

A long, empty hospital hallway with white walls, a polished floor, and a window at the end. The hallway is brightly lit, and the perspective is from the middle of the hallway looking towards the window. There are doors on both sides of the hallway, and a fire alarm pull station is visible on the left wall. The ceiling has recessed lighting and a fire sprinkler.

Kith Haven:

a creative guide for
memory care

Mission Statement

Our challenge is to revitalize the memory care unit/wing at Kith Haven to respond to the needs of its residents and caregivers, with the focus on improving accessibility and quality of life.

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Introduction

Project Summary

As members of the 2020 University of Michigan-Flint Design Studio class, we greatly enjoyed having the opportunity to work in partnership with the Kith Haven Community to create this guide. With the help of Heather Seipke, Ph.D., observations from our visits to Kith Haven, and our own personal research, we have created "Kith Haven: A Creative Guide for Memory Care" in hopes that we can spark some ideas that may inspire the implementation of new change within Kith Haven. Through our time spent at Kith Haven, we were greatly inspired by the exceptional staff and caregivers that we had the chance to meet and inspiring residents we visited with. We can only hope that this guide, and our lasting partnership with Kith Haven, will provide impact on the caregivers, staff, families, and residents that it has the opportunity to reach for years to come. In the pages to come, we have prioritized ideas in the sequential order of immediate action, one year, and five year implementations. Thank you for your partnership and we look forward to working with you in the months and years to come.

- Hailey Andres, Jamie Beebe, Mia Medal, Katelyn Stuck, & Maddie Vamossy

Research

Design Matrix

As we began thinking about the best approach to partner with the Kith Haven community, we utilized the help of a design matrix. This chart helped us to organize our thoughts surrounding items that we could change, individuals we could partner with to make these changes, as well as a baseline timeline.

Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Campaign to encourage participation Family->Resident ->Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Working together to create new activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and implementing change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking to create an updated set of standards of memory care unit design
Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Functional placement of decor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ New system for residents to access activity material ★ Redesigning cafeteria and activities area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Lighting/color /decor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Year: Door changes, timed lights - 5 Year: installing new windows
Stand-Alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Change decor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Designing a new calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing a new lighting option for memory care
	Individual (Designer)	Interdisciplinary (Teams: Admin, Facilities, Staff, Designers, Social Workers)	Cross-Sector (Group: Gov't Org, Social Work researcher, designers/architects, ADA)

U of M-Flint Faculty

Research and Information from Heather Seipke, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Communication at University of Michigan-Flint, Certified Gerontologist, Institute of Gerontology, 2000

Heather Seipke's Research Focus:

Conventional and alternative social and behavioral therapies to increase life satisfaction across the lifespan.

- "Sprinkle the memories" of residents throughout the space. This could be through door decorations and artwork throughout that reminds residents of their life. According to Heather, "The best way to understand the likes of residents is to get them to talk about their past."
- We should keep the staff and visitors in mind when decorating. The residents aren't going to create lasting memories of the space, but the visitors will.
- Heather recommends making the personalized decor easily interchangeable. Heather recommended memory boxes outside the doors that residents can fill

with their memories/pictures. <https://bit.ly/39LnmRU>

- You can accommodate the personal taste of residents and visitors by including these memories in the space. Including this reminiscing decor is also proven to improve memory. These could be little objects of paintings that make it feel more like a home.



A memory box example filled with military relics.

General Research

Fueled by her passions for art and psychology, Design Studio student Jamie Beebe conducted research on the following elements. Color, music, wayfinding, and activities research conducted helped to guide our team in our efforts to create solutions for the Kith Haven community.

Color

<https://bit.ly/2yXzqCM>

It has been proposed that AD patients suffer from a non-specific type of color blindness. In this research study they individuals divided into three groups (healthy control group, AD, VaD) and measured their cognitive impairment.

Ishihara Color Vision Test - 38 Plate is a promising potential method as an easy and not time-consuming screening test for the differential diagnosis of dementia between AD and VaD.

