

## Culture Change—What is it?



“**Culture change**” focuses on moving away from “*institutional*” nursing home services and **toward care with a resident-directed approach.**

The intent of culture change is to create a community where the **values, voices, and choices of residents are heard and respected and all staff are valued members of the team.** Staff help each resident feel “at home.”

Practicing culture change while providing care in all aspects of each resident’s life shows honor and respect for those residents.

As a result, **culture change can help prevent abuse and neglect!**

## Culture Change in Action

Culture change involves building meaningful relationships between staff and residents, so **residents will live purposeful lives** in homelike spaces that are private, comfortable, and personal and **staff feel valued and respected.** **Care is directed by and centered on the resident.** Direct care staff are supported in **responding to the resident’s individual needs and preferences and shaping the resident’s experience in the home.**

While taking time to build relationships and honor residents’ preferences can seem hard when staff feel rushed, taking even small steps toward culture change—like arranging residents’ daily schedules to meet their needs or finding ways to engage residents in activities they value—can improve both residents’ and staff experiences and satisfaction.



## The Federal NH Reform Law

This law requires that residents are cared for in a way that promotes the quality of life for each resident, and that care should be individualized to meet the needs of each resident. **Culture change is one way to make this law a reality.**

## Residents Living With Dementia

### How can staff implement culture change for residents living with dementia?

- \* Honor residents’ *observed preferences and lifelong habits*
- \* Request consistent work assignments
- \* Learn best practices for communicating with and caring for residents
- \* Find flexible and creative ways to meet their needs and problem-solve difficult situations

## Examples of Culture Change

**Eden Alternative** nursing homes and the **Green House Project** are two examples of culture change, which offer warm and homey environments. One case study demonstrated that the **culture change** approach to care **improves both the quality of life for residents, and job satisfaction for staff!**

According to Eden Alternative, one critical aspect of culture change is the **“provision of support and nurturing for staff, most particularly those who provide the hands-on care and support.”**



## Simple, but Life-Changing...



Reaching out to residents, even in the smallest ways, can create more meaningful relationships. Research shows that social support can prevent much of the damage caused by loneliness and social isolation—and it even reduces physical pain!

All it takes is the willingness to reach out.

**Try starting with a simple “hello” to every resident you meet.** Look that person in the eye, smile at him or her, and say “hello.” This is a very simple, but important, first step toward changing the culture in nursing homes.

(Source: Sanjay Gupta, MD)

## Great Resources!

**“10 No-Cost Ideas to Advance Your Culture Change Journey” handout**—these ideas can be quickly used to emphasize resident-directed care. Click on:

<https://ltombudsman.org/uploads/files/support/10-no-cost-cc-ideas.pdf>

### Pioneer Network’s

*Continuum of Person-Directed Culture* illustrates differences between

traditional care and a “person-directed” culture:

<https://www.pioneernetwork.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Continuum-of-Person-Directed-Culture-21.pdf>

The **Eden Alternative** is a strong model of Culture Change. For more information and resources, visit their website at:

<https://www.edenalt.org>



## To Report Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation

Of a nursing home resident by a staff member:  
Call State of Michigan Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) @ (800) 882-6006

Of an older adult living at home, in assisted living, adult foster care, home for the aged, or a nursing home, by anyone who is *not* a staff member, call:

**Adult Protective Services: (855) 444-3911**

If you think a crime has occurred: Call your local police/sheriff department (and LARA)—  
If the danger is immediate, call 911

## Happy Holidays to all who Celebrate!



## For More Information

Long Term Care Ombudsman: (517) 394-3027

Tri-County Office on Aging: (800) 405-9141

The *Michigan Elder Justice Initiative (MEJI)*’s **Excellence in Caring** newsletter is published with grant funds from the Tri-County Office on Aging.

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