

New Facility Would Expand Services for Short-Term Stays

A generation ago, an 80-year-old with a broken hip could look forward to a lengthy hospital stay. The emphasis was on treating the medical condition, but not necessarily on the long-term health and independences of the person. The chances of that person resuming an independent life decreased with each passing day of this “cure.”

So much has changed. Many medical conditions that in the past meant a loss of independence are nowadays only minor setbacks. Today, the emphasis is on rehabilitation. Nowhere is this more true than at the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home’s short-term care unit.

But it’s time for the building to catch up with the need. From July 2003 through June 2004, 116 short-term Residents stayed at the Home for an average of about 25 days each. So far, for the 12-month period that began July 1, admissions are on track to exceed 2003/2004 by one-third or more. According to Mike Silverman, executive director of the Home and Jewish Senior Services, the demand for short-term services has moved beyond what can be met within the existing building. A separate unit focused entirely on the needs of short-term stays is part of a proposed major remodeling for the Home to be funded by an upcoming capital campaign.

The remodeled area would include a greatly expanded and updated suite for physical, occupational and speech therapy services. The suite also would include a homelike bedroom, kitchen and bathroom in which to practice the activities of daily living that will be needed upon returning home. The expanded space also would provide more privacy for Residents receiving these services than is possible in the current set-up.

“Our goal is always to help a person to his or her highest level of function, or return them to the level of function they had before they were in the hospital,” Emily Moody, physical therapist at the Blumkin Home, said.

“For most people, that means going home. With added space, we will be able to provide additional services that currently we are not able to provide.”

The Omaha Jewish Community’s superior commitment to its seniors is evident in all aspects of the existing Home, Silverman said.

“We have a lot to be proud of,” he added. “But our thinking has evolved. Today we know that with appropriate therapy and community support, many people in their 80s and 90s are able to continue living safely and independently. There’s no doubt that this investment in short-term care will yield long-term benefits.”



Esther Mazvinsky spent a few days recently at the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home while she received therapy from Emily Moody, a physical therapist. A proposed capital campaign for the Home would help fund an expanded, updated facility specifically designed for the needs of short-term Residents.