



THE FRIENDSHIP HOUSE AT ROYAL OAKS

AN EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE IN MEMORY SUPPORT



A place that feels like home

Our 56-suite Friendship House, dedicated to memory support, opened in May 2015 on the Royal Oaks campus. The building and the programming for memory-support residents focuses on skill preservation and was designed after extensive research on how those with dementia may live fuller lives based on surroundings that “feel like home.”

Friendship House is designed as four “neighborhoods,” each with 14 private suites with private baths, surrounded by a 2300 sq. ft. living area. Each neighborhood has defined spaces for cinema/media, meditative/spiritual,

dining and activities, and cooking and laundry. The staff, called Companions, are dedicated to a culture that “feels like home.” Each holds these certifications: Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified Caregiver, EssentiALZ Dementia Care through the Alzheimer’s Association, CPR, and First Aid. The work stations blend into the surroundings to make the center feel residential. The staff are consistently assigned to a neighborhood to enhance trust with residents and family members.

The on-site Nurse Manager is an R.N. with a B.S. in Nursing and is a member

of the Arizona Assisted Living Federation of America’s Memory Alliance Committee. A second R.N. supports the Companions with staff development and education. In fact, both are certified facilitators for the Virtual Dementia Tour, a special training provided to staff, residents, family, and friends to experience what a resident with dementia may experience.

With our non-profit mission to serve, we invite families in the west valley to consider Friendship House for loved ones who need memory support. Call (623) 815-4132 for more information.

Sharing their lives with them

Our Companions recognize our residents are individuals and rejoice in spending time with them, reminding them of who they are and what they have enjoyed in life. We care about the person and strive to bond with them, sharing their life story and helping them remember fondly the memories locked deep inside, while providing activities that stimulate the mind and body. As we engage with the resident, we recreate new paths to connect distant areas of the brain or nervous system, allowing for re-learning and resulting in joy and peace—if only for just a short period of time. The scheduled cognitive exercises and games use recall to allow residents to create new ways to learn, while providing avenues to succeed in a social environment.



All those working with our memory residents are artists. An artist creates something from nothing, going way beyond just listing activities on a calendar. Those who work at the Friendship House create a culture that unlocks a memory and brings out hidden talents and interests that still reside in the midst of

memory loss. They act as counselors, spiritual guides, teachers, mentors, fitness gurus, and experts on pop culture and current events. Volunteers can be seen on the enclosed back patios helping residents line up the perfect, hitting a croquet ball, or working their magic at the artist center.

Keeping the energy high

Group chair aerobics and yoga routines set to music energize our residents and promote strength and endurance maintenance. Aqua classes and personal training options in the water free residents' minds of fear of fall, provide buoyancy and increase the ability to think clearly and respond quicker. We have made wonderful advances with our residents through our aqua therapy programs. Visit www.RoyalOaks.com and view the video on the home page.

Residents who try massage and aroma therapy with guided imagery have discovered how relaxing it is, leading them to imagine life again as a young child, mentally visiting a favorite place or relative, and reminiscing over a memory long forgotten.

Comfort foods and special cooking projects are popular on campus, allowing residents to try new things or share a favorite



dish. Picnics and afternoon baking projects bring the past alive as residents remember family reunions and grandmothers baking cookies and muffins.

Music is a universal language

Companions create personalized playlists using iPods to enable those struggling with Alzheimer's, dementia and other cognitive and physical challenges to reconnect with the world through music-triggered memories. The grand piano is front and center, encouraging residents to tinker on the keys. Professional musicians and singers often perform to a packed house of residents, family members, companions, and volunteers.

Friendships are formed through informal groups that gather for coffee, to help bake, bingo, birthday celebrations, and more. Therapy dogs are on campus twice weekly—nothing brings a smile faster to a resident's face than a visit from a four-legged friend!

Staying connected using technology has become very popular with our residents, who Skype or Facetime with family members. We work with residents to encourage them to embrace technology and live in today's culture.

