May 28, 2025

Testimony of Amber Evans, LCB Senior Living

ALR Commission Hearing

I am the Vice President of Memory Care and Resident Engagement Services for LCB Senior Living. I have been serving in some entity for this organization for over 10 years, and before that- served as an expressive art therapist contracting in ALRs to provide services for those living with dementia in these communities. I have had the privilege to watch first-hand how ALRs, and the liberties they provide- has offered not only needed, but dignified and creative approaches to person centered care, living and personal expression for residents living there.

Top of mind is just recently, being able to work with a very apprehensive and sad wife, moving her husband into a memory care neighborhood in an ALR. Not only was she grappling with the reality of her husband’s dementia, but she was also in fear that he would become just another ‘number’ in the long line of residents with needs. Being able to ‘hold her hand’ (so to speak) in this experience and institute all of our person centered discovery information we offer, and of course provide engagement and ADL's in his day that were specific to him was paramount. She thanked me to being able to take on these other items in a more personal centered way, without allowing him to get lost in the shuffle. This meant that she could “go back to being his wife--- and not just his caregiver.” This is a profound gift that ALR’s do everyday for families. That’s the thing about this structure- it allows us to institute programs and systems that deepen the lives of residents, and thus--- deepen the lives of families.

Speaking specifically to those living with dementia, I have seen residents many times join one of our communities, who have either been isolated at home, or another facility with a different structure. They have many times become deconditioned with certain levels of functionality like speech, dexterity, mood, recall, etc. To be able to watch these residents join our program and begin to “come alive” again has been the biggest joy of my life. And is such a needed structure to ensure longer life, slowed down progression of dementia, more meaningful quality of life, and deeper social connectedness. I have seen residents whose aphasia improves because of the connection to music on our program that allow for deeper verbal expression. I have witnessed residents with fear and anxiety in social settings, light up and make friends. I have witnessed those whose gait, or dexterity have weakened regain strength in their skills due to the specialized exposure to art interventions, or the specialized dementia specific interventions we are able to institute with our certified learning accessibility for our front line associates. I have seen residents with a lifelong successful careers, not lose their voice and legacy because of their disease journey, but rather share and be celebrated for their accomplishments, and still access this legacy through storytelling, or teaching or group engagement. I see residents thrive every day because of the structure of what we can (and love to) provide.

This truly is only scratching the surface of a high level look at the day to day offerings and power of ALR. No dementia journey looks the same, soo to be able to take a person centered and creative approach, backed with research, science and education- becomes paramount.

Thank you, and please let me know if you have any questions or would like to talk further.