



Veteran Thelma Tomlinson

Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes

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**REPORT TO THE
LEGISLATURE**

WINTER 2010



Sean Parnell, Governor
William H. Hogan, Commissioner

Pictures on the front cover (from top to bottom):

<p>1. Unidentified resident at the Anchorage Pioneer Home</p>
<p>2. Artist Rie Munoz donated 25 of her prints to the Sitka Pioneers' Home. The Home's administrative team celebrated the gift with Munoz at a reception held in her honor, July 10, 2009. From left: Klaudia Leccese, social services, Judi Blankenship, environmental services foreman, Rie Munoz, artist, Peter Kennedy, maintenance foreman, Shirley Downing, nurse manager and Philip Welsh, administrator. (Photo courtesy James Poulson/Daily Sitka Sentinel)</p>
<p>3. Anna Hill at an Anchorage Pioneer Home luau. Anna in her youth was on the hit TV show "Hawaii Five-O"</p>
<p>4. Juneau reunion, July 2009- Relatives of Joseph Juneau, for whom the city of Juneau was named, recently celebrated their family reunion in the capital city, in conjunction with the celebration of Alaska's 50th year as a state. The Juneaus graciously accepted an invitation to the Pioneers' Tea at the Juneau Pioneers' Home. Pictured are: Kathleen Fanning, Activity Director, Virginia Juneau, (matriarch of the family), her son, John Juneau, resident Katherine Shaw, her son Al, and Harriet Botelho</p>
<p>5. Palmer Pioneer Home Veteran Thelma Tomlinson at the Veteran's Award Ceremony</p>

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
ALASKA PIONEER HOMES

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Message from Division Director, Dave Cote:

As part of our on-going efforts to reach out to all Alaskans we are sharing with you the enclosed report with information regarding the Alaska Pioneer Homes. We appreciate your continued support on behalf of the elders of this great state.

The Alaska Pioneer Homes are licensed assisted living care programs for Alaska elders 65 years old or older and provides care at three different levels of need including care for persons with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia (ADRD). Our Homes employ experienced medical professionals who specialize in compassionate care. All our Homes are Eden Alternative® Registered Homes.

The Alaska Pioneer Homes has a proud history of service to Alaskans that predates statehood. The first Pioneer Home was established in 1913 in Sitka. Five other Homes, throughout Alaska, were built in the subsequent decades. Today, the Alaska Pioneer Homes serve over 460 Alaska seniors in the six Pioneer Homes located in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Palmer, Juneau, Sitka and Ketchikan.

A few highlights from this fiscal year 2009:

- The Pioneer Homes continues to support the University of Anchorage Alaska Center for Human Development apprenticeship program. There have been 38 Pioneer Homes CNAs who enrolled in the apprenticeship courses.
- The Palmer Veteran's and Pioneer Home's council led by Ed Willis, who has served in both the Alaska Senate and House of Representatives, played an active role in the planning and development of a community wheelchair accessible garden. The project was a collaborative effort between the Home and the University of Alaska Mat – Su College.
- The Anchorage Pioneer Home replaced its old tile flooring in all the dining rooms as well as the entire 2 north neighborhoods with beautiful rolled vinyl wood-grain flooring.
- The Fairbanks Pioneer Home now has a wonderful renovation to its Aurora neighborhood
- The Juneau Pioneer Home is once again certified as an OSHA SHARP site and the Juneau Pioneer Home partnered with UAA to conduct a pilot project to develop the first Eden Alternative university course via distance delivery. 13 staff and 4 elders became Certified Eden Associates
- Ketchikan Pioneer Home began a telemedicine project with the Gerontology Institute through Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, Oregon. The Ketchikan Pioneer Home was painted on the exterior and the windows were replaced enabling residents, in wheelchairs to now look out the windows.
- All buildings on the Sitka Pioneer Home campus have been re-roofed. And SPH is partnering with federal, state and local entities to move forward a project to update/enhance Totem Square.



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Mission Statement

The Mission of the Alaska Pioneer Homes is to assist older Alaskans to have the highest quality of life by providing assisted living in a safe Home setting which promotes positive relationships, meaningful activities and physical, emotional and spiritual growth.



Veteran Dave Cote

Pioneer Homes Division Director, Dave Cote

Governance

The Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes, in the Department of Health and Social Services, manages the six Pioneers' Homes. The Alaska Pioneer Homes Advisory Board (Board) tours Homes every year in the fall and winter and makes recommendations to the Governor.

The Pioneer Homes are licensed assisted living Homes. The Pioneer Homes are licensed for 508 beds and operate in accordance with Alaska statutes and regulations pertaining to assisted living facilities. They are managed on-site by administrators appointed by the Governor.

There is a clear distinction between the management functions assigned to the division and the advisory function of the Board. The Board is the established link between citizens and policymakers, and as such provides community feedback to policymakers from the public. The Board gathers information and discusses issues at public meetings held during the annual Board tour of the Pioneer Homes. From the information gathered at their meetings, the Board develops policy recommendations that are forwarded to the Governor.

Consumers

The average age of current Pioneer Home residents is 82.3 years. Two thirds of residents are female and about half of the residents suffer at least mild cognitive impairment. 45 percent of the residents are able to pay the full amount charged for their care, others pay a portion of the charges based on their income and assets, and funding from the division's Payment Assistance Program or the Older Alaskan Medicaid waiver.

