

What's Happening in the World of Grants with PAC?

Research Corner

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In partnership with PAC, the University of Southern Indiana's Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness has received a \$789,800 grant from the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) to fund dementia care training for nursing home staff members in Indiana. The project, Building a Dementia-Competent Nursing Home Workforce, is a collaboration with Teepa Snow and her company, Positive Approach[®] to Care (PAC), to improve the lives of people living with dementia and transform the culture of dementia care.

PAC has had a five-year relationship with USI in the area of dementia care and education. The current project will focus on nursing home staff with three goals: building a dementia-competent certified nursing assistant (CNA) workforce by offering opportunities to embed the PAC training model into 25 CNA schools statewide; integrating PAC curriculum into new staff orientation in Indiana nursing homes; and developing an advanced course for current PAC Certified Independent Trainers and Coaches in Indiana nursing homes.

In 2016, USI received ISDH funding to partner with PAC for a PAC Trainer/Coach certification project involving twelve nursing homes in southwest Indiana. Following the training, a PAC Certified Independent Trainer and Coach from each participating nursing home conducted a series of in-services on dementia for other staff members, using content from Workshop A: normal and not normal aging, Workshop B: Positive Physical Approach[™], and Workshop C: GEMS[®].

Efficacy of knowledge gained and perceptions changed among nursing home staff members involved with the project is reported in the [Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions](#). A USI-led research team worked with PAC to write the manuscript.

"USI is fortunate to have a partnership with Teepa's Positive Approach to Care where we can continue to collaborate to improve the lives of people living with dementia in Indiana," said Dr. Katie Ehlman, associate professor of gerontology and director of the Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness. "We know a project like this has the potential to make a difference statewide in developing and expanding caregiver skills."

"Developing a workforce with a depth of dementia-related knowledge and the skills to train and coach others who care for elders in nursing homes is a necessary response to

the projected number of Indiana residents who may need formal nursing home care over the next 30 years,” said Ehlman.

Providing support and care for someone living with dementia, from early symptoms to end of life is neither simple, nor impossible, according to Snow. “Better quality dementia care requires that each care partner develop awareness of the condition and its ever-changing status, knowledge of each person and his or her individual needs and preferences, and interactive and care-related skills to make life worth living for those living with dementia, until life ends,” she said. “With USI and the state of Indiana, we have shown that PAC trainers and coaches can, and do, make a difference when helping staff become the care providers that are needed for those living with dementia.”

Applications are now being accepted for the three project areas. To be involved with the Building a Dementia-Competent Nursing Home Workforce project, visit the [USI Website](#) or contact [Beth Nolan](#) with Teepa Snow’s PAC via [email](#).

Founded in 1965, the University of Southern Indiana enrolls more than 10,000 dual credit, undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students in more than 80 majors. A public higher education institution, located on a beautiful 1,400-acre campus in Evansville, Indiana, USI offers programs through the College of Liberal Arts, Romain College of Business, College of Nursing and Health Professions, and the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education. USI is a Carnegie Foundation Community Engaged University and offers continuing education and special programs to more than 15,000 participants annually through Outreach and Engagement. USI is online at www.usi.edu.