

Providing a retreat for people with dementia

Daniel Katz led effort to offer homey setting for Alzheimer's patients

By THOMAS ADAMS

Daniel Katz believes in community-based programs for people with dementia.

He has advocated for the model during the decade he has been president and CEO at Jewish Senior Life and during 15 years as a vice president at Stamford Hospital in Connecticut.

Marian's House, a daytime retreat on Winton Road for patients with early to mid-stage Alzheimer's disease and related forms of dementia, is testament to that. The Brighton location offers meals, activities, supervision and specialized programming in a residential setting.



SENIOR CARE
HONOREE
Daniel Katz

"As far as we know, no one across the country has ever done this before," Katz says. "It's all on one floor, and it's in a neighborhood. We specifically put this in a neighborhood because when you're in the early stages, you start to think about what's going to happen to you as the disease progresses."

Katz and staff members at Jewish Senior Life with expertise in Alzheimer's chose to separate Marian's House from Jewish Senior Life, a continuing care retirement community on South Winton Road in Brighton.

"If somebody drives into our campus (for Marian's House services) and sees the Jewish Home, that's a little frightening because possibly you might end up there," Katz says.

Marian's House is designed to allow those with early Alzheimer's to remain in their homes and to provide some relief to their caregivers. People with Alzheimer's

can come to Marian's House for half-day or full-day visits.

"There's tremendous stress on a caregiver," Katz says. "It's 24/7. ... They can come a couple days a week; they can come five days a week."

The facility has overnight guest rooms for the caregivers of Alzheimer's patients.

The caretaker at Marian's House, formerly the director of admissions at Jewish Senior Life, lives in an apartment in the back of the house.

Marian's House was a \$1 million project, entirely paid for with donations to allow for reasonable and affordable fees, Katz says. A half-day visit costs \$50; a full-day visit, \$70.

Marian's House received a 2013 merit award from the American Institute of Architects.

The house is designed for both one-on-one interaction and group activities. A large, open kitchen and eating area allow guests to participate in meal preparation. The house also includes a family room and a quiet room for residents and guests.

A screened porch and fenced yard with natural light provide space for gardening and walking.

"I started out as a nursing home administrator," Katz says. "The types of care we're able to provide today are much different than it was 35 years ago. We touch 3,000 people a year with everything we do."

He became interested in elder care, and in the care of those with Alzheimer's, so he could help people who are closer to the end of life and can no longer live independently.

"It's a great reward," he says. "I don't do it for the money, and even through all those years it continues to be a great reward."

Katz was a member of the Spending and Government Efficiency Commission formed in 2011 by Gov. Andrew Cuomo to field suggestions on ways to improve the quality and efficiency of state government.

He also was part of a group that explored ways to reduce the state's Medicaid spending. He advocated for community-based

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Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

"As far as we know, no one across the country has ever done this before," says Katz, president and CEO of Jewish Senior Life, of Marian's House.

KATZ

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care and a reduction in the number of nursing-home beds.

"From when I first met Dan, I saw him as a visionary and a tremendous strategic thinker, which is why I thought him a perfect fit as a SAGE Commission member," Fran Weisberg, former executive director of the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency and commission appointee, told the Rochester Business Journal in May 2011.

"He gets that community-based care is what the consumer wants and believes as I do that what the consumer wants in this case will be cheaper for government."

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