

Connection

SPRING 2024

Establishing a replicable model for senior life that is focused on brain health, wellness and purposeful living.



**Abe's Garden
Community**

Influencing Dementia Care Worldwide

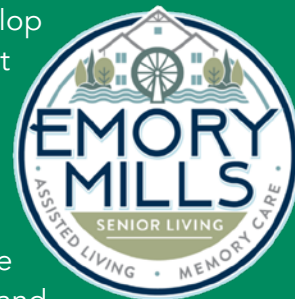
Abe's Garden Community Disseminates the *I'm Still Here*® Approach Far Outside of Its Walls

By Lori Latusek

Abe's Garden Community is taking steps to ensure the research-based *I'm Still Here*® approach is a cornerstone in global care for those living with dementia. The organization is spreading the *I'm Still Here*® dementia care and engagement philosophy nationally and internationally, and bringing this approach to private homes, inventive day programming, and other senior living communities. This initiative encompasses a diverse array of strategies, from managing a new assisted living and memory care community across the state, to opening an offsite dementia day program and speaking at conferences with global audiences.

Emory Mills Senior Living, a Hearthstone Assisted Living and Memory Care Community

Abe's Garden Community's Hearthstone Education and Advisory Division has embarked on a consult management role with Emory Mills, a startup assisted living and memory care community in Knoxville, TN. This venture aims to develop a senior living community that combines best practices from Abe's Garden Community's internationally recognized intentional dementia design with the *I'm Still Here*® care and engagement philosophy and a Center of Excellence certification. This initiative will offer families in East Tennessee a senior living option aimed at providing a purposeful environment, outstanding engagement, and elevated care. Emory Mills is expected to open in the fall of 2024.



(L to R) Abe's Garden Community COO Chris Coelho, CEO Susannah Dwyer celebrate a partnership with Emory Mills' Pramod Patel and Stan Sorey.

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I'm Still Here® Center of Excellence Certification

Emory Mills will join 21 other certified *I'm Still Here*® Center of Excellence communities across 10 states. The Hearthstone Education and Advisory Division shapes the future of dementia care by educating senior living communities and guiding them to receive or renew their certification as an *I'm Still Here*® Center of Excellence. Abe's Garden Community is the Center of Excellence model and educational hub, which sets a gold standard for senior living and dementia care and fosters a network of communities dedicated to evidence-based person-directed care.

To learn more about becoming a Center of Excellence, contact Divisional Leader MaryBeth Watson at mwatson@abesgarden.org or 629.225.2270.

Photo by Valerie Snider



Conference Presentations: Sharing Insights and Inspiring Change from California to Poland and Beyond

In March, Abe's Garden Community COO Chris Coelho is taking the stage at the **Senior Living 100** conference in Laguna Niguel, CA, to present *Driving Census with Outpatient Memory Care*. This platform offers an opportunity to share the power of the *I'm Still Here*® approach with the country's most prestigious senior care industry leaders.

In April, CEO Susannah Dwyer and Senior Director of Campus Development Judy Shmerling Given will head

to Kraków, Poland, where Susannah will be speaking at the longest-running global conference on Alzheimer's disease and dementia, the **ADI (Alzheimer's Disease International) Conference**. This year's conference theme is *Dementia: Insights. Innovations. Inspirations*. The team will share the pioneering techniques – and research – of *I'm Still Here*® to 1,000 delegates from over 120 countries, including researchers, scientists, care and medical professionals, people living with dementia, and family caregivers. Susannah will lead three presentations: *Improving Quality of Life Throughout the Dementia Continuum*, *Let's Get Engaged: Evidence-Based Strategies for Creating Engaging Dementia Programs*, and *Doctor's Orders: Engagement to Deprescribe*. Additionally, Susannah, Chris, and Judy will have the opportunity to communicate Abe's Garden Community's mission, history, and successes with attendees at a branded informational booth.



ADI recognized Abe's Garden Community as a groundbreaker in dementia design in the *World Alzheimer Report 2020* and the Memory Support Center of Excellence was featured as one of nine United States-based residential care center case studies in the report. Use this QR code to read about other accomplishments and link to the report.



