

COLLAGE Symposium Equips Participants to Advance Healthy Aging

"I really enjoyed the presentations. I left with a list of things to do and think about. Truthfully, I got more out of that one day than any [national] conference! The networking/sharing side of COLLAGE is so valuable!!

Symposium participant, Carolina Meadows, Chapel Hill, NC

"I can think of many present residents who would be living in the nursing home right now if it wasn't for Alexian's wellness efforts and their own resolve. This is admirable and wonderful."

Gary Mohn, President and CEO, Alexian Village of Milwaukee, WI

The symposium in Chicago was a whirlwind and, in our unbiased opinion, very successful. A lot of information - provided by fifteen well-prepared speakers - was packed into a 24-hour period. COLLAGE staff left feeling energized, thinking about how powerful an event like this can be and committed to finding ways to re-create this experience for other COLLAGE members and potential members. We were overwhelmed by the participants' positive comments. Some of our other personal favorites include:

- *"A highlight was hearing how other organizations implemented COLLAGE. I am excited about bringing COLLAGE to our community for all levels of the continuum plus community-based services."*
- *"I particularly enjoyed the "real life" examples from communities using the COLLAGE program and the examples of how the program impacted operations. Seems like a pretty neat tool."*
- *"All presentations were high quality – clear, passionate and energizing."*
- *"This was very informative. I came in pretty skeptical. This program allowed me to truly see the benefits that are involved for residents/staff."*
- *"An excellent symposium – numerous presentation stood out. Thank you!*
- *"With reference to balance, fitness, mobility and promoting wellness -- inspirational -- I want and need to start a program in our facility for independent living."*
- *"Great presentations by users showing impact from various perspectives, e.g., individual, community, etc. Focus on healthy aging very important."*
- *"I loved that the experience of each community was different. The "What works and what doesn't" portion brought out that in one organization a COLLAGE nurse worked well and in another it decreased the buy-in of others. The unique aspects of this topic was very helpful."*

Highlights of Three Presentations

Gary Mohn, President and CEO of Alexian Village of Milwaukee (AVM), talked about Alexian's ability to help their residents/clients age stay out of the health center and age in place more gracefully. Gary explained,

"I can think of many present residents who would be living in the nursing home right now if it wasn't for Alexian's wellness efforts and their own resolve. This is admirable and

wonderful. Also, little by little, our understanding of a 'nursing home' is changing. No longer is it intended for long term care unless there is no other possible alternative. So the 'assisted living' model found an important niche in our healthcare needs where individuals still live an active and participating life. Avoiding a nursing home is something we all wish to do. 'Wellness' is a big piece of that puzzle."

Gary presented striking information about his organization's ability to keep residents out of healthcare through their *Wellness by Design* program that includes among other things care coordinators conducting an assessment using the COLLAGE tools to create a personal plan for health and wellness. The plan identifies what the resident can do to stay independent and what services might be helpful. The care coordination team conducts about 300 visits to residents in their apartment per month. Purposes for the visits range from medication set-up to problem solving.

In 1999 Alexian Village of Milwaukee projected that in 2006 106 residents would need their health center. The actual number in 2006 was 49! Gary commented,

"...this was a direct result of implementing extensive wellness and home health initiatives. The entire team was committed to keeping residents in their IL apartments, and only when absolutely necessary, moving them to assisted living. Residents, who formerly would have moved to skilled nursing, were kept in assisted living. This organization wide change required that more services be made available in AL and IL and the entire organization, staff and residents, change their mindsets... Lifecare residents were thrilled that they could remain in their apartments as long as possible and that the organization had a financial incentive to help them do that."

In a spirited presentation, Barbara Thomas, CEO of Kendal Northern Ohio, addressed the notion of why data is important to her community and why it should be important to all aging services providers. She commented that expectations are increasing for performance and accountability in areas related to consumers, funding sources, accreditation, risk management, state and national long term care associations, contracted external providers, government, and watchdog and service organizations.

COLLAGE has been helpful to Kendal Northern Ohio specifically to develop service plans in both independent and assisted living; to inform cross-department teams; as a source of unexpected referrals; to increase the "purposefulness" of clinic staff; and, to extended new perspectives for the medical director. COLLAGE has, in Barbara's words, "delighted our residents/clients with a fitness/wellness focus." It has helped with follow-up discussions, goal setting, matching common interests, new priorities for program development, referrals to new classes ("participation is up"), and new equipment purchases.

Exhibiting a witty presentation style, David Gehm, President and CEO of Lutheran Homes of Michigan, talked about how COLLAGE has moved his organization forward in health and wellness operations, core business interests and at a strategic level. He elaborated

that the COLLAGE tools are rigorous and reliable, provide a standardized approach, drive a customized aging experience, provide data across time and setting, provide national benchmark data and empower caregivers at the point of care. At the core business level, he further commented, COLLAGE has advanced his organization by providing efficiencies related to standardization, flow of data across ministry sites, a marketing edge, a revenue enhancement and staff career path development. And, with reference to the strategic interests of LHM, the program has provided a brand and image reshaping, a natural interface with emerging technologies and real-time data for business decision making.

We love to talk about how COLLAGE is changing member organizations and lifting up the field of aging services. For more information please contact Neil Beresin, Product Manager -- nberesin@collageaging.org or 610.335.1283.

DOWNLOAD additional symposium presentations here

Assessment and Activity Promotion to Advance Healthy Aging: Using Data to Inform Practice – Katherine Berg. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)

BeWell – Bringing Everyone Wellness Enrichment for Lasting Life: An innovative program of Lutheran Homes of South Carolina – Cindy Curtis. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)

COLLAGE Implementation Strategies: What works and what doesn't? – Steven Cutshaw. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)

Using Data and Technology to Advance Healthy Aging – David Gehm. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)

COLLAGE Implementation Strategies: What Works...and What Doesn't? (at Carolina Meadows anyway!) – Roberta Gray and Kathy Hauser. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)

Using the COLLAGE Assessment Tool with Assisted Living Residents in Canada – Norma Jutan. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)

Actuarial Profiles and Needs of Residents – Gary Mohn. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)

Using COLLAGE Data for Effective Health/Wellness Strategic Planning – Gary Mohn. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)

Raising the Bar to Exceed Expectations - Data Drivers – Barbara Thomas. To view a pdf of the presentation, [click here](#)