Services

In the spirit of resident directed care, Pioneer Home care teams involve a resident's family, friends, and advocates in assessing and planning a resident's service needs during the admission process and periodically thereafter. At the conclusion of the assessment, a service level is determined based on the resident's needs and abilities.

Services available to residents of the Homes may include:

- ◆ Meal preparation
- ◆ Emergency call systems/assistance
- ◆ Assistance with bathing, dressing, and eating
- ◆ Assistance with medications
- ◆ Health assessment
- ◆ Recreational opportunities
- ◆ Social work services
- ◆ Opportunities for spiritual worship

Of the general types of available services listed above, certain services have been grouped into categories called service levels. There are three different service levels and each resident receives services within one particular level of care. Monthly charges are based on the service level of care. The three service levels available to residents of the Pioneer Homes are as follows:

<p>Level I</p> <p>Rate: \$2,350</p>	<p>Services include the provision of housing, meals, emergency assistance, and opportunities for recreation; level I services do not include staff assistance with activities of daily living, medication administration, or health-related services, although the Pioneer Home pharmacy may supply prescribed medications.</p>
<p>Level II</p> <p>Rate: \$4,260</p>	<p>Services include the provision of housing, meals, and emergency assistance; and as stated in the resident's assisted living plan, staff assistance, including assistance with activities of daily living, medication administration, recreation, and health-related services; assistance provided by a staff member includes supervision, reminders, and hands-on assistance, with the resident performing the majority of the effort. During the night shift, the resident is independent in performing activities of daily living and capable of self-supervision.</p>

<p>Level III</p> <p>Rate: \$6,170</p>	<p>services include the provision of housing, meals, and emergency assistance; and as stated in the resident's assisted living plan, staff assistance, including extensive assistance with activities of daily living, medication administration, recreation, and health-related services; assistance provided by a staff member includes hands-on assistance, with the staff member performing the majority of the effort; the resident may receive assistance throughout a 24-hour day, including the provision of care in a transitional setting.</p>
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The services within each service level are further tailored to meet individual residents' needs. A service contract and assisted living plan are developed with each resident or resident representative. The assisted living plan is reviewed at regular intervals and modified to meet the changing needs of residents.

Initiatives from Central Office in Juneau

Apprenticeship Program

The Pioneer Homes recognizes the worth of employee retention. In order to increase employee retention for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), one strategy the Pioneer Homes implemented has been an apprenticeship program. There have been 38 Pioneer Homes CNAs who were enrolled in the Introduction to Dementia, 40 students enrolled in Introduction to Geriatrics and 15 in the Mentor class.

The Pioneer Homes Apprenticeship Program, which provides training for CNA's within the PH system, works in collaboration with the University Alaska Anchorage Center for Human Development, the Alaska Department of Labor and One-Stop Employment Centers and the US Department of Labor Alaska Office of Apprenticeship.

The collaborative effort has already produced benefits in the form of increases in job performance and job satisfaction. We expect turnover rates to decrease with an increase in overall job satisfaction.

Department of Administration Classification adjusted the CNAII class specifications in order for us to temporarily move CNAI to CNAII in order for us to be consistent with the apprenticeship program design. However, over the long run this temporary solution will need to be re-examined as more and more employees fulfill the apprenticeship requirements and are eligible for a re-class from CNAI to CNAII.

The Pioneer Homes long-range goal is to establish the class specifications for apprenticeships for our CNA job series. We are still hopeful the division of personnel will work on establishing the class specifications for apprenticeships in order to enable us to continue with the apprenticeship program.

Preparedness Planning

In the spring of 2009 we were fortunate enough to receive from the State of Alaska Emergency Preparedness Program a grant of \$30,000. We purchased Evacu-chairs (for evacuating residents down stairs) and Emergency radios that have the capability of transmitting statewide. Each Home and one in central office will have a radio that will be registered with the Alaska Land Mobile Radio Communication Systems. This fall we have been awarded another \$30,000 to purchase emergency preparedness equipment or training.

Currently, all the Homes are engaged in developing their Pandemic response plan, which is required to be submitted to the Department's Emergency Preparedness Program.

Safe Lifting Initiative

This year the Pioneer Homes continued its involvement in the Pioneer Home Safe Lifting Initiative with consultant Michael Lary. This year Mr. Lary worked with the Ketchikan Pioneer Home training and introducing safe resident movement techniques and equipment.

State Web Page Development & Technologies

The Pioneer Homes spent a special amount of effort developing our Web site. If you have a chance please visit our new look at:
<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dalp/>

This past year we replaced the occupancy report and waitlist database with cutting edge Web-based application.

Began capturing acuity measures, which shows how many residents need assistance with feeding, mobility, and etc. We are collecting this data because it will be of great assistance when explaining the increase in the acuity of our residents.

The Department of Health and Social Services contracted with a consultant company Information Insights to assess the future program needs of the Pioneer Homes. Information Insights report will focus on the increase in level III residents, the decrease in level I residents, new philosophies of care, possible expansion of the Pioneer Home system to new communities and address the increasing number of seniors with assaultive behavior and mental health issues.

Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home January 2010

Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home Introduction

Our Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home continues to strive to assist older Alaskans to have the highest quality of life by providing assisted living in a safe Home setting which promotes independence, positive relationships, meaningful activities and physical, emotional and spiritual growth.