Free Resources for Personal and Professional Caregivers Across the Globe

Understanding the challenges faced by dementia caregivers, Abe's Garden Community offers videos sharing best practices as a complimentary resource. These videos cover a range of topics that help caregivers learn proper communication, engagement, and care techniques. While we know our caregiving series has received more than 550,000 views on YouTube around the world, this does not include the unknown number of viewers watching in group settings. Abe's Garden Community is proud that these videos have been chosen by organizations as far as Australia and Canada to use as a training tool for staff and volunteers. Although there is a cost to develop the videos, by making these resources freely available, Abe's Garden Community is fulfilling its mission to widely share knowledge in best practice dementia care.

In October 2023, we launched **"Secrets to Engaging People with Dementia,"** an educational web series sharing memory care best practices based on Hearthstone's research and the *I'm Still Here*® approach. These brief videos provide useful tips to anyone working with – or caring for – someone living with cognitive challenges. These videos have garnered more than 250 views by industry professionals and family caregivers.

Access any of our videos by using this QR code or visiting our YouTube channel at bit.ly/AGCyoutube.



The Club at Cool Springs, a Hearthstone Memory Support Day Program

Abe's Garden Community has launched a unique offsite dementia day program in a neighboring county. **The Club at Cool Springs** in Franklin, TN, offers locals living with dementia expert support, peer socialization, and purposeful engagement rooted in the *I'm Still Here*® approach. **The Club** addresses the lack of specialized dementia programming in the area and fills an immediate need, as it is the first program of its kind in Williamson County. By offering a safe, supportive, and stimulating environment, **The Club** fosters a sense of community and purpose for those living with dementia, while also providing respite for family caregivers. For more information or to schedule a tour, contact Community Club Manager Jaime William at jwilliam@abesgarden.org or 629.209.1545.

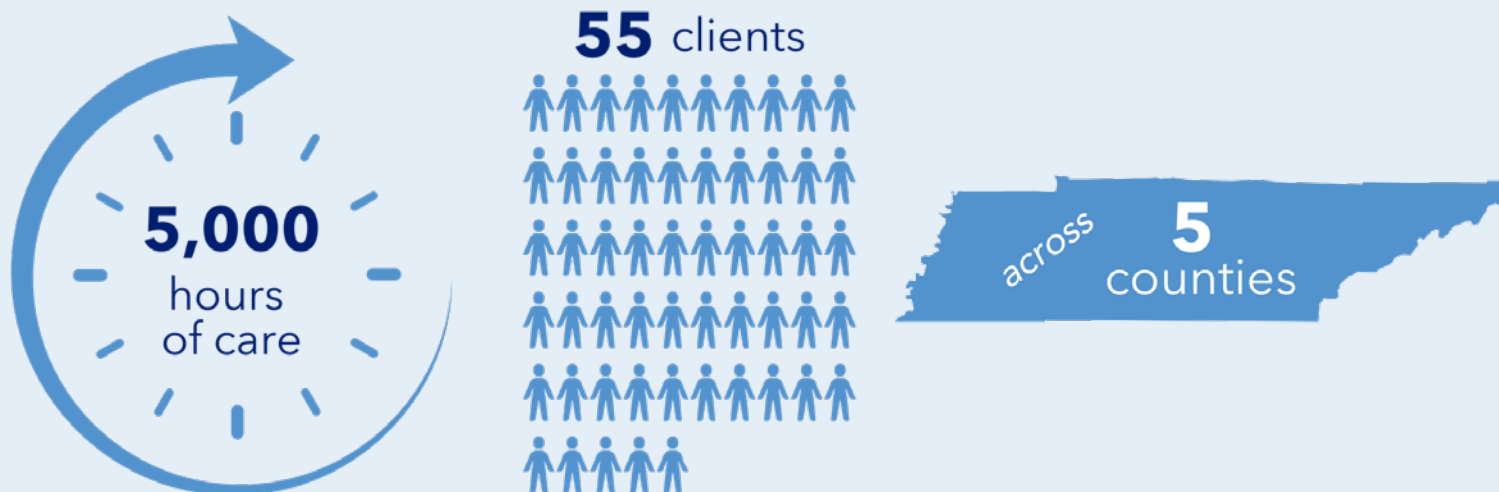


(L to R) Senior Director of Campus Development Judy Shmerling Given, State Representative Sam Whitson, Chairman Mike Shmerling, State Representative Bob Freeman, Dwyer and Coelho at **The Club at Cool Springs** open house. Photo by Bobby Heller

Thank you to the Carolyn Smith Foundation for supporting us by matching \$40,000 in donations during our year-end fundraising.

