

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Elders having access to nature and outdoor activities is considered therapeutic in long-term care settings. In April of 2019 we received pleasant news of being awarded a grant to implement a project we named "Ride & Glide for Wellness". The project encourages our elders, particularly those receiving skilled nursing care, to engage in meaningful outdoor activities. While our Green House homes offer elders accessible outdoor areas, our Shahbazim additionally encourage our elders to utilize outdoor spaces in ways that honor their strengths, provide relationship-rich experiences, and connect them with their surrounding community. Our "Ride & Glide for Wellness" program achieved this by introducing piloted trishaw bike rides and wheelchair accessible glider swings into daily life at Londonderry Village. Elders, including those living with dementia and those experiencing mobility challenges, are to experience the bike rides and glider swings as a way to enjoy quality time outdoors with others.

For the "ride" portion of the project, we became a "Cycling Without Age" affiliate. Several of our staff learned about Cycling Without Age at a national Green House conference and were inspired by the idea. Cycling Without Age was started in 2012 in Denmark by Ole Kassow. Ole Kassow wanted to help elderly folks get back on their bicycles, but he first had to find a solution to the limited mobility that can often accompany aging. The answer was a trishaw bike (a three-wheel cycle with a passenger cab out front). Upon discovering the trishaw he started offering free bike rides to local nursing home residents. He bought more trishaws and launched Cycling Without Age, which further spread throughout Denmark. The movement caught on and Cycling Without Age continued to grow across the globe. Since 2015 it has been introduced to 40 countries around the world, including the United States.

Upon becoming an affiliate we implemented the Cycling Without Age program and brought its unique, one of a kind trishaws bikes to our campus. Our elders now experience authentic bike rides with one or two people sitting in a specially designed "cab" attached to the front of a bike that is piloted by a trained staff person or volunteer. These special trishaws are assisted by electric battery power, so there's no need to be super-sporty to be a cycle pilot.

The trishaws themselves provide our elders with great experiences and a renewed energy from feeling the "wind in their hair" during bike rides. Riders experience their neighborhood and nature up-close from the bike. There's also an opportunity for social connection and for people to share memories and tell their stories while on a ride. The trishaw rides have built dynamic relationships and special moments of joy between bike pilots, passengers and caregivers.

For the “glide” portion of the project, we installed six wheelchair accessible, canopied glider swings near the Green House courtyards and adjacent outdoor garden/PlayPark areas. Glider swings are a great way to encouraging community interactions. Glider swings promote conversation, reminiscing, and increased socialization because all gliding are seated at eye level. Even the simple act of quietly sitting and gliding with another person can create a meaningful and memorable interaction. They also have capacity for elders who enjoy them to experience numerous sensory, motor, cognitive, and social benefits.

Both the swings and trishaws also have an inter-generational appeal so elders can enjoy them with family and friends of any age. Most importantly they help elders feel connected to the people and space not only within, but also around their home... their neighborhood.

The idea for our Ride & Glide for Wellness program grew from our belief that elders can discover new things and have new experiences regardless of their age or the challenges and health conditions with which they are living. The project also resonates with our Green House core values of real home, meaningful life and empowered staff who help elders integrate into the community, celebrate retained abilities, and uphold elder-directed, relationship-rich living. The majority of our Green House elders utilize assistive devices for mobility and over seventy percent are living with some form of dementia. Historically people living with dementia as well as those using walkers or wheelchairs are known to spend less time outdoors. Through our Green House model of care are able to change this for our elders. Introducing wheelchair accessible gliders and trishaws will help us to further focus on our elders’ abilities and strengths rather than their limitations. Yes, our elders can take bike rides and enjoy time gliding on a swing!

