



Methodist Homes

Providing affordable, secure and caring accommodation and services to the elderly

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Press Release

Methodist Homes provides compassionate, nurturing care to elderly living with Alzheimer's

The effects of Alzheimer's, goes far beyond the affects it has on the person living with the degenerative brain disease; it also has a huge impact on loved ones. Many individuals are not able to properly assist their family members living with Alzheimer's so this responsibility falls to special care facilities and well trained care-givers. Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA) offers nurturing, compassionate care to the elderly living with Alzheimer's and other related dementias at four of their fifteen retirement villages, with one village completely dedicated to residents with various forms of dementias.

As the most common form of dementia, Alzheimer's accounts for 60% to 80% of dementia cases. However, the exact cause of this disease is still to be determined. According to recent statistics, globally there are approximately 44 million people living with Alzheimer's. This figure is expected to increase to 75.6 million by 2030 and 135.5 million by 2050. In South Africa alone there is an estimated 750 000 people living with Alzheimer's.

"It is imperative to fully understand this disease as well as the specialist care it requires," says MHA's General Manager, Lynda Erasmus. "Diagnosis, comprehension and management of the disease will go a long way in improving the quality of life of the person living with the disease as well as their family and loved ones. We, at Methodist Homes, understand and are fully aware of the ever-growing need for formal social care systems in South Africa. It is crucial that these people and their families receive only the best treatment, love, care and support and this is where we excel."

Established 50 years ago, Methodist Homes encompasses fifteen care-centric retirement villages in Gauteng (12) and the North West Province (3). Nine of these villages offer mid and frail care services supported by qualified nursing staff and highly trained care workers who provide much needed assistance and care to frail residents. Four of the homes comprise fully equipped Alzheimer's wings within their care centres, providing care for those living with moderate to severe Alzheimer's. Prim Villa, situated on the East Rand, is fully dedicated to residents living with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

Whilst the majority of people living with Alzheimer's are aged 65 and older and the largest known risk factor for developing Alzheimer's being attributed to old age, younger people are also at risk for developing the illness. Subsequently, the preconceived notions of Alzheimer's as an inevitable result of aging is incorrect as only one in five people in their eighties are affected by it. Lynda explains that, "It is therefore extremely important to be correctly diagnosed as early as possible so that the patient can receive the much-needed specialist care and support. Furthermore, the illness is not contagious and people are not predisposed if their parents or relatives were diagnosed with the disease."

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Despite the fact that the illness is irreversible, the progress is slowed down thanks to medication and the correct care which assists to keep people more comfortable and helps to maintain their dignity. "It is alarming that due to a lack of finances and welfare benefits, combined with a shortage of formal social care facilities, the majority of our population do not have access to this specialist care so the disease sadly remains largely undiagnosed and consequently untreated," points out Lynda.

"Methodist Homes remains passionate and committed to providing a high quality of life to Alzheimer's residents as well as the much needed support to their families," concludes Lynda.

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** Information on Alzheimer's courtesy of the Alzheimer's SA website*

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