Abe's Garden at Home

Abe's Garden Community's dedication to providing supplemental in-home care to our residents has expanded to also provide this beneficial service to families in surrounding areas. **Abe's Garden at Home** brings compassionate care and personalized in-home engagement rooted in the *I'm Still Here*® approach to the homes of older adults and those living with dementia. We now proudly provide approximately 5,000 hours of service to an average of 55 clients each month, with 45% of them residing off-campus, covering five Middle Tennessee counties – and this reach increases every week! This growth not only addresses the evolving needs of the larger community but also reinforces Abe's Garden Community's commitment to providing comprehensive and flexible care and respite solutions. If you or anyone you know may benefit from in-home services, contact Abe's Garden at Home Manager Elaine Murphy at emurphy@abesgarden.org or 629-209-9332.



More information about *I'm Still Here*® or our our Hearthstone Educational and Advisory Services is available by visiting www.abesgarden.org/education-advisory-services or contacting Divisional Operations Leader MaryBeth Watson at mwatson@abesgarden.org or 629.225.2270.

In Memoriam

We are saddened by Judge Sandra Day O'Connor's passing in December. In 2006, the first woman to join the Supreme Court left her position after 25 years to care for her husband John following his diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. In October 2008, the Supreme Court Justice donated to Abe's Garden Community an original, commissioned painting by Shane Michael Neal that is now displayed in the memory support lobby.

(L to R) Lisa and Michael Shmerling, Judge O'Connor, and Neal.





Abe's Garden Community Awarded a Government Grant to Help *Double the Assisted Living Capacity*

An exciting project will help meet the needs of Middle Tennessee's aging population and increase Abe's Garden Community's assisted living capacity by 100%, from 20 to 40 private apartments.

In May 2023, Abe's Garden Community received notice of a \$1.07MM grant from the Tennessee Department of Health to convert the fourth floor of independent living to 20 new assisted living apartments. Abe's Garden Community was one of 33 recipients chosen statewide to receive this award designated to brick-and-mortar expansion of pediatric and adult acute care hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, Licensed Assisted Care Living Facilities, and Licensed Nursing Home Facilities.

According to the National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care, the number of occupied units in assisted care living is at its highest level ever and demand has increased for the fifth consecutive quarter (*McKnight's Senior Living*, October 7, 2022).

Creating 20 additional assisted living apartments means more older adults who need assistance with activities of daily living such as bathing, meal preparation, medication dosage, intellectual stimulation, socialization, and exercise/therapy have the option to join Abe's Garden Community. Here, their healthcare needs may be addressed to improve their quality of life as they age.

A charitable gift pledge was secured by Abe's Garden Community as a required match for the grant award. The award will be paid as reimbursable expenses are approved. Renovations are expected to begin in the fall of 2024.

Estate Planning Consultation:

A VALUABLE RESOURCE OFFERED TO YOU

Abe's Garden Community offers comprehensive support for our families within our care network, addressing various needs related to caregiving, emotions, finances, and lifestyle transitions. We provide free educational videos for caregivers, counseling for individuals navigating the challenges of aging or dementia with their loved ones, and personalized estate planning assistance. Our partnership with Thompson & Associates ensures that those preparing for the future can receive tailored guidance to safeguard their legacy. Kalpana Gowda, who is involved in the estate planning process, shares her insights based on her experience.

"I really needed this type of thing but didn't know how to go about it.

