

In December 2011, I visited Beth-Haven Nursing Home. Beth-Haven is a 105-resident Medicare/Medicaid certified skilled nursing home located in Hannibal and operated by the Mennonite Home Association. Administrator Dawn Davis recently began serving as co-leader of the [MCS's](#) (Missouri's culture change coalition) Northeast regional group.

Beth-Haven utilizes the [Artifacts of Culture Change](#) online tool to monitor their culture change progress and has a culture change team that leads their efforts. They have already made several positive changes and are planning more.

Many of their changes are piloted in their special care unit, The Gardens, and then are implemented throughout the home. The Gardens has universal workers, family style dining, and private rooms. They have their own recreation therapist and an outdoor garden area that the residents can access freely. They are currently working on liberalizing medication passes.



Resident Room with bay window in The Gardens (Special Care Unit)



Personalized shadow boxes located outside of resident rooms, which helps residents with dementia recognize their rooms.

Some of the changes they have made throughout the home include replacing all their beds with new electric beds, improving lighting by adding daylight lighting, and eliminating overhead paging. They are also working on liberalizing diets and minimizing the use of body alarms. They currently only have four residents still on therapeutic diets just and a couple with body alarms.

They have 23 private rooms. There are no restrictions on residents' personal furniture or decorations. Residents can have their own refrigerators; however, there are community refrigerators available for those who don't have their own. Residents can also have their own pets if they are able to care for them.

Each neighborhood has a guest room for family visits. They have four dining rooms and are adding another with a library. They will be working with the local library to develop a book exchange. They have a chapel and a chaplain. They also have their own private cable channel, which they use to post menus, announcements, and to run memorials for residents who recently passed away.

Staff members are consistently assigned to care for residents who they know and have relationships with. Residents can receive the type of bath they prefer when they want it. They also have a blanket warmer. It is so popular that their fund raising committee is working on getting another one.

They are also working on dining improvements and have family style dining in The Gardens. They accommodate special requests. For example, they have one resident who wants ham, egg, and cheese everyday at 10:00. They have snacks available at all times at no extra cost. Some residents enjoy gardening,

so they have raised gardens for them. Food Service and Activity staff members prepare the vegetables from the gardens for the residents.

Future plans include installing a wireless call system, going to electronic medical records, replacing the flooring, adding a community computer with internet access, adding wifi, naming each neighborhood, renovating the bathing rooms, renovating the nurses' work area, and adding a memory wall with photos of residents who have passed away.

During my visit, I met 83-year-old resident William Smith. Mr. Smith grew up and went to school in Madison, Missouri, where his father worked in a coal mine. When he was 16-years-old, his family moved to Hannibal where his father began working at the rubber plant where they made soles and heels for shoes. He has lived in Hannibal since.



Resident William Smith

He also began working for International Shoe Company on the night shift when he was 16. Sometime later, he went to work for William Underwood Food Company, which was taken over by PET. He retired from PET when he was 62.

He moved to Beth-Haven 2 ½ years ago. He is happy with life there and was complimentary of the care he receives. He is asked about his preferences and makes his own decisions. He goes to bed when he chooses and likes to get up early. He said, "I like everything pretty well the way it is." "Everybody gets attention."

I also met Tangela Rickard. Working at Beth-Haven is Ms. Rickard's first job. She loves her job and the residents so much that she can't see herself doing anything else. She has now been there almost 27 years and is a CNA, CMT, and Restorative Aide.



Aide Tangela Rickard

Ms. Rickard said the residents get a lot of love from family and staff. "You love the residents who are really lovable and you love the ones who are really ornery." Many residents tell her that they love her and give her hugs and kisses. When she leaves for the day, they tell her they will see her tomorrow. When she returns they tell her they missed her.

Residents maintain as much independence as possible. They pick out their own clothes, choose when they want help getting up in the mornings, and make their own appointments with the assistance of their families. They have one resident who still has his own truck. He tells them he is leaving and goes for a drive. If the residents don't like the food that is being served, they can request something different.

We discussed changes that have taken place over the years. She said the residents are happier now, which she attributed to more choices and consistent staffing assignments. The staff members are less task-oriented and have more time to develop relationships with the residents. There are also fewer residents in wheelchairs now. More people are rehabbing and going home, which she said it due to the quality of care provided by therapy staff.

I also visited Beth-Haven's sister home, Pleasant View, which is just across the street. Administrator Paul Ewert showed me around. Pleasant View opened in 2007. They have 35 apartments, but are licensed for 42 residents to accommodate couples. They also have nine independent living apartments attached.



Pleasant View Assisted Living

Residents wake up when they choose and are provided made to order breakfasts. Residents who choose to sleep late can still order a hot breakfast or there is a continental breakfast available if they prefer.



Resident Apartment



Resident Apartment

Activities, housekeeping, and laundry staff serve as universal workers. There are no audible alarms, staff members carry pagers. There is a residential type laundry room on each floor. Residents can either do their own laundry or staff will do it for them. Basic cable is provided and they also receive the in-house channel from Beth-Haven.



Resident Laundry

As is commonly the case with homes that are on the culture change journey, both Beth-Haven and Pleasant view typically stays full.