

North Idaho Seniors Deserve the Best

By Bryan Lindsay

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Life Care Center of Coeur d'Alene sits on the border of Coeur d'Alene and Hayden, right next to Kohl's Department Store. Over the past seventeen years, it has become a part of the healthcare network that serves Hayden and its neighboring communities. When I started my career as a director for long term care facilities, I was familiar with all the stereotypes associated with nursing homes. My mission has been to change this perception by giving patrons an exceptional experience, and possibly the total opposite from what they were expecting. That is what happened with Cynthia Picha.

Cynthia has a summer home in Hayden Lake and spends other parts of the year in Manchester, Washington. Before she could return for the winter, she had an illness that necessitated extended therapy and nursing care. She chose to come to our Life Care facility and what she experienced was nothing like what she expected. "I was blown away by the care I received. It has exceeded all my expectations." Her expectations much like those many people have, were that a nursing home environment was something to be feared. "I was one who promised my mother that as long as I was capable, I would never allow her to go to a nursing home." She now sees nursing care facilities as a positive environment: a place of healing, a place where people treat you well and help you work towards better health.

Many things have improved from what your past experiences may lead you to believe, so I wanted to address four frequently asked questions about our services.

How long does someone typically stay at your facility?

We provide both long-term care and short term rehabilitation. For our short-term residents, we have thirty-three

private suites. The length of stay is dictated by your physician and your individual health needs. Our goal is to get you home as quickly and safely as possible. We recognize there is "no place like home," but also don't want to send you back before we've met the requirements for safely integrating you back into your life. Our therapy team has more than two-hundred and twenty collective years of experience and have proficiency in helping hundreds of people each year return back home. For our short-term residents, our average length of stay is less than a month. This is far from the old stereotype that we're the last stop on life's tour.

Who pays for my care?

For those coming for short-term rehabilitation, typically Medicare covers the first 20 days at 100%. Medicare can continue to provide financial assistance for up to 100 days, and most insurance companies cover the 20% copay. Many private insurance companies also provide coverage if you do not have Medicare. It is best to check with your insurance provider to find out what their "skilled nursing" benefit is. Medicare does not cover long-term care. This is usually paid for privately, through long-term care insurance policies; or if personal funds are not available, state funding through Medicaid can help cover the costs.

What is the best way to choose a care center, if the need arises?

We highly recommend "The Five Senses" Test. There are multiple options for finding care in the community, and you should know what to look for. When you walk in, what is your first impression? How does it smell? Do you sense warmth and kindness or does it feel sterile or cold? Ask to try the food. Come after hours or un-announced. One of the things people frequently verbalize is that they're surprised how nice it smells and how beautiful it looks. Weren't places like this