

Busting the Paradigm: Person-Directed Short Stay Rehab The Shumard Rehab Center Story

Welcome to Shumard Rehabilitation Center, part of the SEM Haven Health and Residential Care Center in Milford, OH. Like many long-term care providers, they have added services for those who need rehabilitative care between their hospitalization and finally returning home. Unlike many of their peers, they are extremely successful at providing rehabilitative services in a person-directed manner and are finding that it is setting people up for success when they do return home. When asked why they have chosen to move away from the “sub-acute care” paradigm that most short stay rehab providers have adopted, their comment is, “They are better prepared when they arrive home and becoming well-known aids in the healing process, both physically and mentally.”

When you visit the Shumard Rehabilitation Center you will see that it is part of a larger home that also provides long-term care services. The space is designed like a household, except it has 11 private rooms. There is an open kitchen and dining room area. The household has its own outside entrance and private courtyard. The larger courtyard for the whole home is also accessible. There is a front porch where guests can relax after their therapy. Guests are met at the front door when they arrive and guided to their room where they will find a welcome bag with some toiletries and other fun things for their stay.

It takes a great deal of energy and commitment to try to get to know each individual that comes in for short stay rehab services. After all, they may only stay for 2-3 weeks and then they return home. At the Shumard Rehabilitation Center, they have really focused on hiring employee care partners that like to get to know new people and have the passion to do it well, and quickly. Sometimes it can be challenging with so many different personalities living together, but it is great when the care partners are able to break through the barriers that sometimes come up.

How do they get to know you so quickly if you come to stay at Shumard Rehabilitation Center? All employee care partners are assigned a room instead of a person for their “buddy.” If, for some reason, they are not compatible with the current rehab guest, the employee care partner trades off with someone else who is better suited to the guest. Here are some of their other techniques to building relationships:

- Spending time talking to the rehab guests, getting to know their preferences a little at a time
- Inviting rehab guests to dine with the employee care partners
- Inviting the rehab guests to eat with each other and socialize
- Introducing new rehab guests to others at mealtime
- Asking rehab guests what they would like to eat
- Asking rehab guests why they have come to stay and what their plan to move home is
- Making sure to have a meeting with the guest, their family, and all the supporting care partners within 72 hours of their arrival

The employee care partners at Shumard Rehabilitation Center really work on getting to know the little things about the guests. For them, it is about the discovery as the relationship is built. They try to learn what they can before the guest moves in, but often they learn much more after the guest arrives. The family doesn't always know everything about their loved one either, so it takes lots of conversations to gain trust and really get to know the person. The goal is to make the stay enjoyable and to be successful you have to make them feel like "Hey, I can do this" so they can be strong at home. The employee care partners take what they learn and create an individualized experience. Here are some examples:

- Providing knitting supplies to a lady who "used to" knit. She then started to knit again and was thrilled she could "still do it"
- Pets come in with employees and cats and birds live here. Molly (poodle) comes to work with her owner a few times a week. She goes room to room visiting. Somehow she knows when someone is not a "dog person" and doesn't go in their room. She also knows when someone "needs her" and will spend extra time with them. It is amazing how many of our guests have had a dog and Molly triggers conversations.
- Sporting events, e.g. putting the Cincinnati Reds games on the calendar and who they are playing, celebrating Opening Day, the All Star Game and Bengals Football tail-gating parties.
- Cooking a turkey on Thanksgiving so we all have that "smell" in the home
- Guests fill eggs with candy as a part of their therapy for the big Easter Egg Hunt
- When a holiday is approaching, guests are included in conversations about how they have celebrated it
- After therapy workouts on Tuesdays, guests are offered coffee and donuts
- Enjoying all sorts of music depending on who is here in the dining room at mealtime
- We 'almost go' out to lunch by having the rehab guests choose what food is ordered in
- The rehab guests cook as a part of their therapy
- Access to a book cart with current magazines, DVD's, and newspapers. If the care partners learn that they like something else, it is brought in, e.g. Yoga magazines, cooking magazines, etc.
- Offering manicures whenever they want one
- A free haircut coupon
- Lunch N learn with the chaplain weekly
- Celebrating celebrities and famous events, e.g. Sly Stallone's birthday was June 6th. We talked about him and his accomplishments.
- Having cookouts a few times a year
- Providing a candlelit dinner If a couple has an anniversary while they are here. The care partners will help dress up the lady (if she is the rehab guest).