MUSIC

<https://bit.ly/2VwKnTn>

This research study shows that music therapy, listening to music, can enhance cognitive functioning in patients with

AD and the mental well being and could be recommended as an alternative to manage symptoms, along with alleviating caregiver distress as well. They split the groups into three (singing group, lyric reading group, and control group) interventions over a three months span, tested, then another three month span, then tested again on verbal fluency, psychiatric symptoms, and caregiver distress.



General Research

Wayfinding

<https://bit.ly/3bdfeuV>

This research study explores the difficulty of wayfinding for patients with ad. Persons with AD find it difficult to find their way even in a familiar environment. Aimless wandering, because they don't know where they are, evokes feelings of insecurity, they do not have their sense of here and now. This article swings back to music therapy with trailing music out, continuing the activity onto the next one, marching out of the room to the dining room for lunch helps the transition because it is not ending just continuing on. The most difficult wayfinding difficulties observed when the staff was not in the area were, their room, the dinning hall and the bathrooms.

Activities

<https://bit.ly/3acGGrx>

This research article is explaining how persons with dementia can express themselves through different forms of art using things like clay and paper mâché to virtual and digital sculptures. While this was a good exercise to help tell the stories of the participants, their self-initiated ideas

and stories reflecting the conscious expressions of their presence in a particular time and space... there is ample evidence to suggest that the viewing and making sculpture may influence the sensory involvement and consequently the imagination and creativity of people with early stage dementia as well as the transformative qualities.

Aesthetic preferences are still important for Alzheimer's patients, and for them to be capable of creative and recreational activities get their procedural memory skills moving. Participating in mentally stimulating activities (reading, playing board games, playing musical instruments, and dancing) may help build up a larger cognitive reserve by reactive engagement and mental challenge stimulate the formation of new synapses between neurons in the brain—"one of the factors implicated in the prevention of Alzheimer's disease and dementia illnesses (Gaugler, 2010a; Gaugler, 2010b; Mayeux, 2007; Verghese et al., 2003)."

****Activities in which participants can create their own artwork or music allow spontaneity, originality, and expression of personal thoughts and feelings that, in turn, lead to improved emotional health.**

Kith Haven Visits

In beginning our research for Kith Haven we had the opportunity to visit with the administrative members, caregivers, and residents of this wonderful community. These visits allowed us to better understand the challenges, successes, and creative needs of all parties involved. Below is a log of our visits, along with some of the key takeaways that helped us to develop our creative guide moving forward.

Initial Visit:

- As a class we had an opportunity to visit Kith Haven for the first time on January 29, 2020.
- During this visit, Rebecca was able to show us around the facility as a whole and then gave us a more in depth look at the memory care wing that we would be working with.
- This visit guided our initial design matrix thoughts and helped us to start the brainstorming process.

Second Visit

- On February 12, 2020 Hailey, Katelyn, and Mia visited.
- This visit taught us that many residents enjoy creativity and coloring, especially Ms. Odessa.
- We also learned that music was a routine activity that was enjoyed by many, including the wonderful staff.
- The staff alerted us to some concerns that may arise with the use of indoor plants, or wall hangings that are hung too low that may be taken off the wall by residents.

Third Visit

- On February 18, 2020 Maddie and Jamie had the opportunity to visit.
- During this visit, it was once again observed that many residents enjoyed music that way playing.
- The “artist corner” was noticed on this visit.
- It was also noted that residents sometimes have a difficult time navigating around obstacles in some of the common areas.

Caregiver Survey

As we began our initial thoughts surrounding how we believed we could help Kith Haven, we knew it would be imperative that we sought out the opinions of the individuals who spend a significant amount of time in the memory wing, the caregivers. With this in mind, we created a survey that could be utilized by the Kith Haven administrators to get a sense of what those on the front lines of caregiving believed to be the most necessary needs of improvement for Kith Haven and its residents. The questions below are suggestions we have to help better understand the needs of the Kith Haven Community, as observed by caregivers.

Kith Haven Staff Survey

- What kind of activity do you feel the residents enjoy the most?
- What do you find the most enjoyable about working in the memory care unit at Kith Haven?
- Are there any systems within the memory care unit of Kith Haven that makes your job run more smoothly? If so, what?
- How much one-on-one time do you spend with each

resident during work hours? Do you wish you could spend more time with them individually?