Our History

The Palmer Pioneer Home was built in 1971 on the former site of the Alaska State Fairgrounds. Nestled in the heart of downtown Palmer, the Home is surrounded by beautiful views of the Chugach and Talkeetna Mountain Ranges as well as the massive Knik Glacier.



Alaska Veteran's & Pioneer
Home in Palmer, Alaska

In 1999 the Home became registered as an official Eden Alternative® Home. The Home's casual country charm made for a seamless transition to the Eden Alternative approach and to a Home environment centered on the residents. There are several resident neighborhoods complete with their own dining rooms and sitting/activity areas that support the Eden philosophy.

In May 2004 the Alaska Legislature approved development of the state's first veteran's Home. After extensive remodeling and program development to meet U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requirements, the facility were renamed the Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home. 75 percent of the 79 beds in the Home are designated for veterans, and 25 percent are available for non-veterans. Qualifying veterans are eligible for a per-diem from the VA to offset costs of their care. As of August 31, 2009 24 beds out of 79 beds are occupied by veterans.

Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home January 2010

Accomplishments

In the past year there has been a resurgence of interest in our Resident Council. The council is led by Ed Willis who has served in both the Alaska Senate and House of Representatives. As advocates for seniors, members have actively participated in public hearings and partnered with community organizations in support of the Home. They have been busy with projects large and small that not only benefits the recipients but also gives the residents a sense of self worth and adds meaning and purpose to their lives.



The council played an active role in the planning and development of a community wheelchair accessible garden. The project was a collaborative effort between the Home and the University of Alaska Mat – Su College students and professors. Funding was provided by an organization called Learn & Serve in America. Residents already garden in small sites throughout the grounds. And with the new garden it will increase the bountiful harvest of herbs and vegetables that residents will be able to produce.

Ed Willis with his Potato harvest

We have enjoyed wonderful soups, homemade sauerkraut, breads, and jellies that residents and staff have made from the bounty. The opening celebration ended with a lecture in organic gardening from one of the professors at Mat-Su College. The gardening projects are a great source of joy and pride for this farming community.

Other resident council projects include the purchase of fleece wheelchair arm covers to give an added measure of comfort to those confined to wheelchairs. The resident council also showed support of the volunteer Mat-Su Valley recycling project by stuffing envelopes for mass mail outs.

Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home January 2010

The Mat-Su community is so supportive of the Home that we are always grateful to be able to give back. This year staff and residents collected food for victims of spring flooding of the Yukon River. We also partnered with local veterans groups to provide food, clothing and blankets to impoverished veterans in remote areas of the state. A community wide collection was sponsored by Mat-Su Veterans Council and the Veterans Aviation Outreach made drops to remote sites.



Barney Furman & Director,
Dave Cote

The community looks to us as a center for veterans and active military support, outreach and celebration. As such, we honor and commemorate service men and women throughout the year. On Veteran's Day we host a special event attended by active military personnel, their families, and veterans in the community. On Memorial Day, residents are transported to ceremonies at the Veterans Memorial Wall and to lunch at one of the local veteran's organization posts. In addition a moment of remembrance for the fallen is held at a designated time at our Home and all the veterans' Homes across the nation.

Our veterans also joined federal, state and community dignitaries in the grand opening ceremonies for the new VA community based outpatient clinic in Wasilla. One of our veterans opened the program with an invocation and another participated in the ribbon cutting. At a separate, very reverent ceremony at the Home twenty three of our veterans were recognized for their service with a presentation of the Alaska Veterans Service Medal.

Level III residents continue to make up the largest group in the Home. Over the past 12 months Level III residents have averaged

Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home
January 2010

72.4% of our census. Acuity within that group continues to increase and is measured on an ongoing basis to determine how we can best serve their needs. Safety is a high priority with such a fragile group. Two small offices were combined into a larger nurse's station to allow the staff to be closer to the residents with the highest needs. The nurse call system was upgraded and all door alarms, resident calls and fall risk monitor systems are dispatched directly to the care team's pagers.

Current installation of security cameras will provide another measure of safety and security for staff and residents alike. They will be located in all hallways, parking lots, entry ways, and common areas throughout the building. Additional projects funded in FY 09 include coax cable replacement, a generator transfer switch upgrade, and replacement of the metal trim or flashing outside the building.



Lovely Helen Jackson adorns herself with flowers from the garden

Challenges

Despite technical advances, hands on care are the greatest need this population requires. We continue to be challenged with the high cost of providing that care.

A subset of the Level III population challenges us with advancing Alzheimer's that leads to behavior that is sometimes difficult to control. Amongst those there also exist a number of residents who had mental health concerns earlier in life that are now resurfacing.

Residential elder care within Alaska, for those with behavioral and mental health concerns, is virtually nonexistent.

A facility that houses residents for a short stay while medication trials for behavior management are completed would provide a safe

Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home
January 2010

temporary transition and allow the resident to return Home to AVPH.

As with all of us, our population is aging and acute illnesses are bound to occur. Technological advances in healthcare allow patients to live longer with the support of new devices and equipment. Hospital stays have grown shorter since the Medicare DRG reimbursement system was implemented. This poses yet another challenge for us; when hospitals discharge sooner our Home must be prepared for residents re-entering the Home with higher acuity and medical needs. New equipment and higher acuities require additional training and nursing time to manage. The line becomes blurred between skilled care and assisted living.

