

The Aging in Place Project: Assuring Quality At-Home Services for Seniors

The Challenge:

Many senior citizens and their families, preferring to remain at home rather than enter a nursing home, seek to postpone or even avoid nursing home care.

The Goal:

Provide more and higher-quality services at home, allowing people to “age in place.”

An Innovative Solution:

The Aging in Place Project, which includes: TigerPlace, a state of the art independent living facility for 60 seniors in Columbia, MO; and Sinclair Home Care, which provides home care services to residents of TigerPlace and Lenoir Woods. Sinclair Home Care and TigerPlace are innovative learning environments for students on issues and experiences related to aging in place.

Where To Learn More

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What It Is

- Sinclair Home Care was created as a department within the University of Missouri’s Sinclair School of Nursing (MUSSON). It is a licensed home care agency that provides community-based care to residents of TigerPlace and Lenoir Woods to support the aging in place program. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) funded a \$2 million grant to start the agency and evaluate clinical outcomes of aging in place (AIP).
- A partnership among the MUSSON, Sinclair Home Care, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services as well as a top long-term care provider, Americare, is assessing the impact of a model of registered nurse the care coordination and other home care services to help seniors age in place. The new model of long term care was developed based on prior research findings and designed to promote research about care of older adults and long term care services. Americare built TigerPlace. Since it opened, it is fully occupied and residents and University of Missouri students are actively learning from each other.
- State legislation for the Missouri Aging in Place Initiative in 1999 and 2001 was needed to build TigerPlace and evaluate how providing coordinated home care and home health services to elders can support them so they do not have to move to a traditional nursing home as their needs increase. TigerPlace is the only Aging in Place site operating in Missouri.

What It Does

- The effects of multiple mental and physical co-morbidities as people age are diminished in the TigerPlace supportive environment. Based on individual choice and autonomy, both the building and the services maximize each elder person's mental, physical, and psychosocial strengths. Specific services that integrate mind and body are: a country club dining experience for meals; a sports bar; private completely accessible apartments with screened porches; an on-site veterinary clinic, doors to the outside from each apartment with safe walking paths for personal pets; and health and wellness programs with registered nurse care coordination and 24-hour nurse response on call.
- A state sponsored evaluation compared findings from 2005 to 2008 of the AIP project to national long term care data. Results from the two AIP locations revealed:
 - The combined housing and care cost for any resident has never approached or exceeded the national average cost for nursing home care at either location.
 - The AIP model of care that combines registered nurse care coordination with home care services improved or stabilized both mental and physical health measures.

How It Stands Out

- Sinclair Home Care (in operation since 1999)
 - Has, according to outcome analyses of the CMS-funded evaluation, produced significantly better outcomes in cognition, depression, ADLs, and incontinence than a matched cohort of nursing home residents at 6, 12, 18, and 24 months.
 - Has produced significantly better outcomes of pain, shortness of breath and ADLs through AIP nurse care coordination.
 - Provided, through RN care coordination, \$482.85 per month cost savings to the total Medicare and Medicaid costs of health care when compared to home and community-based services during the 12 months of the CMS-funded evaluation. Total Medicare and Medicaid costs were \$1784 lower per month than in a comparison nursing home group.
 - Has provided more than 700 nursing students with clinical experiences (and provided experience for many engineering, communication, business, PT, SW, and medical students).
 - Served 700 clients in the AIP CMS-funded evaluation; nurse care coordination delayed or prevented nursing home placement for 250 clients
- Tiger Place (in operation since 2004)
 - Has provided more than over 400 students with clinical experiences.
 - Facilitates development and evaluation of technology in a collaborative setting.
 - Is the site for the interdisciplinary technology and aging research team that has secured more than \$8 million in funding from the National Science Foundation, RAND/Hartford foundation, National Institutes of Health, Administration on Aging, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Alzheimer's Association.
 - Has reduced hospitalizations, sustained outcomes of maintaining mobility and independence, early illness recognition, involvement in life and community activities, and successful hospice care for those at end of life.