- What would help things work more smoothly in the memory care at Kith Haven?
- What challenges do the residents face in the memory care unit?
- If you could improve anything structurally within the memory care unit, what would it be?
- Is there anything else you'd like to add? (Comments, questions, etc.)

This survey could be printed out for caregivers to fill out at their leisure, or it can be added into a Google Forms format to allow caregivers to be able to fill out the items from anywhere, and to have the opportunity to collect data with ease.



Visitor Survey

Similarly to the survey for the caregivers, we know that it is critical to consider the thoughts of resident's families and caregivers when looking for ways to implement change in the Kith Haven Community. The questions on the survey directly correlate to music, decor, memories, and general suggestions. This survey could be printed out for families and visitor to fill out at their leisure, or it can be added into a Google Forms format to allow caregivers to be able to fill out the items from anywhere, and to have the opportunity to collect data with ease. It is our hope that these initial survey findings will help to create a more clear idea as to what ideas the Kith Haven Community, as a whole, would like to see.

Kith Haven Visitor Survey

- List three of your favorite memories with your loved one prior to 2010.
- In which decade was your loved one born?
- Does/did your loved one have any pets? If so, what kind of animal?
- What is your loved one's favorite kind of music?
- What is your favorite activity to do with your loved

one? Is this activity currently offered at Kith Haven?

- If you could change the aesthetics or decorations (e.g. wall color, furniture, pictures, etc.) in the memory care unit, what would you change?
- Other considerations to make when working to improve the atmosphere of Kith Haven?



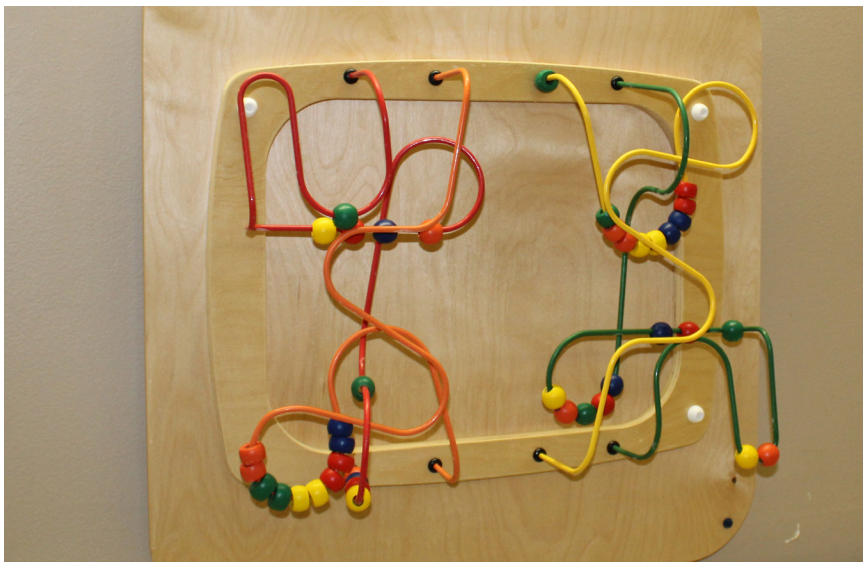
Immediate Action

Current Barriers

After making a few visits to Kith Haven, it was apparent that there was one particular item that needed to be removed. It is said to simply create confusion, stress, and anger within the residents. This item is the puzzle that can be located on the wall across from the family room.

Our Recommendation:

Remove the item from the wall , sanitize it, and look to donate the items to a local school or children's museum.



Initial Workshop

The UM-Flint Design Studio plans to host a workshop at Kith Haven that focuses on resident experiences. While this had to be postponed due to COVID-19, we still plan on making it a reality when it is safe and practical to do so. The Kith Haven workshop has two main goals: to provide the memory care unit with resources that will benefit both residents and caretakers, and to observe resident interactions with workshop activities to determine other ways we can utilize design to benefit Kith Haven in the future.