Every level of healthcare has seen an increase in acuities. Skilled care facilities now manage patients that used to be cared for in hospitals. As profit margins have shrunk, fewer providers are willing to accept Medicare patients. This problem is universal throughout the country; however Alaska has a very limited number of skilled nursing beds and Medicare providers. We are simply experiencing this challenge as part of the bigger healthcare problem in the country.

This year we were audited by Assisted Living Licensing, US Department of Veterans Affairs, US Department of Labor, and Medicaid. Although all audits acknowledge that we are providing excellent care, the need for documentation of all our services has increased. This places a huge burden on all staff and takes time away from the resident.

Our building also continues to age and it feels as though it is bulging at the seams. VA inspections have resulted in additional space requirements for utility rooms. The few existing closets that were left have been remodeled to meet compliance requirements. Although there were extensive heating and ventilation upgrades with the VA construction project, certain areas of the Home continue to have very poor ventilation.

One such area is the pharmacy closet in the Nursing Resource Center. Temperatures in that area have been above what is

Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home
January 2010

considered safe for medication storage. It is our hope that capital funding will be approved to remodel the Nursing Resource Center to better suit the current needs of the Home and its residents while meeting regulatory requirements and standards of care.



Ed Walker cutting the ribbon
during the Palmer VA
Community Based Outpatient
Clinic opening ceremony with
Senator Charlie Huggins,
Wasilla Mayor Verne E.
Rupright, and Alex Spector,
Director of the VA Alaska
Healthcare System

Anchorage Pioneer Home
January 2010

**Anchorage Pioneer Home
Introduction**

The Anchorage Pioneer Home sits like a jewel in the crown of this historical community core. The building was constructed in stages beginning with the five story tower in 1977 and completed in 1982. As would be expected in any facility after 30 of service, particularly one that involves hundreds of staff serving 168 Alaskan Elders, there are many maintenance challenges.



APH Resident Nancy Culp with CNA
Ron Watkins

The Anchorage Pioneer Home provides licensed assisted living care for Alaska resident elders 65 years old or older. The Home has a capacity for 168 elders and provides care at three different levels including care for persons with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia (ADRD).

Our History

The Elders of the Anchorage Home include many of the great pioneers of the first half of the 20th century including Homesteaders, miners, authors, bush pilots, and families who turned Anchorage from a railroad tent town to Alaska's center of commerce and culture. Even an ex-television star resides in the Home. The Anchorage Pioneers' Home serves elders ranging in age from mid-60's to 100. In 2000 the Home became registered as an Eden Alternative® Home. The goal of this program is to overcome the three issues that elders in long term care face: loneliness, helplessness and boredom. This is done by creating a natural Home environment where elders, caregivers, support staff, family members, friends and volunteers all participate in elder-centered care.

Anchorage Pioneer Home January 2010

We've worked very hard to make the Anchorage Pioneer Home a hub of activity within the downtown community. With our prime location right next to the Park Strip and our beautiful grounds covered in flowers in the summer and sparkling white lights in the winter, the Home is an attraction for visitors and neighbors. The Home is an important component of the local community and hosts not only activities which are fun for the whole family such as concerts and parties but also business meetings such as Community Council and local Homeowners associations.

Accomplishments

In recent months the Anchorage Home has been a busy construction zone which has resulted in substantial improvements to the Home and also provided a good deal of stimulation and entertainment for our elders. This past winter old tile flooring was replaced in all the dining rooms as well as the entire 2 north neighborhood with beautiful rolled vinyl wood-grain flooring. This was a huge project with a lot of disruption to the Home but we made it fun by having 6 residents at a time "go camping" in another area of the Home while their floors were being replaced. Glass in the windows in the south tower was also replaced as the old ones had broken seals and had become inefficient. Our stand alone generator for the Home was also replaced as the old one was not up to code.



APH Resident Joe Smart with Tamaro Lewis
on St Patrick's Day

The APH staff feels very strongly that we are stewards of the Home and the Home belongs to the people of Alaska. As

Anchorage Pioneer Home
January 2010

stewards we strive to keep the Home at full capacity in order to meet the needs of as many elders we can in a safe environment. Year round, our occupancy remains at close to 100% and only dips briefly during the process of admission. As you can tell, APH has been a very busy place this past year!

Challenges

Our capital improvements have been wonderful for the Home, but the real challenge is the everyday needs of the physical plant and the maintenance of the vast array of equipment.

Our maintenance staff is overloaded with responsibilities and is unable to keep up on important preventive

maintenance issues as well as routine maintenance needs. Their time and talents are spent on important life safety issues that take priority. APH has a real need for more maintenance staff due to the age and condition of the building as well as the increase in maintaining equipment necessary for the care of the elders we serve.

A challenge in this area is the trend toward elders with higher medical needs which leads to a decrease in length of stay; this in turn translates into a sharp increase in the number of admissions each year of residents at higher ages and medical acuity. Each admission represents a spike in the work load for the staff of the Home. This spike is from the direct care staff assessing and preparing the new resident, the maintenance and housekeeping crews preparing the resident room, and the admission staff gathering all the necessary documentation.

We have also found that (on average) we perform admission screenings/assessments on five individuals for each one person admitted to the Home. This process requires a great deal of man-hours.



