

KRCC transition teams begin moving day planning

Moving day set for August

By Kathy Tandberg

As construction for the new Knife River Care Center facility moves closer to completion, an estimated moving date has been tentatively set for sometime this coming August. With that in mind, moving plans are being set into place as well.

The process of moving will be an extensive one and will require an exact plan to make it happen in a timely manner, for not only is the center moving its residents, it is also moving much of the current equipment, including beds.

The hope is that everything possible will be moved before the day residents move in. On that final day, if things go as planned, the residents will get up in the morning at the old facility in midtown Beulah and go to bed that night in their new rooms at the facility in north Beulah.

In the midst of this is the care of the residents, most who are elderly. This includes making sure they are administered their proper medication in the usual timely fashion, as well as making sure they're comfortable while their furniture is moved across town.

If all goes as hoped, with family members assisting their loved ones when possible, the residents will step into their new home and find that their personal items already in place, with their own pictures on the walls and their clothing hanging in the closet of their new rooms.

Coordinating this immense operation at present time is KRCC Chief Operating Officer/Chief Financial Officer Linda Czywczynski. She began last fall working with a 22 member transition team, serving on each subcommittee that has been created. This team is comprised of volunteers that include care center staff at various levels – nurse's aides, housekeeping, maintenance and dietary personnel, social workers, nurses, activity aides, supervisors, dietary aides – and resident family members.

Czywczynski said the first item on the agenda was a brainstorming session of what would need to be done to accomplish the move as painless and as simply as possible for the residents. After the group brainstormed, they came up with a list of about 60 items that needed to be addressed. These were broken down into six subcommittees.

Community Relations

The community relations subcommittee is co-chaired by Pam Barnick, the human resource manager, and Yvonne Seibel, activity aide. A committee of 11, this group's goal is to keep communication open with the community and family members, to inform and educate them about the new facility and events that will take place. This committee is also in charge of creating a brochure of the new facility. This group will also be looking for volunteers to assist residents with the move, family members whenever possible. Czywczynski said they have determined that a spring cleaning is needed in the residents' rooms so items that are no longer used are not moved unnecessarily.

Volunteers will be needed to help with residents who do not have family members. In addition, letters will be sent to area high schools asking for volunteer help in moving equipments and furniture from athletes or anyone wanting to help.

Grounds and Maintenance

The grounds and maintenance subcommittee is co-chaired by Allen Weil, maintenance supervisor, and Jerry Gahner, CNA. This group of seven's goal is to make the new buildings more homelike, visually appealing, safe and efficient for everyone including residents, visitors, and staff, in the most cost effective manner.

This includes landscaping not included in the construction costs, such as an underground sprinkler system, trees, shrubs and landscape design.

Moving Day

The moving day subcommittee is co-chaired by Jen Schepp, R.N., and Therese Morgenstern, ward clerk. A group of 10, this committee is responsible for facilitating a smooth move when the residents are moved. Their job is to insure that the day will be safe and stress-free for the residents.

Czywczynski said this job will entail much planning and anticipating things that need to be done and could happen.

“We’ll have to be sure we have proper transportation for each resident’s needs. If someone is bed-ridden and needs an ambulance to move, then that’s what they’ll have,” she said.

Culture Change

The culture change subcommittee is co-chaired by Loretta Greni, R.N. nurse manager, and Tammie Alexander, licensed social worker. This group of 18’s goal is to facilitate a smooth transition into the new facility in relation to culture change, block schedule and kitchen serving changes. The plan is to work towards this goal with proper training and education of staff, which has already begun.

Czywczynski said the new facility is laid out completely different than the present facility. The change, however more pleasant and homey for the residents, will still be a change and they will need assistance to acclimate themselves.

The residents will be living in “neighborhoods in three different wings. The subcommittee will look at who should live in each household and who likes to sit with whom at meals. They will also consider who likes the brighter rooms and who doesn’t. They will also make sure the right mix of staff is in each wing to fill the needs of the residents who live there.

“We’re not making one neighborhood light care and one heavy. We’ll have a good mix, with compatibility our biggest goal,” Czywczynski said.

Training, Policy and Procedures

The training, policy and procedures subcommittee is co-chaired by Lunette Eberle, R.N. Director of Nursing, and Czywczynski. This 12-member committee’s goal is to plan for necessary policy and procedure changes.

“Before we can even move in, the (North Dakota) Department of Health comes in to be sure everything is in compliance. This includes security, disaster plans, correct water temperatures, any basic requirement of the health department,” Czywczynski said.

This includes training of the staff before the move for any new equipment, such as the new security system and call system. The new security system includes a monitoring badge for resident safety that will monitor the location of a resident at all times, wherever they may be in the facility.

Czywczynski said this new system monitors all name badges, including employees, so if a complaint comes in stating someone’s family member waited 10 minutes for help, the new system will have logged the time the staff member actually arrived to help and show that the care was given in a timely manner. The new call system includes badges that the residents can push to call for help.

Family Transition

The family transition team is co-chaired by Curtis Schulz and Jerald Sommer, both family members. This seven-member team’s goal is to facilitate in naming the neighborhoods and households in each, as well as name the various rooms within the facility.

The new facility is divided into three wings, called neighborhoods. Each neighborhood has two households. The group has chosen names that have a pleasant sound that will remind residents of beautiful places.

The hospice suite, a new addition to the nursing home, has been named Serenity Suite. The new Alzheimer’s neighborhood has been named Whispering Winds. Its two households are called Morning Breezes and Evening Breezes. The next neighborhood is named Shady Lane, with its two households called Cottonwood Grove and Elm Grove. The final neighborhood is named Harvest Lane, with its households called Golden Grain and Fruit Blossoms.

Czywczynski said Shady Lane and Harvest Lane each have a fully functional kitchen, with a stove, dishwasher, refrigerator, dishes and pots and pans, just like one's kitchen at home. Each household within the neighborhoods has its own dining room that will seat 15, plus a dayroom and a private dining room that can be used by friends and family for special occasions or private time.

The committees meet at various times, some once a week, some twice a month. No meetings are longer than an hour, Czywczynski said, so as not to overwhelm anyone. More moving day details will be announced at a later date.

Anyone interested in volunteering for moving day can contact Czywczynski at the nursing home at 873-4322.