Observing nature has proven benefits to the mind and body. There are a growing number of studies that suggest bird watching and creating outdoor habitats for birds can increase morale and reduce stress. Our conceptual workshop ideologies, highlights a sense of unification from faculty, family and patients such as painting decorative birdhouses. For our workshop activity, we would divide the patients into groups of 4-6, pair up students with a faculty member per group to help facilitate the process. Paint detailed designs on the birdhouses and then let dry. On a different day, finish by coating them with outdoor sealer. Then place them in the

front or backyard garden space. These can be viewed by the patients throughout their day hoping to bring them great cheer. Our hope is that involving Kith residents in painting birdhouses will not only reduce stress during the process, but provide a great connection to the outdoors!

Painting birdhouses is just one of the activities the Design Studio planned for residents (although it is the most involved). We also plan to provide coloring sheets and whiteboards for residents to express their creativity and explore color. In addition, we would like to provide a fabric station with a variety of colors and textures. Patients can use these as they please, such as folding or stroking. These will simulate experiences that residents have had throughout their lives, like doing laundry or snuggling up to a beloved pet.

Additionally, the workshop will be particularly beneficial to nonverbal patients, who typically have no way to communicate what activity they would like to partake in. Having a variety of choices during the workshop allows residents to do whatever is most fulfilling to them without needing to ask for it.

Interior Colors

Feedback received by staff during our Kith Haven visits indicated that the current paint colors within the memory care wing are very bland to look at for both the residents, families, potential new residents, and caretakers, alike. Upon our research, we have found some potential paint solutions that will add vibrancy to the space, while still being mindful of the resident's needs. Sherman Williams not only has a line of colors for senior living, but specific colors curated for memory care units. The swatches can be seen on the left, and Sherman Williams's description can be found below.

Sherman Williams Senior Living Color-Memory

"Taking into consideration the special needs of memory care facilities, this lively, rousing palette is carefully designed to help aging eyes "see" better. With a balance of warm and cool tones, these saturated colors can highlight the location of certain rooms or lead people along a "wander path." Colors often look muted as the eye ages. Using more varied, brighter colors help residents to distinguish between spaces and find their way around."



SW 6486
Reflecting Pool
Interior / Exterior



SW 6564
Red Clover
Interior / Exterior



SW 6451
Nurture Green
Interior / Exterior



SW 6660
Honey Blush
Interior / Exterior



SW 6626
Sunset
Interior



SW 6352
Soft Apricot
Interior / Exterior



SW 6536
Searching Blue
Interior / Exterior



SW 6514
Respite
Interior / Exterior



SW 6379
Jersey Cream
Interior / Exterior



SW 0025
Rosedust
Interior / Exterior

Check out the color selection here, <https://bit.ly/2JFCmpN>

Interior Colors



A snapshot of new color considerations within Kith Haven.

Created with



✓ FEATURED IN SCENE

SW 6514
Respite
Locator Number: 184-C3

SW 6352
Soft Apricot
Locator Number: 126-C2

SW 6486
Reflecting Pool
Locator Number: 171-C4

**SHERWIN-WILLIAMS.**

Actual color may vary from on-screen representation. To confirm your color choices prior to purchase, please view a physical color chip, color card, or painted sample.

Sherwin-Williams is not responsible for the content and photos shared by users of their color selection tools.

1 Year Plan

Interiors

Lighting Considerations

ADA approved lights have a thin profile that allows them to fit in hallways, aisles, passageways, bathrooms, and other cramped spaces without intruding into areas where people walk or pass through with other means. Light fixtures must be 80 inches above the ground. If a wall sconce is less than 80 inches above the floor, it can't extend more than four inches out from the wall. Light switches must be 48 inches or less above the ground so someone in a wheelchair can reach them with ease. The light switch must be operable by a single hand and can't require tight twisting, grasping or pinching. With exploring different light research studies with the elderly, and in patients with AD, lighting between 2500k and 2700 k and a good for reading light was important to them as well as found that their performances were increased.



Memory Boxes

As shared by Alzheimers.net "Items stored in a memory box should be personal, like a baby's toy or postcard. The memory box should reflect the senior's interests or a moment in history that has meaning to that individual.

