



FAQ: Possible Changes for the Long Term Care Center

There has been increasing concern and conversation about our Long Term Care Center as NH&C leaders explore options for senior services and the Long Term Care Center, as community needs for senior care evolve.

We are looking at options that could expand the spectrum of care in the Northfield area, offering more choices for care to suit individual needs. This may bring changes for residents, families and staff of the Long Term Care Center.

Asking “what if” questions can be unsettling for residents, families, staff and community members. Because we are in the research phase of this process, there are no answers yet – only possibilities.

Because the Long Term Care Center is so important to so many individuals, we want to share as much information as possible at this stage in the process.

Has a decision been made to close the Long Term Care Center?

There has been no decision to close the Long Term Care Center.

We're working on a detailed feasibility plan for senior care services. We're still in the exploration phase.

We should have enough information this summer to make a well-informed decision. The decision could be made by yearend.

Why are you considering changing the Long Term Care Center?

With any service, we seek to understand what the demand will be for services now and in the future. Our research shows that our community has more traditional skilled nursing beds than it will need, but doesn't have enough of the other options that people increasingly need and want: Assisted living, memory care, independent living, and enhanced care. We are actively exploring how best to address those needs in the future.

What are the possible outcomes of this feasibility study?

It's possible that:

- The Long Term Care Center could remain in place as it is, and evolve in the future.
- A facility with assisted living, memory care, and enhanced care could be constructed next to the hospital campus and the Long Term Care Center would close.

What would a new facility involve?

The model we're studying would provide:

- Memory care
- Assisted living
- Independent living
- Enhanced care (a homelike environment that provides an alternative to traditional nursing homes)

This model would involve construction of new senior care facilities to the west of the hospital campus. If the project progresses, we might be able to begin construction in late 2017. This may allow a transition to new facilities in 2019. A longer timeline is more likely.

We're talking with three potential partners:

- Yanik Companies –a developer that would own the new facilities
- A senior services organization to manage care services
- St. Olaf – the land owner that may invest in alumni housing

How is this good for the community?

Across the U.S., senior care continues to evolve as more people choose to “age in place,” and many choose to stay longer in their homes with in-home services for their medical (and non-medical) needs. There's been a tremendous rise in assisted living services, and less need for traditional nursing home care – so more options are now available for seniors.

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How is this good for the community? (continued)

One service that is now being offered is “enhanced care,” a homelike environment that provides an alternative for traditional nursing homes. This is now part of an array of services where medical care is added as needed, bridging between levels of care as individuals age and their needs change.

Our research shows that Northfield needs this kind of enhanced care setting, plus additional assisted living units along with more memory care beds and fewer traditional nursing home beds.

When will a decision be made?

A decision could be made by yearend. We want to make the right decision, and will take all the time and diligence that such an important decision deserves.

As the process continues, we will do our best to communicate directly and clearly with Long Term Care Center residents and families, Long Term Care Center staff, and the community.

If the decision involves changes for Long Term Care Center residents and/or staff, we will make sure there is abundant time for transition.

If the Long Term Care Center closes, what will happen to residents there now?

The Long Term Care Center staff will work with each resident for placement in either the new facility next to the hospital or a different skilled nursing facility in the community.

If the Long Term Care Center closes, what will happen to staff there?

Jobs may shift within Northfield Hospital & Clinics or to the new facility. We’ll understand more about possible partners, their staffing requirements, and possible job opportunities if the project matures. We are committed to regular meetings with Long Term Care Center leaders and staff to let them know what’s happening.

How is St. Olaf involved?

St. Olaf owns the land on which the hospital campus is built, and the land adjacent to the campus.

St. Olaf is exploring the possibility of providing independent living units for St. Olaf College alumni on St. Olaf land next to the hospital campus.

Why do this study now?

Several trends make planning for the future crucial, with significant changes in:

- Northfield's population ("the #1 place to retire in the U.S.")
- the U.S. healthcare system
- seniors' needs and wants for their care

As trends in senior care shift to more services provided in more homelike settings, we want to be ready to provide the services seniors need and want. It takes time to plan for such changes.

Do you have more questions or concerns of your own? Please feel welcome to contact us directly:

LTCC residents and families: Tammy Hayes, Chief Nursing Executive and LTCC Administrator – 507-646-6865 or hayest@northfieldhospital.org

NH&C staff (including LTCC staff): Tammy Hayes, Chief Nursing Executive and LTCC Administrator – 507-646-6865 or hayest@northfieldhospital.org

Community members: Betsy Spethmann, Director of Community Relations – 507-646-1034 or spethmannb@northfieldhospital.org

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