Five Star Club Stellar Care for Patients with Dementia

The only non-profit provider of adult day care to Coachella Valley seniors with Alzheimer's disease and other organic brain diseases, Eisenhower Medical Center's Five Star Club has provided compassionate care to clients for more than 23 years.

Whether memory loss stems from Alzheimer's, a stroke, Parkinson's disease or another cause, both patient and caregiver often experience frustration, boredom, anger or depression. Those who have Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia can experience a prolonged decline in their health but often retain their social skills.

Licensed for 35 participants on a daily basis, the goal of the Five Star Club's programming is to keep patients mentally and physically stimulated by offering personalized care plans and various activities including exercise, dance, bingo, card games, theme parties, arts and crafts, animal therapy visits, music and a fellowship group, plus a well-balanced lunch and two snacks. Toileting and bathing assistance and referrals to other community services are also provided.

"We have a very social, user-friendly and relaxed environment here," says Denise Latini, RN, BSN, PHN, Manager, Five Star Club. "Our services are offered in a non-medical, club-like setting so our clients feel comfortable and safe. The Five Star Club is a place for individuals to come and enjoy the day. It is like coming to a senior center, but they receive supervision and assistance."
"Alzheimer's currently affects an estimated 5.4 million Americans at an estimated cost of $183 million in 2011 ~ "
—Alzheimer's Association 2011 Facts and Figures, March 2011.

The Five Star Club has a roster of 80 to 100 clients at any one time. The Club also accepts clients in wheelchairs. Some clients come once or twice a week, others come all five days.

The Club's dedicated staff of seven, many of whom have been with the Club for 19 and 23 years, is specially trained and ensures a five-to-one client-to-staff ratio. "Our staff promotes a no-fail environment and really cares about each member's well-being. Negatives like 'don't,' 'can't' and 'no' are not part of our communication with our memory-impaired clients," says Latini. "We use compassionate communication. For many dementia patients, every time they ask a question they genuinely think it is the first time they are doing so. Our goal is to keep them calm, happy and engaged by redirecting them away from any answers or subject matter that might be upsetting to them."

Caring for the Caregiver

The Five Star Club, in addition to providing respite for caregivers of dementia patients, also offers support through its free, weekly two-hour caregivers support group held conveniently during Five Star Club hours. Latini leads the Alzheimer's Association support group that is sponsored at the Five Star Club. Caregivers of non-club members are also encouraged to participate in the group.

The Five Star Club, located at 42201 Beacon Hill, Suite A, Palm Desert, is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Transportation is available on fully ADA-compliant SunDial buses.

For more information about the Five Star Club, or to schedule an appointment for a Club visit, call 760-836-0232.

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