

BUILDING UPON EXCELLENCE:

Facilities Implement Change to Meet Emerging Trends

As the educational and philanthropic arm of ANFP, the Nutrition & Foodservice Education Foundation (NFEF) engages in innovative research, education, and charitable causes promoting the vital role of the Certified Dietary Manager as the cornerstone of the dietetics profession. Organized to advance the profession by staying ahead of rapid change, the NFEF places research and education as its highest priorities.

On behalf of the NFEF, Technomic—a leading food research firm—conducted an original research study assessing the current and future role of food service in long-term care and senior living. The study identified three important trends: a shift toward the dining neighborhood model; an option/choice and wellness model; and a continued demand for organic, green, and locally-sourced food. (A summary of the study was published in the January 2014 issue of *Nutrition & Foodservice Edge* magazine and is available on the NFEF website.)

In response to the findings of Technomic's extensive research, NFEF representatives visited four facilities to witness firsthand the innovations and emerging trends sweeping the profession. NFEF spoke to representatives of the companies operating the food-service department at each facility, and to the CDMs at the helm of these exciting changes.

OAK RIDGE MANOR

Brownwood, Texas

Chain: Creative Solutions in Healthcare

DONNA YNSTROSA, CDM, CFPP led NFEF representatives on a tour of her facility. She shared with them her implementation of a wellness program she operates within the constraints of her budget. To give residents a choice, they have the option of alternate meal options with a healthier spin prepared tableside in the dining room where a CDM does the cooking. These wellness meals are served on colorful china to bring attention to them.

"From a corporate point of view, we prefer to hire a CDM, CFPP for any of our dietary manager openings because we know that if an applicant has cared enough about their development and training to obtain this credential, then they are self-motivated and committed to their career. Also, by qualifying to become a CDM, we can be assured that they have a breadth of knowledge regarding important qualities that are needed to succeed at one of our facilities, including foodservice management systems, team-building and empowering employees, sanitation and infection control, and safe food handling practices."

—Amy Wees, MBA, RD, LD, Vice President of Nutritional Services, Creative Solutions in Healthcare



Another creative idea of Ynostrosa's is the appetizer program, served each day prior to lunch. While residents wait for their meal, the facility's activity director demonstrates how to prepare the daily appetizer. Residents can either make their own appetizers or simply enjoy the prepared appetizers. Community building is an added bonus here. Ynostrosa credits her CDM certification with helping her put in place these important innovations:

"It has broadened my horizons in the long-term care world tremendously. My certification has given me the knowledge and confidence in my ability to not be afraid to implement new goals and projects in my facility. It has helped me to present and better serve my residents and their dietary needs with choices and healthy options. It has helped me achieve goals toward my full potential. I would, and do, encourage my staff to further their career by achieving this goal," she said.

Ynostrosa's residents have around-the-clock access to coffee, water, and a grab-and-go refrigerator stocked with healthy options. The refrigerator option provides choices to residents during mealtime while having the added benefit of limiting requests during production time.

AMARILLO CENTER FOR SKILLED CARE

Amarillo, Texas

Chain: Creative Solutions in Healthcare



NFEF REPRESENTATIVES met with Certified Dietary Manager Martha Evanoff, who led the tour of her facility. Evanoff also had in place an action station where food was prepared in front of residents in the dining room, providing them an additional meal choice. Embracing the neighborhood model, Evanoff's facility also offers a smaller dining room option for those residents needing additional support.

In addition to a continental breakfast choice, residents have access to a 24/7 beverage station and a grab-and-go refrigerator option. Choice is the new standard, according to Evanoff. It is both convenient and pleasing to residents who are from the Baby Boomer generation and used to making dining choices.

"If I must hire a dietary manager without the CDM, CFPP credential. I work with them to obtain their credential quickly, as I know that this preparation will fill any gaps in their knowledge base and make them ready to handle the challenges that they will face in their long-term care foodservice management career. In addition, once a dietary manager has been through the process of obtaining their CDM, CFPP credential, they understand the importance of mentoring and are more likely to help their employees advance their careers as well."

—Amy Wees, MBA RD, LD, Vice President of Nutritional Services, Creative Solutions in Healthcare

CDMs like Evanoff are the glue that keeps foodservice operations in long-term care running smoothly. The expertise they bring to the workplace is hard to match. Evanoff acknowledged the importance her certification plays on a daily basis, especially when working with her facility's chef:

"My ANFP certification is valuable to me because it is tied with the ANFP organization. My certification provides me with the wide range of education I need to run an efficient, organized kitchen. It enables me to have an understanding of certain diets and be able to modify food items for special diets and diet textures when working with a creative chef. As a result, both the chef and I are able to work with the staff on the portion sizes and quality of the food we serve," she said.