When you choose keepsakes for the memory box, consider:

- Safety: Avoid heavy or sharp items.
- Significance: Focus on items linked to positive memories
- Texture: Items should be easy to handle; texture itself can help stir memories.
- Uniqueness: If an item is irreplaceable, leave it out.

Bear in mind that a loved one may not recognize items right away or understand why they were included. So, consider labeling each item with a sticker or tag. You can also list the items on a piece of paper, and write a phrase or sentence about each one."

Memory boxes can be mounted (with locks) outside of the

doors in the hallway using the hanging requirements, similar to the "Remember Me" bulletin board that is currently in the facility. An example can be found at: <https://bit.ly/3bRxtWB>



Memory boxes outside of doors can personalize the doors for residents so that they can connect their memories with the home and find their room easier. If the budget or safety guidelines do not allow for the memory boxes to be outside of rooms, the memory boxes can be placed inside the rooms of residents. The Alzheimer's Association suggests that memory boxes can be as simple as a shoebox or plastic bin.

Memory Boxes

The Alzheimer's Association recommends the following ideas that are demonstrated in the example:

- A baseball or cards: Detroit Tigers 1968 baseball card
- A keychain: See blue keychain
- A letter
- A recipe: The notecard.
- Artwork by children or grandchildren: rainbow crayon photo
- Dried flowers: Baby's breath
- Family photos: Old family photo, recent photo with family, school photo of grandchild
- Postcards: New York Postcard
- Sheet music: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee (if the resident is religious, this can give them comfort)
- Vacation souvenirs: Autoworld Flag, Michigan Patch

Memory Boxes as an Activity/Workshop

Residents can work with their family members to build their memory box for a meaningful activity when they become members of Kith Haven. If the resident does not have immediate family members or items, a spare box of

miscellaneous items can be developed with caregivers in the activity room. These can be donated from a thrift shop or garage sale, as well as printed out materials from the Internet.



A localized example of what a memory box could look like, including postcards, keychains, photos, and artwork.

5 Year Plan

Outdoor Signage

Nursing home residents are faced with acclimating to a new environment and less face-time with families. Former United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kathleen Sebelius, shared some of her perspectives on what can make a big impact in very little ways.

"Carers tell us time and time again that when it comes to hospitals, care homes or other settings, it's often the small things – whether clear signage, light and airy rooms or good handrails – that make a big difference"
Secretary of state for health, October 2012

Here's a fun and easy way to interact between families to loved ones by placing a garden sign in the front of the building as well as the back where it can be viewed from the second floor windows of the memory care unit. I had the pleasure to sit with Mrs Sharon during my visit. She reminisced on how energetic her cocker spaniel, Zack, would keep her busy at home and during their frequent walks. And if she could plant some flowers in the gardens, it would be her favorite, roses. "Red or yellow, either one would be nice!" - Mrs Sharon.



Activity Wall

In “Dementia whiteboard ‘touches hearts’ around the world,” an article by BBC News, <https://bbc.in/3bvimCz>, the value of a whiteboard for dementia patients is assessed. The article includes a quote from Tim Beanland, a spokesperson for the Alzheimer’s Society, who states: “Anxiety is really common amongst people with dementia and they can need a lot of support, but help is out there. Whiteboards are useful for providing a structure for the day or explaining that someone has left the house and will return at a particular time. As long as what is written on the board does not offer false reassurances, then techniques like this are a good thing.”

Whiteboards also offer residents a chance to draw and have their drawing appreciated by visitors, something that we observed as a class in our visits. floor to ceiling reminder whiteboard can give the residents a chance to view reminders, positive affirmations, and a chance to draw. The scenery helps combine the familiar imagery from a local outdoor park (Riverbank Park, Flint) with the reminders and whiteboard. Printed on removable vinyl, the scenery is a non-permanent addition to the drawings of residents. If the images are too overwhelming for residents, they can be easily removed.



An example of a floor to ceiling whiteboard. Source: IdeaPaint Wall Mural, Flickr

D&SIGN