A main benefit of our Ride & Glide for Wellness project is its ability to give elders a new type of mobility, with opportunities for meaningful time outdoors that expands their world. Research additionally supports that time spent outdoors can have positive effects upon the well-being of elders such as improving sleeping patterns, reducing pain, decreasing incontinence, as well as reducing agitation, anxiety and depression. Our experience has been in agreement with this research. While valuable for all elders, various research studies also prove this can be especially valuable for elders living with a form of dementia. The bikes and gliders also combat boredom and loneliness, create variety and spontaneity in daily life, provide opportunities for conversation, and encourage the sharing memories while also creating new ones. Through time spent on a bike ride or glider, new friendships will blossom and existing relationship are enhanced.

The trishaws and gliders we’ve introduced into our skilled care serve as a catalyst for further changing how elders, especially those living with dementia or those living with mobility issues, can experience the world around them. The positive and authentic experiences that result from an afternoon bike ride with a family member or a morning spent gliding with a friend undoubtedly enhance our elders overall physical, social, emotional and spiritual well-being. Beyond the initial implementation of the program, we are now sustaining the program via support from community partnerships and volunteers.

TIMELINE OF COMPLETED TASKS

The following outlines all of the action steps which have been completed as they relate to the grant agreement (original project timeline can be found in the grant application) Grant has been completed with our organization establishing means of continuing the project into the future for many years to come. While the grant is completed, we will continue to gather data to measure outcomes and impact of the program.

	Project Step	Step Completed
1.	Introduced Ride & Glide for Wellness project into the GreenHouse homes. Project coordinator met with GreenHouse staff and elders on a monthly basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	Project Coordinator met with management team to provide overview of project goals and objectives as well as give an overview of the implementation and evaluation process.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.	Each GreenHouse home held a house meeting to discuss implementation of the project within the home. Houses identified individuals who may be interested in helping with the project (coordinating, piloting, scheduling, etc.) Feedback and communication will be provided to the Project Coordinator on an ongoing basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.	Project Coordinator created a project team which met at least monthly for a minimum of one year. This group continues to meet even following the completing of the project. New staff and volunteers become involved as interested.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.	Completed Cycling Without Age Affiliate Agreement. Our organization became an affiliate of the world-wide Cycling Without Age program. This will continue indefinitely. Trishaw bike rides are part of this affiliation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.	Reviewed Cycling Without Age affiliate resources and made contact with program. Our organization has been	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	enrolled as an active member and communicate regularly with this group and its resources.	
7.	Reviewed relevant policies, procedures and guidelines related to the project and created additional as needed. Project coordinator and management will update and create these as needed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8.	Secured appropriate liability insurance for the project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

9.	Project team communicates project progress to all staff and stakeholders on a monthly basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.	Ordered Trishaws and accessories via Cycling Without Age.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.	Ordered WhisperGLIDE wheelchair accessible swings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12.	Project Coordinator holds monthly meeting with project team members.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13.	Project coordinator meets with GreenHouse staff and elders on an ongoing basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.	Identified Trishaw cycle pilots for initial training.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15.	Prepared training programs and competency checklists for Trishaw pilots.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16.	Installed WhisperGLIDE swings in locations desired by GreenHouse elders and staff as well as a WhisperGlide swing installed at our campus PlayPark and health center outdoor garden area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
17.	Provided orientation to staff regarding use of the WhisperGLIDE swings. Training resources were developed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
18.	Project evaluation tools and data collection methods finalized. Collection process reviewed with staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19.	Project Coordinator meets with necessary staff to orient them to data collection needed for project evaluation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
20.	Reports completed on a monthly basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
21.	Trained first group of Trishaw pilots via classroom as well as one-to-one observation of competency skills checklist via an actual Trishaw ride.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
22.	Elders began using wheelchair accessible swings and continue this on a daily, ongoing basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
23.	Project utilization and evaluation data gathered on a monthly basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
24.	Trained Trishaw pilots began to offer bike rides. This continued on a daily basis and will continue daily.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

