

A Radical Transformation of Care

Village Care Nursing Center: A new facility designed to get away from traditional institutional care

Construction will begin late this year on a new Village Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing, a facility that will complement Village Care of New York's burgeoning community care network in Manhattan. The newly created SeniorChoices array of services places considerable emphasis on the creation and expansion of community services, the new Center will be a state-of-the-art residential care facility that will replace the current Village Nursing Home.

The components of SeniorChoices are a radical transformation of care and services for older adults. The new facility, which will have 105 beds, is under construction on West Houston Street between Sixth Avenue and Varick Street. The new building, which will be predominantly a care center offering short-stay services such as inpatient rehabilitation, was designed by the New York firm of Perkins Eastman LLC, with feng shui input from Alex Stark of New York City.

In addition to 60 short-stay rehabilitation beds, the 53,000 square foot facility will also provide 45 beds for persons with complex continuing care needs who may require longer-term services in a skilled nursing facility. These beds will offer end-of-life care and palliative care. When fully operational, the new facility will serve more than 600 different individuals each year.

Village Care President and CEO Arthur Y. Webb said that the new facility has been designed to get away from the institutional feeling found in traditional nursing homes, and the program places a great deal of emphasis on privacy and in preserving individual dignity.



Village Care Nursing Center: A new facility designed to get away from traditional institutional care



Some of the features will include:

- Private rooms make up a major part of the capacity, a break from long-standing tradition and requirements that see most traditional nursing homes having at least two persons to a room
- A neighborhood design to each floor, with open space and a community feel.
- Instead of a large-scale dining room, the residents of each floor will take their meals on the floor where they reside, and eating facilities will be available beyond the traditional breakfast-lunch-dinner timetable.
- An interior garden will add to the building's aesthetics and offer a place of serenity for patients and their families, and a rooftop garden will offer opportunities for planting.
- Feng shui-correct layout that is intended to promote healing and recuperation for patients.

“While the true emphasis of what we are seeking to achieve is to offer and provide care for older adults in the community, the new facility will provide a reliable anchor for those community services and a center for the community to relate to,” Webb said. With emphasis on physical and occupational therapies, the overriding goal will be to restore individual’s ability to function and to “get them back home,” Webb said.

Herbert Fillmore, Village Care’s executive vice-president for SeniorChoices, pointed out that the current Village Nurs-

ing home is the only skilled nursing facility on the West Side of Manhattan south of 86th Street, and that with the new facility and the expanded array of community-based care and services, the organization will continue to meet the needs of those living in that area.

“With the complement of services we will provide in SeniorChoices, Village Care will vastly expand the numbers of persons we can serve each year,” Fillmore said. SeniorChoices currently serves about 1,000 individuals a year and by 2010 that will be expanded to more than 2,300 a year.

Currently, with Village Nursing Home and two adult day health centers, the organization serves about 750 people a year with nursing home-level needs. In 2010 that number will more than double with the opening of the new facility, the addition of a PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) component, expansion of Long-Term Home Health Care and day health center slots, and the creation of a Medicaid Assisted Living Program.

For those living independently, Village Care will expand its home care and home health care services. The organization also operates a health clinic in Chelsea. “We have a legacy going back to 1977 that we are committed to preserving and protecting,” Webb said, noting that with the transformation that will occur over the next few years, seniors and their families will have more choices and greater opportunities for community care. ■