Introduction

Northland Nursing Home is a 23-bed nursing home part of the Mayo Clinic Health System (MCHS) in Barron, Wisconsin. In 2012, Northland Nursing Home began renovating the building to improve the facility’s home-like atmosphere and overall appearance. Along with the renovations, our furniture was replaced with more modern furniture and our wall décor was taken down to accommodate new wallpaper. However, after the renovations were finished, the wall décor no longer matched the new appearance of the nursing home. Because of budgeting issues, Northland Nursing Home has not been able to buy new artwork for the walls.

Mission of the Task

By working with the students in the University of Wisconsin – Barron County (UW-BC) art program, we will be able to work together with the community to provide affordable artwork for the nursing home that is also inspired by and meaningful to the residents.

Objectives Set for Acquiring New Artwork:
- Increase the sentimental value of the artwork in the facility
- Increase the community involvement of the nursing home
- Establish a relationship between the nursing home and the local college
- Improve the home-like atmosphere of the nursing home
- Increase resident involvement with nursing home décor
- Increase the opportunity for social interaction for the residents
- Provide the opportunity for residents to share their story with others

Process

I. Meet with Ginnie Baer, Assistant Professor of the Art Department
II. Create a timeline to work with the Spring 2014 art class – Ginnie decided to use the art project as the students’ final project for Spring semester
III. Educate the nursing home team about the project’s progress
IV. Meet with the Spring 2014 art class to explain the purpose and process of their final project
V. Create a schedule for each student to come meet and get to know a resident
VI. Work with each student to help create artwork inspired by the resident he/she met with
VII. The University of Wisconsin – Barron County donates the artwork to the nursing home

Summary of Success

Accomplishments:
- While working with the UW-BC students, the Northland residents, Ginnie Baer, and the Northland staff, we were able to achieve all of the goals intended with this project.
- 94% of residents stated that this project made them feel more involved with decisions for decorating
- 89% of UW-BC students stated that they foresee being involved with nursing home activities in the future

Barriers:
- Because we are part of the Mayo Clinic Health System, Northland Nursing Home is not permitted to accept all types of donations. However, by finding a way to benefit the local college and the residents, we were able to complete this project as a team and build a stronger relationship with the community.

Recommendations

I believe that this project had further potential to become a more long-term program. In hindsight, I feel that additional steps could have been taken to possibly create a club with the UW-BC art program to transform this project into a routine occurrence. For example, it would have been a wonderful addition to the project to establish a schedule for the UW-BC students to come paint with residents on a monthly basis, rather than just a one time event.

Acknowledgements

- University of Wisconsin – Barron County Art Students
- Ginnie Baer, Assistant Professor of the Art Department
- Northland Nursing Home Residents
- Northland Nursing Home Staff
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- Kristy Hanson, Nursing Home Administrator
- NWWI Mayo Clinic Health System Public Affairs Department