



Murals On the Walls..Made Talk!

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For Best Practice we have chosen our Dementia Unit's wall decor. What got the wall decor started was in 2009 we added a Dementia Unit to our facility and it seemed to us to have a very bland appearance. The residents going to be living within these walls needed a cheery, colorful, uplifting atmosphere. We needed decor that couldn't be removed from the walls, broken or damaged in any way; thus we came up with a plan and boy did it make talk!!!... Sketches and paint started being added on the walls and before long murals were being completed!

Our best practice addresses the Psycho-social well-being of our residents living within this unit. These residents are generally confined to this unit. They were in need of a more cheery, colorful and uplifting atmosphere in their "home". Like your walls speak something about you when someone comes to your home; these residents were able to experience stories of where these murals took them deep within their hearts and minds! The old saying, "If walls could talk!" These murals on the walls made talk!!! Resident's reminisce of farms days, church days, gardening, old furniture, animals, pets, receiving mail, clothes line days, old cars, phone booths, straw hats, old claw bathtub with overflowing bubbles, family time and even deer hunting! If you research what does a painting say, you find the answer of: passion, high energy, animation, genuineness, warmth, harmony, comfort, socialization, entertaining, uplifting and to tell a story. These answers are exactly what our residents, staff and visitors see and experience!

The cost of this practice would vary depending on your artist(s) fees. You could be *very* fortunate like we were and have artists within your staff (our Activity Coordinator) that are already on the clock. Your facility may know an artist(s) outside of their building that would donate their time as well (we were fortunate to use our Activity Coordinator's Daughter-In-Law). You would have to price and purchase the paints and brushes. We were able to get some of our paints donated from a local hardware store. Another cost for us was the wood that we purchased, cut and painted/stained and our Maintenance Department measured and framed off some of our paintings to look like actual pictures in the resident's rooms. Framing is an option, but not a must.

We feel that by adding these murals and paintings in our Dementia Unit, our Beauty Shop and one of our shower rooms that it gives our facility a cheery, colorful and uplifting atmosphere. This artwork has been a way to make the residents and *even* staff, family and visitors sense a home-like feel, uplift moods, act as conversation pieces, distract behaviors, ease any loneliness and anxiousness, help in redirection and are just fun for all!