and wellness of seniors with dementia.

This year I will be graduating with my degree in psychology, and I have taken many health psych classes, including psychopharmacology, lifespan development, healthy aspects of aging and many more that have given me the necessary knowledge to pair with my experience at the care facility. I have a thorough understanding of the care that takes place at the facility, as well as a great relationship with my manager and coworkers, such that I feel very comfortable speaking with them about this topic. They have already mentioned this staffing issue to me previously this month, so I know that I will be able to gain further insight into this problem from them.

Conclusion

The need for more staff like nurses, health care aides, and mental health workers in Glenmore Lodge Care Community is quite necessary at this point in time. By directing the 5 questions above at the management and staff of the care facility, they will be able to determine which solutions are practical to implement into their program, such as money saving solutions to help draw more crucial staff members to the team. By pursuing this, the residents' care and wellbeing will increase. I look forward to receiving your feedback on my proposal, as I would like to address this concern within the care facility as soon as I can. Thank you.