25.	Trained second group of Trishaw pilots via classroom as well as one-to one observation of competency skills checklist via an actual Trishaw ride.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
26.	Began community outreach and identify potential community support and volunteers for the project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
27.	Held initial meetings with potential community groups for support and continue to do this on an ongoing basis as opportunities arise.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
28.	Trained third group of Trishaw pilots via classroom as well as one-to one observation of competency skills checklist via an actual Trishaw ride.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
29.	Created materials about the project to share with the community in order to gain ongoing future support.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
30.	Gathered success stories that can be shared and published several articles about the Ride and Glide for Wellness project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
31.	Project coordinator met and continues to meet monthly with GreenHouse staff and elders and continue to gain feedback about utilization of bikes and swings, further needs, reporting process, outcomes and such.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
32.	A plan for involving local community support has been built into annual partnership giving opportunities. This will bring ongoing volunteers as well as contributions to the project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
33.	All project steps have been complete in relation to the PA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES GRANT AGREEMENT for the RIDE AND GLIDE FOR WELLNESS PROJECT. Contract Number: 4100084333 Report and invoices submitted to PA Long Term Care Grant program.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

PROJECT SPECIFICS

A. RIDE: Trishaw Bike Rides

On average for each quarter, about half of our skilled nursing care elders participated in trishaw bike rides.

Trishaw bike rides ranged from 15 minutes to 45 minutes with the average ride time being 35 minutes. Elders living with dementia and Alzheimer's disease as well as elders who use assistive devices for mobility, including wheelchairs, were able to enjoy trishaw bike rides. Historically elders with dementia and Alzheimer's disease and those using mobility devices tend to spend less time outdoors. The benefit of this project is that it offers elders motivation and incentive for meaningful time outside while also engaging with others.

The Ride & Glide for Wellness project coordinator trained staff and volunteers to be "trishaw pilots" with that training encompassing the project's goals, principles of the Cycling Without Age program as well as trishaw bike safety. Additionally bike pilots learn how to complete a Trishaw Assessment Form (attachment A) in order to ensure ongoing assessment of each trishaw bike ride's impact upon elders. Bike pilots complete a form with each ride. The data obtained from the assessment form provides outcomes for the Ride & Glide for Wellness program. Three factors are assessed with each ride using a Likert scale with 1 being "poor" and 10 being "excellent". The bike ride impact upon: 1.) mood/behavior; 2.) quality of life; and 3.) variety in experience/environment/personal interactions is evaluated.

The first measure evaluates the project's ability to use trishaw rides to reduce challenging behaviors, alleviate anxiety and depression, and provide an antidote to loneliness. The second measure evaluates the project's impact upon quality of life and the ability to add value to the elder's physical, social, emotional and spiritual domains of functioning. The third strongly connects to our Eden Alternative principles of alleviating boredom through the introduction of new experiences, environments, and social interactions. The assessment form also includes an area for comments to be included which note each elder's verbal and nonverbal reactions gleaned during the trishaw ride.

Trishaw Bike Assessment form outcomes for the grant period:

Measure #1 Mood & Behavior - trishaw rides resulted in a 52% improvement in elder's overall moods and behaviors.

Measure #2 Quality of Life - trishaw rides resulted in a 41% improvement in elder's overall quality of life.

Measure #3 Variety and Spontaneity - trishaw rides resulted in a 38% improvement in the variety and spontaneity of the elder's day, breaking away from routine and adding unexpected joy.

B. GLIDE: WhisperGlide Swings

On average approximately half of our skilled nursing residents utilize the glider swings. Duration of time spent on the swings ranged from 10 minutes to 90 minutes with the average swing time being 40 minutes. Again, elders living with dementia and Alzheimer's disease as well as those

using assistive devices for mobility, including wheelchairs, utilized the swings and benefited from them.

Staff learn how to complete a Wheelchair Accessible Swing Assessment Form (attachment B) in order to ensure ongoing assessment of each WhisperGlide Swing experience's impact upon elders. Staff complete a form with each swing ride. The data obtained from the assessment form provides outcomes for the Ride & Glide for Wellness program. Three factors are assessed with each ride using a Likert scale with 1 being "poor" and 10 being "excellent". The bike ride impact upon: 1.) mood/behavior; 2.) quality of life; and 3.) variety in experience/environment/personal interactions is evaluated.