We don't just call out bingo numbers or put on variety shows

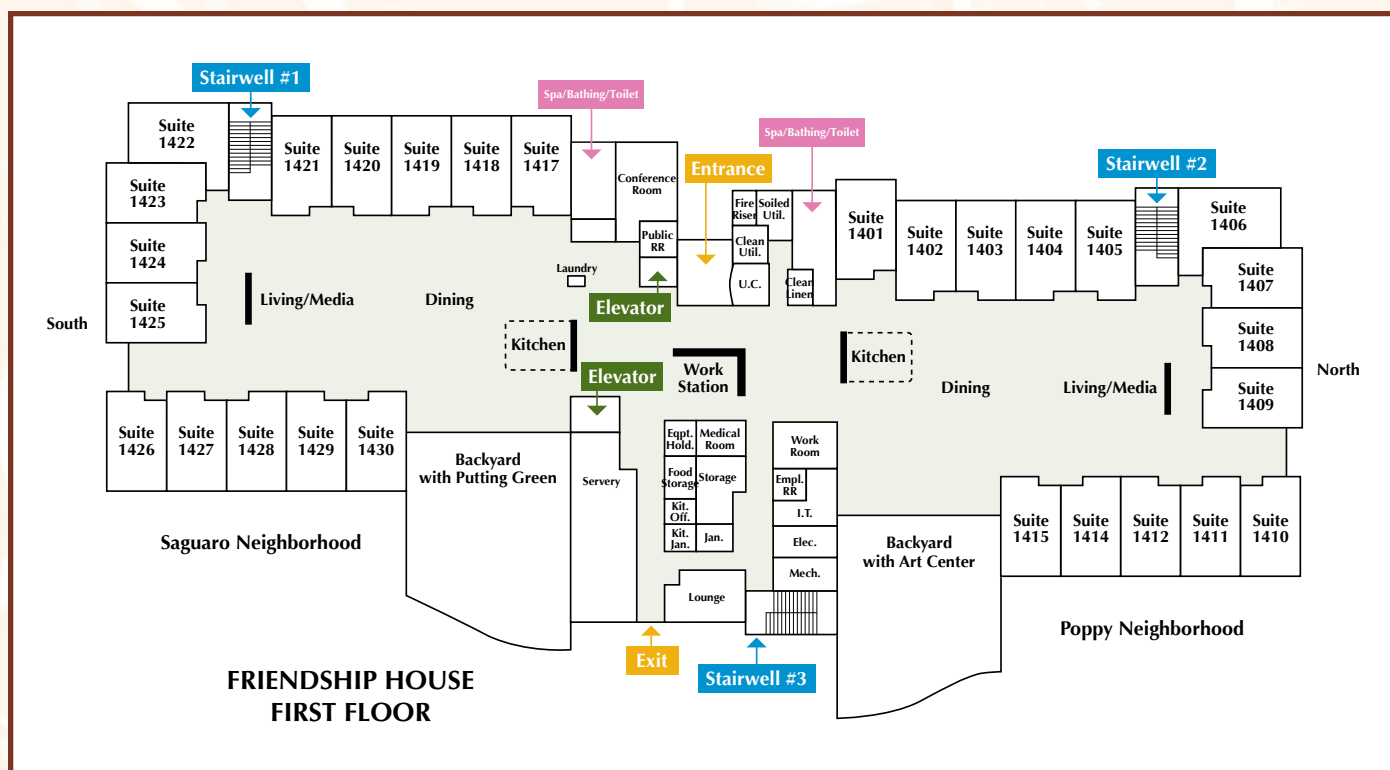
for residents. We act as advisors for residents to create a personal "bucket list." This promotes individual skills and talents, and sharing them helps to create a cohesive environment. We meet with residents and/or their families to understand "what makes them tick." Then programs are implemented to fulfill that need.

Through Bible study, vespers, hymns and devotion, and the services brought to campus through various area places of worship, we encourage residents to follow a spiritual path. Our on-staff Chaplain is available to lend guidance and suggest ways to gain a spiritual foothold.



What is the non-profit difference?

As a non-profit, Royal Oaks is committed to enhancing the lives of older adults. Staff and residents support a mission that benefits the greater good of our campus, the community, and society. We have no shareholders looking for financial benefit; therefore, our funds are channeled back into our campus to improve the lives of our residents.





The Friendship House is an environment designed to allow a natural flow of activity and conversation, where people progress through the day in a natural and effortless way that feels stable and safe.

The Friendship House at Royal Oaks

A “high tech” and “high touch” approach is fundamental

The latest technology to keep residents safe and help staff provide the best care has been installed at Friendship House. For example, residents wear a secure bracelet that sends a message wirelessly to the companion if the resident falls. Motion sensors are placed in the private suites between bed and bathroom to sense movement and notify the caregiver to promptly check to see if assistance is needed. All exits are required by fire code to have the delayed egress system in place; a bar on the door is pressed for 15 seconds releasing the locks. However, the building includes a special feature that wirelessly notifies a caregiver if a resident is hovering near a door so a resident attempting to exit can be diverted or distracted prior to alarms sounding if a door is opened. Caremerge, a family engagement technology, is used extensively to keep family members near and far in-the-know about their loved one.

Home is not just bricks and mortar

In numerous studies published by dementia care specialists, home is defined as a psychological state, an expression of self, and as a physical structure. Home is a place that makes us feel comfortable and secure, a place we look forward to returning to after a journey, or even a long day away. It is the place we house our most treasured possessions and memoirs, and a place where we invite family and friends to share stories and life experiences, laugh and love, and feel whole. Designing the Friendship House was based on these values.

It is not unusual for residents with dementia to often repeat “I want to go home.” This is not necessarily that they want to go to a particular structure, but they want to go to that place that gives them the feeling of home. Our interviews about “home” with residents who have progressive dementia were enlightening: memories of sitting at a kitchen table while Grandma baked cookies and offered up a glass of milk. Coming home from work

and seeing a loved one looking out the kitchen window framed in yellow gingham curtains. Planting flowers in a garden. Sitting in a screened-in sun porch drinking ice tea with neighbors. With their progressive dementia, they could not recall what the last meal included, the name of the staff member who was caring for them, or even the day or year. But they had beautiful, implicit memories of “home.” For people experiencing dementia, the feelings of anxiety and confusion are magnified when personal space is compromised. The Friendship House is a home where residents feel calm and included.

**For more information:
(623) 815-4132**



ROYAL OAKS

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