Anchorage Pioneer Home
January 2010

As an example, APH has admitted 250 new residents in the past 5 years. In the 5 years before that less than half that number of residents, 115, was admitted.

In addition to the challenge of numerous admissions and overwhelming maintenance needs, our Home faces a documentation challenge brought on by Medicare and Medicaid requirements. The Pioneer Home has always maintained the standards of a top notch assisted living facility that charts “by exception”.



APH Resident Anna Hill on Picnic Outing

This means that, unlike nursing Homes and hospitals, we only chart on a resident if something unusual occurs. New standards require our nursing and activity staff document at a similar level as hospital documentation. These additional documentation requirements will result

in less elder contact and less care unless we are able to increase our clerical staffing. Non compliance with the documentation requirements may result in interruption of revenue streams as well as monetary fines.

The good news is that the elders who live in the Anchorage Pioneer Home receive tremendous first rate care in a safe and loving environment from staff that is highly qualified professionals. We were flattered that when there was a need in our community to assist another facility, Mary Conrad Nursing Home which had fallen below professional standards, the staff of the Anchorage Pioneer Home was called in to assist. We are also proud that APH is a teaching facility with a continual flow of

Anchorage Pioneer Home
January 2010

students from local and out of state universities. APH continues to participate in the University of Alaska Apprenticeship Program.

APH has an ongoing in-house education program that allows our staff to stay on the cutting edge of their professions and advance in their chosen career. APH enjoys a great reputation in our community, among our elders and their families. We are excited that our volunteer program brings literally hundreds of volunteers into the Home each month. But most of all we are honored and proud to be a part of the lives of the elders we serve.



APH Resident Elsie Hrubes at baking activity

Fairbanks Pioneer Home
January 2010

**Fairbanks Pioneer Home
Introduction**

The Fairbanks Pioneer Home was built in the Golden Heart City 42 years ago; it opened in July of 1967. A month later the Pioneer Home became flooded which required all of the residents to evacuate and move to University Hill until the flood subsided. Once the clean up was completed our residents moved back in and settled into enjoying their life in the Fairbanks Pioneer Home.



FPH Sing-A-Long in the Library

The Fairbanks Pioneer Home is a warm and active community that provides exceptional care to those who live here. There are three distinct neighborhoods that meet the varying needs of our residents. At present the Fairbanks Home's average age is 88, with 4 individuals over the age of 100.

Accomplishments

The Home continues to participate with the Fairbanks Senior Services providers group. We meet on a regular basis with others in our community that shares the same interests.

Our Home now has a wonderful renovation to the Aurora neighborhood which was completed in a timely manner. It was a much needed face lift that was celebrated with our staff, residents and their families, gathering for a potluck and tours of the new Aurora neighborhood.



Vickie Wilson, FPH
Administrator, Carl
Heflinger & Janet Perrigo
at FPH annual Golden
Days Family Reunion
Picnic

Fairbanks Pioneer Home
January 2010

The Fairbanks Pioneer Home has worked successfully with the Tanana Valley Campus as a training sight for the Certified Nurse's Aide program. This experience has provided our Home with a greater amount of Certified Nurse's Aide applicants to choose from. Several staff of our staff participated in the University of Anchorage Distant Courses that is being offered as part of the Apprentice Program. The employees found the classes' to be very beneficial.

The Fairbanks Pioneer Home Foundation has been instrumental in fund raising to improve the walkways for our residents. The residents enjoy the improvements allowing them to walk further for daily exercise. The Foundation is planning on continuing to do improvements next summer 2010.

This year FPH had three residents turn 100 and one resident turned 102. Our resident who was 102 passed this year and our Home was privileged to have her as a resident and to have known so much about her life.

Our Home partnered with our local Alzheimer's Association to offer residents, who are in varying stages of dementia, an art therapy program. In the four sessions to date, our residents have created paintings, drawings, collages, and decorations for the Homestead neighborhood.

Additionally, the Fairbanks Pioneer Home installed Cameras in the facility to provide 24 hour building security



The FPH 6th Annual Pioneer Treasure Sale was a huge success again this year, netting in one day \$10,000.00.

Fairbanks Pioneer Home
January 2010

Challenges

This year FPH has had a continuous struggle recruiting and retaining Nurses. Since we were unable to find RN's, we hired several Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN's). We have also have been challenged to find RN's that are skilled in supervising employees. We are in the process of reclassifying a position to be a Health Program Manager. This new position will help open up the field to possible individuals who specialize in Health Care combined with Personnel Management.

In a 24 hour facility, such as FPH, we have a diverse group of employees working around the clock resulting in ongoing personnel issues. The administration of FPH spends an incredible amount of time and energy resolving personnel issues in order to promote a more harmonious atmosphere. In addition our state personnel system challenges the administration of FPH's ability to address personnel issues.



Marge Dirkz & Jessica
Armstrong at the FPH
Golden Days Family
Reunion Picnic on July
23, 2209

Juneau Pioneer Home January 2010

Juneau Pioneer Home Introduction

The Juneau Pioneer Home was completed in 1988 and is currently Home to 45 incredible Alaskans. The Home is nestled in the wetlands along Juneau's Egan Drive and has breathtaking views of nearby mountains and the Gastineau Channel that divides the mainland from Douglas Island.