The work with Thompson & Associates has helped me sort out questions I've had about planning for the future. When my father died in 2021, I found myself with responsibilities and important decisions that needed to be made. We had all leaned on my father for decades regarding financial matters. Since I no longer have my dad to guide me, it's such a nice gift from my Abe's Garden Community family to be able to meet with Paul Grassmann. He has been very patient and thorough in listening to my concerns and intentions and then advising me on how to approach estate planning for all members of my family.

My experience with Thompson & Associates has been just like my experience with Abe's Garden Community... I'm always greeted with a warm smile, a readiness to help, expertise, clear communication, and valuable information.

As an immigrant family, we didn't have much of a road map for senior living or estate planning for multiple generations. I've learned so much from my meetings with Paul. When I think about future generations of my family, I feel confident that I'm making good decisions now that will continue to honor Lalitha Aunty, her husband, and my parents' legacies.

This was the missing piece in my planning. I found it, not in five people, but in just one! Thompson & Associates helped update my estate plan, as a valuable piece to my financial team. I can't imagine why anyone would not want to take advantage of this valuable resource!"

This **complimentary service** is a gift to you provided by an Abe's Garden Community philanthropic partner. If you are interested in learning more or scheduling an appointment with Paul, please contact Risa Klein Herzog at rherzog@abesgarden.org or 615.202.9772.



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We have found kindness and competence here. I'm incredibly proud of Lalitha Aunty for taking the courageous step to move to Abe's Garden Independent Living. She has impressed and inspired everyone in our family and friend circles. ~ Kalpana

Kalpana (C) with her mother Saraswathi Gowda (L) and aunt Lalitha Prakash.

WHAT DOES *Quality of Life* Mean at Abe's Garden Community?

By Lori Latusek

Abe's Garden Community is passionate about providing opportunities that may improve the quality of life for older adults. But what does "quality of life" mean and how is it measured?

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), quality of life (QoL) is a concept that aims to capture the well-being of a population or individual at a specific point in time, taking into account positive and negative elements. Common facets of QoL include personal health (physical, mental, and spiritual), relationships, education status, work environment, social status, wealth, a sense of security and safety, freedom, autonomy in decision-making, social-belonging, and their physical surroundings.



Examples of how Abe's Garden Memory Support addresses QoL include:

- **Improve personal health and well-being** by reducing unnecessary medications, providing various opportunities for movement, and designing comfortable, safe living spaces with an abundance of natural light.
- **Promote freedom and autonomy** with an intentionally designed secure courtyard and connected, open-concept households for residents to access as they are able.
- **Offer decision-making opportunities for residents** throughout the day by presenting two options (to not overwhelm them with more) from which shirt to wear to which prepared dish they would like to eat and which activity they would like to join and more.
- **Provide socialization and personal fulfillment** through a wide variety of purposeful engagement opportunities throughout every day. Each household is filled with engagement prompts such as exercise machines, art, puzzles, and group activities. Additionally, team members use research-based techniques to consistently invite residents to be active.





115 Woodmont Boulevard
Nashville, TN 37205



Let's Grow Together

As you can see in this issue, we continue to grow through expanding our care and services! Please use this QR code to unite with us in our mission to expand locally while increasing our impact around the world! Thank you!



629-217-2354

www.abesgarden.org

Abe's Garden® Community is a
501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

GROWING OUR SPACES FOR *Meaningful Engagement*

What makes spaces places? Meaningful engagement! Abe's Garden Community's Memory Support Center of Excellence was internationally recognized for its groundbreaking, intentional design, which includes areas that prompt meaningful engagement opportunities for those living with memory loss. Independent living residents also enjoy elements of this design and the variety of brain health and wellness activities offered daily.

As we look to the future to add 20 new assisted living and 20 new memory support suites, we can create new spaces that support Abe's Garden Community's positive, dignified approach to programming.

A chapel, music research lab/theater, multi-use community room, education suite, fitness studio, and a bistro are top of mind. Research shows that encouraging residents and program participants to choose between a variety of engagement opportunities promotes wellness and autonomy. There is evidence that choosing to join a class, club or committee enhances one's sense of purpose. To learn more about our plans, please contact Sr. Director of Development Mandy Hansen at mhansen@abesgarden.org or 629.249.1141.