SANCTUARY AT FRASER VILLA

Fraser, Michigan

Chain: Trinity Senior Living Communities

Contract Management Company: Unidine



SHARON SYFERT, CDM, CFPP Dining Services Director for Sanctuary at Fraser Villa, strives to build upon her commitment to innovation every day. Taking NFEF representatives through her facility, she showcased the neighborhood dining room implemented on each wing. Fresh food stations and around-the-clock hydration stations give her residents even more options. Changing from the traditional dining room model to the neighborhood model has made residents feel more bonded to each other. More like a family. Staff members work exclusively in only one neighborhood model dining room, offering residents a consistent dining experience.

"Our Dining Service Directors are expected to understand the very specific dietary and nutrition needs of seniors in long-term and post-acute care environments. The CDM signals to our clients that they not only have that knowledge today, but also are committed to the continuous learning required for us to be that strategic partner into the future."

—Patrick Johnson, Vice President, Operations, Senior Living Culinary Group - Unidine

This model conversion left the existing large dining room vacant. This gave Syfert and team the opportunity to develop additional programming including 'neighborhood themed-dinner reunions,' allowing residents to host their families in this space offering a restaurant-like experience and menu. Lastly, Syfert showed NFEF representatives the reconfigured kitchen storage areas that can now accommodate more fresh food and less freezer space.

Being a CDM, Syfert says, makes it possible to be spontaneous and creative, and implement the innovations NFEF representatives witnessed when on their site visit.

"My credential is valuable because it helps me keep up with the wealth of knowledge out there. It also allows me to come together with a group of people who think the way I do. When I get together with other CDMS, we talk about what we have been up against in our positions. I come away from those gatherings inspired and ready to put a new twist on things I have heard other dietary managers are doing at their facilities," she said.



KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

- Greater demand for choice—grab and go, local sourcing, authentic ethnic, organic
- Shift to neighborhood model
- Cross-trained staff, localized kitchens with flexible dining times

An Executive Summary of the research study can be found in the ANFP Marketplace, FREE for CDMs.
Visit www.ANFPonline.org/Market

SANCTUARY AT HOLY CROSS

South Bend, Indiana

Chain: Trinity Senior Living Communities

Contract Management Company: Unidine

AT SANCTUARY at Holy Cross, Chef Derrick Stevens, the Dining Services Director, took NFEF representatives on a tour of the facility. Choice figured largely here, as well. Residents received their breakfast upon rising, rather than at a scheduled time. The neighborhood model that is in place utilizes a central kitchen and meals arrive in a home-like setting. Here too, fresh food stations and around-the-clock hydration stations give residents access to more choices throughout the day.

"It used to be that foodservice in senior living and long-term care was about feeding residents, and being a culinarian was enough. Now, our senior living and long-term care clients are looking for a strategic partner that operates at the intersection of clinical and culinary. We are partners in improving clinical outcomes, helping to reduce hospital readmissions, and supporting our clients' occupancy strategies, in addition to providing residents with an exceptional dining experience."

—Patrick Johnson, Vice President, Operations, Senior Living Culinary Group - Unidine

Moving away from the traditional dining room model to the neighborhood model has reinforced a feeling of community within Sanctuary at Holy Cross. The shift in mood is visible on the faces of residents at mealtime. Residents enjoy their meals more and eat better when the dining setting is appealing and the facility is respectful of their desires and needs.

Many thanks to the CDMs and team members from Creative Solutions in Healthcare and Unidine, who provided NFEF with a close-up view of their best practices—especially Kim Kyle, CDM, CFPP, Amy Wees, MBA, RD, LD, and Jenny Overly, MS, RD.



From a chef's point of view, these innovations and changes are key to providing residents with the best dining environment possible. Together with a great menu, they are a winning combination. Stevens knows that certified dietary managers also have a greater knowledge of how the food they serve nourishes and restores the body. This is why Stevens, soon to be a CDM, believes it is important for chefs in the healthcare industry to also earn a CDM credential.

"It allows you to better understand the way the food you create interacts with the body's mechanics. To understand what directly is needed to promote healing from a building block level. Also, earning a CDM credential helps you understand the way the food interacts with the body and what is needed to alter it and not lose the integrity or flavor for those requiring a special diet. It really puts in perspective that you are equally important to every person's wellbeing and health as any other scope of medicine," he said.

For a summary of the Technomic study, visit the Foundation's website at www.nfefoundation.org

Have you changed your operations to address these emerging dining trends? NFEF is committed to serving as an innovation center, showcasing operations that demonstrate the critical role CDMs play in advancing and implementing trends to meet resident needs and preferences. Please contact Kate Dockins, CAE for more details, kdockins@ANFPonline.org.