The Home is divided into four neighborhoods that serve as mini-communities. Each community is supported by a team made up of residents, caregivers, support staff, family members, friends and volunteers. The team members sustain each other by the encouragement to be creative in the development of a caring, loving Home. The neighborhood concept is instrumental in building an atmosphere where loved ones who have dementia can feel safe and appreciated.

JPH residents Stina Barrens and Nina Brown, with staff Demy Carandang and Fred Abad, show off the beautiful flowers they grew this summer in sunny Juneau.

In 1998 the Juneau Pioneer Home embraced the Eden Alternative® philosophy. The Juneau Pioneer Home promotes the Eden Alternative. Within the Eden philosophy, family, friends, pets, and plants all contribute to creating a “human habitat” by revitalizing relationships and encouraging residents to be involved in a vibrant community. Central to the Eden philosophy is that decisions are made by teams which are comprised of the people closest to the residents. The team members sustain each other and are committed to providing compassionate care to residents in a manner that nurtures the human body, mind and spirit while preserving the dignity and individuality of residents.

Juneau Pioneer Home January 2010

Accomplishments

On the educational front the Juneau Pioneer Home partnered with UAA to conduct a pilot project to develop the first Eden Alternative university course. This course resulted in 13 staff and 4 elders becoming Certified Eden Associates. Two staff from the Eden Alternative office came to JPH and made a videotape of our Home. They interviewed several residents and staff about how they feel the Eden approach affects life in the Home. This video will be part of a presentation at the Eden Alternative International Conference in Denver in June. JPH also continued to work with UAA on the apprenticeship program, resulting in two CNA mentors for our Home. The JPH foundation provided scholarships for two Assisted Living Aides to go to Certified Nursing Assistant School.



Sig Olsen dances with Marritt Andruss, the geriatric nurse practitioner at the Juneau Pioneer Home. The Juneau Pioneer Home celebrated its 20th anniversary ball with dancing, food and live music from the Thunder Mountain Big Band.

A few of our more recent resident health initiatives are that we started a JPH Fitness Club as a motivational tool for residents. The physical therapy aides punch a card to indicate participation in an exercise session and when a card is filled up, residents get to choose a gift. Also we enrolled in the state's VacTrak program to track residents' vaccination history.

Juneau Pioneer Home
January 2010

JPH is once again certified as an OSHA SHARP site. This is an exemplary recognition of our health and safety record by the Occupational Safety and Health Association (OSHA). We were the first state agency to receive this recognition 2 years ago, and have qualified for continuation as a SHARP site this year.

On the activities front our partnership with the Tlingit and Haida Central Council Head Start program continues with exciting activities and relationships between the elders and the children. One special program, entitled "Reader Buddies", has the elders reading children's book to the kids. We reactivated our greenhouse and grew a few vegetables and flowers. Residents were actively involved in our flower gardens in the back of the Home where they grew 12 inch in diameter Dinner Plate Dahlias.



Pioneer Home Board Member,
Martha Penrose and JPH resident
Stina Barrans

On the building maintenance side; our fire alarm system was upgraded to install a fully addressable system that indicates the exact location of the source of the problem. This project also replaced all our smoke detectors, heat detectors and pull stations. All of the lighting fixtures in the Home were replaced, resulting in increased efficiency in energy usage.

And on a final note, we conducted satisfaction surveys with staff, residents, and elders and the results and comments from the survey were excellent.

Juneau Pioneer Home
January 2010

Challenges

We continue to be challenged by our inability to attract on call nurses and Certified Nursing Assistants. Our on call pay is simply not competitive with other local health care entities. For several years, we have encouraged the University of Alaska Southeast to add another CNA class, and they finally did so this semester.

We continue to hire on call Assisted Living Aides (ALA) because of the lack of CNA's. The ALA staff comes to our Home with very little training or experience and it is incumbent on us to train in the basic skills, resulting in increased on call costs during the training period.

We are experiencing an increase in the number and frequency of deaths, which is difficult for staff emotionally, and also results in increased workloads with more new admissions.



Several JPH residents enjoyed our outdoor picnics during our long stretch of summer sunshine in Juneau.

Juneau Pioneer Home
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Millie Tandy, presenting flowers to
Merritt Andruss, Prom Queen, and
retiring JPH Nurse Practitioner
extraordinaire

Good Bye Merritt!

Ketchikan Pioneer Home
January 2010

Ketchikan Pioneer Home

Introduction:

The Ketchikan Pioneer Home (KPH) is licensed to care for 47 assisted living residents. The Home is situated on a garden hillside that neighbors the Alder Park, Sea View Terrace, the Alaska Marine Highway Ferry Terminal and the Inter-Island Ferry. Resident rooms are located on the two upper floors of the 3 story building and are divided into neighborhoods based on resident level of care. The average daily census is 41 and the average resident age is 85.



KH resident Audrey Glaser rides in the brand new KPH van during the Ketchikan Fourth of July parade.

KPH is proud to offer a Respite Program, which allows applicants on the waitlist to stay for 14 days while their primary caregiver receives medical treatment and/or much needed rest. This essential program is the only one in our community and is critical to many of our frail, elderly friends. Another point of pride for our staff and residents is the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Fawn Mountain Elementary Indian Education Preschool program. This preschool is housed on the 2nd floor and fills our halls with the laughter of children.

Accomplishments

During this past year our commitment to resident centered care was demonstrated through the purchase of a new rear loading wheelchair van. The van has been a welcome addition for the residents this year as it is a much safer and easier solution for transporting residents.

