

Traditional Nursing Home

Green House Homes

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| Size | Usually 120+ beds divided into 20- to 40-bed units or larger | 7–10 elders |
| Philosophy | Medical model emphasizing provision of clinical services to patients | Habilitative model emphasizing intentional communities and a developmental view of aging |
| Organization | Hierarchy—nurses control unit activity | Empowerment of direct care staff; nurses visit the house to provide skilled services |
| Decision Making | Decisions made by the organizational leadership | Decisions made by elders or person closest to elders as often as feasible; House Councils plan menus, activities, and house routines |
| Privacy | Typically shared bedrooms and bathrooms | Private bedrooms and bathrooms |
| Access | Space belongs to the institution; elders have access to their room and public areas but many spaces are off-limits | Space belongs to the elders and they may access all areas of the house |
| Outdoor Space | Often challenging to access, particularly without assistance or supervision | Easy access; fenced, shaded, and in full view of the hearth and kitchen to allow observation by staff and open access |
| Living Areas | Lounges and dining rooms usually at the end of long corridors | Central hearth with an adjacent open kitchen and dining area, short distance to bedrooms |
| Kitchen | Off-limits to elders and visitors | Elders and visitors have access and may participate in meal preparation activities |
| Nurse's Station | In the center of most units | Medication and supply cabinets in each room; nurses visit rooms to administer medications and treatments; office/study provides space for administrative tasks such as record maintenance |
| Dining | Large dining rooms with many elders, separate “feeder” tables | One dining table providing a focal point for community meals and family-style dining |
| Staffing | Departmental with segmented and specialized tasks | Shahbaz is a universal worker offering direct care, laundry, housekeeping, activities, and meal preparation services |
| Visitors | Limited ability to participate | Participate in meals and other meaningful engagements; hold family celebrations in The Green House home |