The employee care partners at Shumard Rehab Center take care of daily chores like housekeeping along with meeting the needs of the rehab guests (i.e. roles are blended). They have monthly household meetings where the conversation can be about anything anyone wants to do so they can plan the calendar for the following month. All employee care partners and current rehab guests are invited to

attend. At the household meetings they also review an Eden Alternative Principle and have a Learning Circle. Most often the conversation revolves around food.

The therapy room is near the household. The therapists are employees of SEM Haven, which is a nice benefit. The care partner team has regular meetings twice a week, but they call a huddle anytime they have a concern. The consistency of relationship with the therapist is really important. They post the therapy times in the evening and guests can choose when they want to go. That means they do not have to miss their favorite shows for a therapy session!

The employee care partners are coached to encourage the rehab guests to do as much as they can for themselves. Some guests come in and feel they should be waited on. The employee care partners explain that the goal is to get home and being waited on doesn't help them be successful at home. The employee care partners do all they can to ensure the rehab guest is set up for success and that what they are doing is meaningful. The care partners ask guests to cook for others while they are here to make sure they are confident they will be good at home. The rehab guests go down to therapy and do some house cleaning tasks. Guests will set the tables for meals, or wash clothes or dishes, clean the bathroom, etc. All of this is an effort to help them get back into their home routines before they leave.

Does it always go smoothly? Of course not. The care partners at Shumard have difficulties engaging rehab guests in events happening in the larger home, such as social events, entertainment, BINGO and baseball games. The employee care partners have learned that it is more effective to get the rehab guests together while they are dining or right afterwards. The care partners are more focused on doing impromptu things like going outside or incorporating things the guests like to do into their therapy, e.g. cooking. Not long ago, a couple staying at the rehab center provide everyone with a fudge making class. They also have guests who are just focused on therapy and going home. These guests often eat their meals alone in their room. The employee care partners make a point of going in and visiting with them if they choose to stay in their room. There is also a chaplain at SEM Haven who visits the rehab guest and can offer counseling if needed. That said, there are often fun things happening just outside everyone's room, so even those who seem to want to be alone often find themselves coming out and getting involved.

Moving out is something the employee care partners talk about constantly. The rehab guests are asked about getting home health services and the therapists can do a home evaluation before they leave if the guests choose. The therapists know ahead of time what things have to be changed for the guest to be ready to go home. They have a checklist and nursing goes over what they will need, e.g. medications. The care partner team makes sure they have an appointment with their doctor and talks about what to expect when they go home. The final step is to help them pack up to go and the guests are given a phone number to call if they need it. A couple of weeks later they receive a form to fill out about their stay at Shumard Rehabilitation Center.

What kind of difference are they making? They are noticing that rehab guests talk about their therapy and how it is going over meals. They get to know each other and sometimes those new found

friendships stay intact when they move back home. Here are some comments from those that have come to stay at Shumard Rehabilitation Center:

- *For almost 8 weeks your staff inspired, encouraged, and cared for me. AND IT WORKED! All life's best to each and every one of you.*
- *Thank you all for your tender loving care and dedication to all your patients and especially to our mother. You went above and beyond in making her feel at home here and helping her through a very difficult chapter of her life.*
- *I miss you all!*

SEM Haven benefits because the rehab guests go back into the community and spread the word about their experience. Rehab guests are invited to come back for reunions every two years. Often, rehab guests will come back and volunteer at the home. The team from SEM Haven also goes out to places in the community, like the Senior Center, to do lunch and learns on different topics like fall risks and dealing with hot summer days. It is a chance to reconnect with rehab graduates and become more well-known in the community. The care partner team is also out talking to their local hospitals about their person-directed approach to short stay rehab. They are making a difference and it shows!