The first measure evaluates the project's ability to use the swings to reduce challenging behaviors, alleviate anxiety and depression, and provide an antidote to loneliness. The second measure evaluates the projects impact upon quality of life and the ability to add value to the elder's physical, social, emotional and spiritual domains of functioning. The third strongly connects to our Eden Alternative principles of alleviating boredom through the introduction of new experiences, environments, and social interactions. The assessment form also includes an area for comments to be included which note each elder's verbal and nonverbal reactions gleaned during the trishaw ride.

WhisperGlide Swing Assessment form outcomes for the grant period:

Measure #1 Mood & Behavior - glider swing activity resulted in a 54% improvement in elder's overall moods and behaviors.

Measure #2 Quality of Life - glider swing activity resulted in a 41% improvement in elder's overall quality of life.

Measure #3 Variety and Spontaneity - glider swing activity resulted in a 68% improvement in the variety and spontaneity of the elder's day, breaking away from routine and adding unexpected joy.

Sample of Elder's Verbal Responses to the Ride and Glide Project Experience

(Comments shared by elders when participating in trishaw rides and glide swing rides)

- Elder commented "That made my day! Elder was smiling and state "she loved the trishaw ride!" Stating "this is just darling!"
- Elder commented how nice it was to feel the sun and breeze.
- Elder was restless prior to the bike ride. She was much less anxious and less restless during and after the bike ride. Her mood was also significantly improved.

- Elder said “that really refreshed my memory, seeing some of the other residents and staff while outside for a bike ride”.
- A staff who is a trishaw pilot shared the following a trishaw ride with an elder in May: “ I took an elder for a trishaw bike ride this afternoon. He really enjoyed it and asked if he could feel some of the snow that was still on the ground. He had tears of joy smooshing the snow in his hands. It was awesome!”
- One particular elder who is not typically very verbal actually spoke up during a glider swing ride and stated “I feel like a person again”
- Many elders and family members stated how wonderful it is to be able to spend time together on the swings.
- While on the bike ride, the elder talked about the people she knew in the community. She reminisced about living in the community for thirty years and told stories about her life. She stated that she very much enjoyed being outside.
- Many elders comment on how they enjoy experiencing nature while participating in bike rides and glider swing activities.
- Many elders comment on how enjoyable it is to talk with others while out and about for a bike or swing ride.

CONCLUSION

Main take-a-way from the project:

- Elders, all elders regardless of age or diagnosis, benefit from time outdoors.
- Time spent one-on-one with staff or volunteers during the bike rides provides a valuable relationship where elders can reminisce and share.
- The Ride and Glide for Wellness Program supports our Eden Alternative, Green House and Best Life initiatives. The project in many ways has strengthened these with staff having a structured program, The Ride and Glide for Wellness program, to support them.
- Challenging behaviors related to dementia and Alzheimer’s can be reduced using the bikes and swings, with additional benefits gained from betting elders outdoors.
- Elders with mobile devices and limited mobility benefit from time outside and it is valuable to create ways for them to do this, such as bike rides and swing rides. Their mobility (traveling outside of the care unit) improved with implementation of this project.

- Meaningful activities such as bike rides and swing rides have a direct positive impact upon elders' mood and behaviors, overall quality of life, and variety in each elder's day. These specific things were measured using an assessment tool and the outcomes were extremely positive.
- Staff gained a sense of job satisfaction through taking elders for bike rides and glider swing rides.
- The ride and glide program also revealed benefits of intergenerational interaction with elder, especially children, teens and young adults interacting with the elders. Both parties gained value.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions or seek further information about any aspect of this project, please feel free to contact Lisa Thomas, Director of Development at Londonderry Village, 717-838-5406.