This past year we renewed our emphasis on wellness with an increase in activities geared toward the resident's spiritual and physical well-being. We offer church services, gospel singing, outdoor walking clubs, swim

Ketchikan Pioneer Home
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therapy through the Arthritis Foundation, a specialized exercise class and a restorative aide program that has become vital to the residents. This increase in physical activities along with monthly massage therapy and spa days leads to a stronger and more balanced elder. The Gerontology Institute through Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, Oregon is now a resource to KPH residents through the telemedicine project. A number of KPH residents are now receiving geriatric assessments and treatment for issues such as change in mental status, mood or behavior changes, multiple medication interactions, and gait and balance disorders.

We continue to remain committed to improving our process of Assisted Living Plan meetings so that all disciplines are able to contribute to the care plan process as well as the resident and residents loved ones. We have also maintained improvement in our resident charts and recent OSHA and Assisted Living Licensing audits indicated zero orders of correction. Additionally the KPH has the added responsibility of charting through Peace Health's electronic medical record system which provides better continuity of care for the resident and improved communication with local medical professionals. When KPH residents arrive at the emergency room there is an updated medication list available to the physician through this database.

KPH resident Harley Hall and a KPH preschool student enjoy a goodbye hug after school one day



KPH is committed to ensuring intergenerational activities through the continuation of the preschool on site as well as regular visits from many other committed volunteers in our community who have established relationships with our residents. Since we began our emphasis on intergenerational activities many years ago, our first young volunteers are now returning to us as teenagers and spending time with the residents at activities such as the pre-prom party where we host 75+ teenagers for appetizers and a photo opportunity with the residents before prom.

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We have made several significant improvements to the KPH building this past year including the exterior painting and window replacement project is underway. The window replacement will allow our residents in wheel chairs to see out of the windows and this will be greatly appreciated by them. The projects will include a complete painting/staining of the exterior, removal and replacement of the sky bridge, exterior lighting upgrade and complete removal replacement of exterior windows and doors. Alaska Commercial Contractors of Juneau has been managing the project with several subcontractors on site; substantial completion is scheduled for mid-October. And, the resident kitchen/activity area was completely renovated this year with new cabinets and counter space.



KPH resident Virgene Harvey (seated) looks on as volunteer and friend, Mary Hastings, helps to plant Marigolds during the annual hanging basket party on the KPH roof deck.

Fiscally KPH is trying to increase its receipt of funding in order to improve our elder care. Grant funding has been sought and obtained from the Rasmuson Foundation and BP Oil. Private funding has been obtained through the KPH Foundation, private donors, and local businesses. The Rasmuson Foundation has provided a wheelchair accessible custom computer desk and we have accepted a donation of a computer for the new resident media station located on the third floor.

This will allow residents a greater opportunity to network and socialize with loved ones despite limited mobility.

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Recent studies indicate that improved socialization through the internet decreases loneliness and depression among seniors.

KPH is committed to our collaborations within our community through our membership and partnership with many local agencies some of which include: Ketchikan General Hospital, Ketchikan Indian Corporation, Rendezvous, Senior Services, Community Connections, Kayhi Community Service Club and Rotary.

Food is very important to our elders and this year the residents requested more fresh fish and the community along with Nana Management Services responded to their requests. Through donations of locally processed fish, the residents have had hundreds of pounds of fresh salmon and halibut donated and they recently celebrated Grandparents Day with donations of Dungeness and King crab along with shrimp and smoked salmon.

We continue to find solutions to recruitment and retention of our CNAs. One solution has been the KPH Foundation offering CNA scholarships in exchange for work agreements to the KPH. This has enhanced our ability to capture the best of the CNAs in the class and hire these students before they go out into the community and seek work elsewhere. Thus, we are no longer scrambling to recruit CNA staff.

The Home for the Holidays program was recently honored by the Chamber of Commerce for using volunteers to safely transport residents of the KPH to their loved ones Homes for the holidays.

Challenges

The Tongass neighborhood bathing area and bathroom is in need of an extensive remodel and the Fireweed dining area is in need of a remodel to increase dining and living space. The storage area for equipment is in critical need of updating in every neighborhood within KPH. Currently, there is not an effective way to handle aggressive residents and the only alternative is to evict them from the Pioneer Home system. Additional training has been requested from the staff for Palliative Care training and training on working with aggressive residents.

Sitka Pioneer Home
January 2010

Sitka Pioneer Home

Introduction

From the original “Report of the Board of Trustees and Superintendent of the Alaska Pioneers’ Home”: *“Under the act of the First Alaska Legislature, approved April 30, 1913, the Hon. J.F.A. Strong, as Governor of Alaska, appointed Mr. W.P. Mills, of Sitka, Alaska, Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Alaska Pioneers’ Home and Rev. S. G. Kostromentinoff, of Sitka, Alaska, Secretary of the Board, with the Governor as ex-officio President.”* The Board met for the first time on July 4, 1913 and appointed A.G. Shoup as the Superintendent. These were the individuals whose vision and leadership created what some have described as the most progressive and effective eldercare model in the United States.



