Living Independently For Elders: A Nursing Academic Owned PACE Model

Eileen M. Sullivan-Marx, PhD, RN, FAAN
Associate Professor/Associate Dean for Practice & Community Affairs
University of Pennsylvania
School of Nursing
CMS, State, PACE Organization Partnership
Established 1998 by Penn School of Nursing

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Nursing care takes a smart detour

A new approach to the frail elderly finds it's cheaper to help them maintain their independent lives at home — which most prefer.

By Michael Vitez
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Ruby Biggs is an example of America's looming problem — and of one solution.

How do we care for soaring numbers of old, frail people?

Biggs is one of today's standards, just 75. But her arthritis is so bad that even with a walker she can take only a few steps and is still prone to falls. She has an ulcer, diabetes, memory loss. She has no husband, no children.

She is a classic American nursing home resident.

Except she lives at home, alone — the beneficiary of a pioneering new program in long-term care that is taking off, especially in Pennsylvania.

The program, LIFE (Living Independently for Elders), is designed to give people sick enough for a nursing home another option — to live at home, but get their medical care, socialization, and even a hot meal at a center in their community.

And at less cost than a nursing home.

Biggs visits a LIFE center in West Philadelphia by van five days a week, where she receives medical care from a team of doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, and therapists.

She eats lunch there, plays bingo, and returns home in the afternoon. The program also pays for an aide to come by her apartment every morning and evening to help her dress and undress. On weekends, a nurse visits to help with laundry.

"Without our program she would default to a nursing home," said Peter Klein, administrator with the LIFE/PHse.
Living Independently for Elders (LIFE)
PACE Integrated Model of Care

- In-Home Services
- Day Health Care Center & Social Services
- Primary Care & Pharmacy Services
- Transportation Services
- Acute Hospital Care
- Skilled Nursing Facility Care
- Specialty – Behavioral Health, Podiatry, Dentistry
- Rehabilitative & Activity Services

Interdisciplinary Team
MEMBER/FAMILY
LIFE Nursing Professional Model

- Owned and operated – Penn School of Nursing
- Director of Nursing & Member Services
- Primary Care – Nurse Practitioners
- Geropsychiatric Nurse
- Home Health Nurse Practitioner
- Home Care Nurses
- Day Center Triage Nurses
Community Survival with In-Home LTC Services in a 5-year Inception Cohort (2001-2005)
Outcomes of LIFE UPenn

- Inpatient Admissions = 7.6%
- ER Visits = 2.1%
- Nursing Home = 11.7%
- Save Commonwealth 15-20% on Medicaid reimbursement (15 cents on the dollar)
- 6-9% turnover rate among staff at LIFE UPenn (9.1% 2006-07)
“Medically the LIFE Center has really helped control my blood pressure, but it also gives me communication with others, and that’s important since I live by myself. I look forward to singing in the choir, playing *The Price Is Right*, and doing ceramics here. . even going to the zoo. You need to get out, you can’t just sit home and rock in a chair.”

Vivian Lites, 70,
LIFE Council Board Member,
former child day care provider

“When I came here I couldn’t use my hands, and could hardly walk. The LIFE Center does wonders for me two days every week. The pain medication I get here is the most important thing after my strokes, heart attacks, arthritis, and gout. They keep me active with my hands, just like when I used to make plaques for the government.”

Robert L. Hale, Sr., 68,
LIFE Council Board member,
retired carpenter and masonry man
Transitional Care Model
Naylor et al., 2004
Blumenauer Transition Care Bill Proposal

TCM’s Impact on Readmission Rates After Index Hospitalization

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>TCM Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at 6 weeks¹</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>at 26 weeks²</td>
<td>56%</td>
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<td>at 52 weeks³</td>
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Readmission After Hospital Discharge