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## The Green House Project Reinvents Long-Term Eldercare



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According to a recent [poll](#) by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health, 82 percent of retirees and 78 percent of pre-retirees are very concerned about being in an institutional environment that is not as comfortable as a home. This may come at no surprise, due to the regular reports of elder abuse, negligence and the often depressing connotations tied to aging family members being trapped in these lonely, sterile institutions.

While the number of Americans considering retirement is growing, [The Green House Project](#) is *shrinking* the traditional model of the nursing home in an effort to reinvent the structure of long term elder care.

As Dr. Bill Thomas, Green House Project Founder and Director of Innovation, explains in the project's "Where Love Matters" presentation: "Conventional long term care makes the doctors and nurses the stars of show, in the spotlight all the time. The Green House makes the elders the stars of the show...the doctors and nurses are still there, but they're backstage, where they're supposed to be."

As the much-merited stars of the show, Green House residents enjoy private bedrooms, yards and an open kitchen to encourage socializing rather than constant views of hospital staples (medicine carts, nursing stations and trays delivered to cramped rooms).

Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, President and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation which partners with the project told Forbes, "By altering the facility size, interior design, staffing patterns and service-delivery method, the Green House model provides residents better, safer and more personalized care. As a result, elders are happier and healthier. They have more enjoyment in life, remain independent longer and receive more individual attention from a caregiver each day."

How does this new structure translate fiscally? According to Forbes, the more than 100 Green House homes cost the same amount to operate as traditional nursing homes. However, Green Houses require a large initial capital investment, making it more costly in the long run if they replaced every nursing home in the country. And while rigorous studies on the overall long term benefits of the Green House homes over traditional institutions have yet to surface, those living in the smaller home-like spaces voice content and echo the sentiments of Green House home resident Lela Jasper, who in the view below sums up a running list of benefits with the succinct, "I feel safe here."

#### **WATCH: The Green House Project presents "Where Love Matters"**



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