Title - Housing Considerations of the Aged: Designing for Memory Loss

Program of Study – Family and Consumer Sciences: Interior Design

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Abstract: The baby boomer generation is currently transitioning into the later stages of life. A large population within this generation have been diagnosed with a form of memory loss. Such a condition requires living environments that sustain the quality of their physical, social, and mental health. Therefore, the United States is experiencing a larger demand for specialized memory care housing. Thus, interior designers are given the task to find and apply design solutions that create a healthy and safe environment. Since the market’s demand for memory care design solutions are increasing, an influx of new products and ideas exceed the needed analysis of their effectiveness. Therefore, this research focuses on defining the unique considerations for seniors with memory loss and discovering the best practices and most beneficial trends for memory care facilities. Specifically, analysis is done on how elders with memory loss perceive their environment and their needs to promote healthy routines, and design methods to help caregivers operate efficiently. This research further concentrates on floor plan characteristics, technology integration, and innovative amenities. From these findings, several design solutions were found. These solutions include, but not limited to, floor plans with indoor or outdoor walking paths, providing mentally engaging technology, and incorporating sensory rooms into the facility. Overall, this research concludes with a well-established set of design
solutions based on seniors’ needs which can be applied to developing memory care housing. Interior designers can execute such projects with this accumulated and analyzed knowledge.