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Hamister Group, LLC Rolls Out VDT Training at Forest Hill Heights

Forest Hill, MD – Hamister Group, LLC rolled out its second series of site trainings on "The Virtual Dementia Tour," enabling our healthcare employees to provide a higher level of person-centered care for our residents.

The Virtual Dementia Tour® is a scientifically proven method of building a greater understanding of dementia through the use of patented sensory tools and instruction.

Chrissy Smith, Forest Hill Heights Administrator, said the training provided them an opportunity to experience what it would be like to have dementia.

"This is a major condition that can affect our residential population," she said. "The experience itself is astonishing, but once the training is done you really have a new appreciation for what folks with dementia go through."

The VDT® was created by P.K. Beville, Ph.D., an award-winning geriatric psychologist, dementia expert, and founder of Second Wind Dreams, Inc.

April Gast, Director of Personal Care at Forest Hill Heights, one of four Hamister Group world-class assisted living facilities, said her "eyes have been opened to what it truly is like to have Dementia."

"Prior to this training, I felt I had insight from previous training and experience with Dementia patients and residents," Gast said. "After this training, my eyes have been opened to what it truly is like to have Dementia. My empathy for our residents with any level of Dementia has increased and I am able to have insight into their minds."

She added, "It allowed me to put myself in their shoes and to reduce environmental distractions/noises within our facility. I have been pleased with my staff's follow up discussions about the training and how we have applied those findings to their everyday work and life of our residents."

Corporate Trainer Mischelle Walters said the training will be an invaluable tool for employees.



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"The training will give our staff the ability to provide a higher level of person-centered care because they will have a better understanding of what the residents are experiencing, having walked, if for a moment, in the residents' shoes," she said.

Forest Hill Heights is the second Hamister Group Assisted Living Facility to conduct the training. It was rolled out at Heather Heights of Pittsford earlier in the year. Walters said managers at the property level will be trained to deliver the tour so sessions can be provided regularly to ensure all new staff is trained as well.

Hamister Group, LLC is a national healthcare and hospitality management organization located in Buffalo, NY. Hamister Group has assisted living facilities in Orchard Park, Williamsville, and Forest Hill, Maryland. It will also start renovations on a former La Quinta in Pittsburgh this year to transform it into an assisted living facility.

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