



Putting the CARE back in Healthcare...

By Nikki Troisi, AristaCare at Whiting

Donald T. writes in: I am currently looking into placing my wife into a nursing facility. She has suffered from Alzheimer's for the last (3) years. I was able to handle caring for her condition until recently. How do I make sure that my wife will receive the same personalized care at a facility as I am able to give her at home?

It is crucial to tour each nursing center. While touring, make it a point to meet the staff and ask them questions about how they would handle situations that may arise based on your wife's history. Many nursing centers offer different training courses for their staff to help them understand, embrace, and care for your loved one and their Alzheimer's condition. Make sure you feel comfortable with them.

It is essential that every staff member be knowledgeable about Alzheimer's and other types of Dementia in order to be sensitive to both patient and family needs. This model is evidently illustrated at AristaCare. AristaCare recently renovated Nostalgia Park (its one of kind State Certified Dementia Unit) not just in its aesthetics but in staff as well. Last month, 52 staff members comprised of Certified Nursing Aides, Nurses, Housekeepers, and Activities Aides all underwent a rigorous Dementia Training course through the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP). Out of the 52, 30 staff members are Certified Dementia Practitioners. The foundation of the training was based on the message that **no "one" Alzheimer's resident is the same**. Knowing this fundamental information is the first step in personalized care. It is important to remember that those who suffer from Alzheimer's are just like me and you; they have fears as well as a comfort zone to protect them from those fears. Residents and their families rely on the staff to find those comfort zones and make pleasant what could have been a frightful and confusing day.

Family members and caregivers should be treated just as importantly as the Alzheimer's patient. Does the nursing facility hold a support group for residents and their families? Do the staff make the most out of family visits? Are their special activities for Alzheimer's patients? Are there cognitive assessment tools in place to monitor the progress of the Alzheimer's patient?

Donald, no one in the world will be able to give your wife the same kind of special love and care that you have provided her with over the past 3 years given that you are her husband; however, there is no shame in admitting that caring for her at home has become challenging both emotionally and physically. Please research nursing facilities that specialize in Alzheimer's care to make sure your wife gets the very best treatment.

If you have a healthcare related question,
WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. PLEASE WRITE TO:

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