Iris Klingler with George and Freddi Young during the SPH Alaska Day Celebration

Interestingly, the initial occupants of the Home were called inmates, not residents. A.G. Shoup, Superintendent described the “inmates” as follows: *“Almost all of the men who have come to the Alaska Pioneers’ Home are of the highest type of American trailblazer. They are men who have lived alone in the silent places, and are of a naturally adventurous disposition. In fact, it is that very quality that has kept them upon the Alaska frontier, and it is to such men that the Territory must credit much of its development.”*

Since that time, the Sitka Pioneers’ Home (SPH) has undergone significant modifications, but the underlying vision of the founders has remained mostly intact for close to 100 years. Today the Home provides a Homelike environment for up to 75 residents; a diverse community of elders from around the State of Alaska who share their lives with the caring and compassionate staff.

Sitka Pioneer Home January 2010

Accomplishments

Sitka Pioneer Home has been busy with many upgrades to our facility. Renovation of the main dining room is complete. The dining area is decorated with over 15 Rie Munoz prints, donated by the artist. Significant remodeling on the second and third floors continues. This includes, but is not limited to, new flooring and cabinets. Work on the roof is expected to be completed by October. All buildings on



Sitka Pioneer Home's new carpet installation

the SPH campus are being re-roofed. And on a final note SPH is partnering with federal, state and local entities to move forward a project to update/enhance Totem Square. The project consists of, at a minimum, one new totem pole, seating, and lighting and safety structures by the pole(s) and the seawall.

This last year, SPH invested in exercise equipment to be used for both residents and staff. Restorative Care for the residents has been a high priority and the therapists that have used the equipment and the rehab treatment room have been very impressed. In addition, SPH is also focusing on employee wellness. Employees can sign up for membership to use the facilities and equipment when not on duty. Over 15 employees currently have memberships.

After a two year hiatus of two crucial nursing positions being unoccupied SPH successfully hired new nurses and assembled a Nurse Management Team. The team is working to update outdated policies and procedures and to help define best practices in eldercare. We continue to partnership with the University of Alaska Southeast to provide clinical rotations for Certified Nursing Assistants. This partnership facilitates our ability to recruit CNAS because it enables us to create a relationship with

Sitka Pioneer Home
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CNAs while they are in school. Our CNAs also continued to participate in the Apprenticeship Program sponsored by the University of Alaska. Courses included topics in the area of geriatrics, restorative care and dementia. SPH received Eden re-certification for another 2 years.

Challenges

Shortage of nurses all around the country is no different in Alaska and provides significant challenges to the rural areas of the State. In Sitka we experience nursing shortages as well. In addition we have several staffing issues in the form of escorts and increasing acuities of our residents. SPH has a limited number of staff available to escort residents to and from medical providers in the community. In order to be fair and equitable the escort transportation needs require additional staffing.

The rates of acuity of our residents continue to increase. The higher need for care put an extra burden on the direct care staff and adds complexity to any discussion about staffing ratios.

The age of the building will always pose a challenge even with the significant modifications that have taken place this past year. We can expect more renovations as the year's progress. And we have also been challenged to keep up our occupancy rate.



From left: Kathy Revard, Mildred Sarayan, Janet Widmyer, Cora Mosher and Freddi Young during the annual SPH St. Patrick's Day horse race

Pioneer Home Pharmacy
January 2010

Pioneer Home Pharmacy

Introduction

Through the pharmacy distribution system medications and pharmaceutical supplies are shipped to each Home Monday through Friday. If a Home needs medication on a weekend or holiday, each Home has a "local acquisition" policy that enables them to acquire medications from a local pharmacy or hospital.

The Pioneer Home pharmacy is an accredited clerkship site for student pharmacists from the University of Southern California (USC) School of Pharmacy. Students from the University are mentored and trained by the pharmacists over an intense 6 week period. In conjunction with the USC School of pharmacy, the Pioneer Home pharmacy also sponsors accredited continuing education programs for licensed professionals in the community.

In keeping with national trends for long-term care facilities, the Pioneer Home pharmacy program maintains a formulary. The formulary lists those medications that are most appropriate for geriatric use and are the medications used primarily by the Pioneers' Home pharmacy. The formulary is posted on the Division of Longevity Programs Website at <http://hss.state.ak.us/dalp/pharmacy/default.htm>.

History

The Pioneer Home central pharmacy is located on the lower level of the Anchorage Home and provides services to the six Homes located in Sitka, Ketchikan, Juneau, Palmer, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. The pharmacy opened in January of 1998. The staff includes three registered pharmacists, two state licensed pharmacy assistants, and a billing clerk.

Accomplishments

This past year the Pharmacy staff redesigned and updated the online pharmacy formulary.

Our Anchorage pharmacy hosted several sets of USC Pharmacy Students for clinical internship rotations Outreach with MTM education for the pharmacy community. Tammi, one of our pharmacists, taught a class at the pharmacy convention which was well attended by pharmacists around the state.

Pioneer Home Pharmacy
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We now have broader Medicare Part D provider coverage for pharmacy billing. We now have pharmacy agreements with 17 prescription drug plans.

During the State of Alaska temporary acquisition of the Mary Conrad Center our pharmacy provided much needed outreach to that facility as well as the other 6 Pioneer Homes

This past year the pharmacy provided over 2, 200,000 medications in FY 09.

Challenges

It continues to be a challenge to work with less staff to do the chart reviews. Chart reviews require the Anchorage pharmacists to travel to each of the 6 Homes four times annually; one week each trip. While out of the office traveling for a week the pharmacy work load continues at the Home pharmacy office.

