

EXPLORATIONS



GREEN HOUSE DESIGN:

A Natural Fit for Elder Environment

A Case Study on the Impact of Aging at Riverside Assisted Living Facility, Bourbonnais, IL

INSIDE YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT:

The homelike model for resident care Riverside Assisted Living Facility Administration wanted to apply.

The full-scale mock-ups of the proposed living spaces that launched the project.

The 'neighborhood' concept that enables greater resident independence as well as safety.

The Impact of Aging toolbox is made available through a partnership with

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THE QUESTION

How could architectural solutions that incorporated Green House strategies also accommodate the client's existing patient care model?

THE GOAL

Design an assisted living environment that emulates a homelike model and supports operational efficiencies in care for residents with diverse acuity levels, so they may age in place.

Green House Design a Natural Fit for Elder Environment

Riverside Assisted Living Facility, Bourbonnais, IL

Objective

Riverside Senior Life Communities identified the need for assisted living and memory care services in the area around Bourbonnais, Illinois. Several project goals were identified: provide above-market quality with market rate pricing; increase the census rate; improve both resident and staff satisfaction scores; decrease the rate of resident falls and injuries; lessen staff travel; enhance staff visibility of resident spaces; and complete the project at or below budget.

The Challenge

The pursuit of these goals began with a visioning session that explored the principles of the Green House model. This differs from that of a traditional nursing home in terms of size, interior design, organizational structure, and staffing and care models. A key challenge from an evidence-based design perspective was finding an architectural solution that incorporated Green House strategies while accommodating the client's existing patient care model.

The proposed design solution embraces the neighborhood concept, allowing the resident population to be separated into smaller neighborhoods (homes), with care ranging from traditional assisted living to higher-acuity levels of memory care.

The project team used full-scale mock-ups of the resident rooms, kitchen, and dining areas in the design development process. The mock-ups permitted collaboration among team members, end users, and staff in order to validate the size, scale, and amenities of each apartment.



KEY FINDINGS

- 1 The design gives elder residents greater autonomy over how they want to live.
- 2 Residents receive personal attention from direct care staff, and share an engaging day-to-day social life.
- 3 A series of courtyards permit day lighting, views of nature, and access to the outdoors in a safe and secure environment.

Results

There are two 16-bed neighborhoods for traditional assisted living that share a “town center” for activities of daily living (ADLs), dining, living, kitchen, and activity spaces. There are also four 12-bed neighborhoods, organized around a central ADL space for memory care. In these small, elder-centered neighborhoods, residents have significant autonomy over how they want to live, receive personal attention from direct care staff, and share an engaging day-to-day social life. Additionally, the neighborhoods are built around a series of courtyards that permit day lighting, views of nature, and access to the outdoors in a safe and secure environment.



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The project team will measure outcomes based on metrics in the stated project goals as part of a planned post-occupancy evaluation to follow one, three, and five years after occupancy in August 2014.

Design Team

Architecture/Design Firm: ERDMAN