

Our Memory Café offers joy, support, and connection to those with memory challenges, care partners, and loved ones, in a welcoming space for social engagement and community building.

TOURING A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Touring a long-term care facility is an important step—and one that can feel overwhelming. Whether you're planning for yourself or helping a loved one, knowing what to look for can help you feel more confident and prepared.



HERE ARE SOME KEY THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU TOUR:

Start with your first impressions.

Notice how the building feels when you walk in. Pay attention to lighting, noise levels, and even smells. How residents are spending their time: are they engaged, socializing, or interacting with staff?

Observe staff and care.

The way staff interact with residents tells you a lot. Ask about staffing levels and consistency, as familiar caregivers make a big difference in comfort and trust. Ask how personal care, medications, and changing needs are handled.

Take a close look at daily life.

Food and routine play a big role in quality of life. Ask to see a menu or visit during a meal if possible. Notice whether residents who need help are assisted respectfully and without being rushed.

Above all, trust your instincts. Would I feel comfortable here on a hard day? If the answer is yes, you're likely on the right path.

Ask about activities and purpose.

A good facility offers more than a place to live—it offers opportunities to connect. Look for a variety of activities that support movement, creativity, social time, and quiet moments. How are residents encouraged to participate and how are new residents welcomed and supported?

Check rooms, safety, and personalization.

Rooms should feel safe and comfortable, with features like call buttons, handrails, and clear signage. Ask what can be brought in to make a space feel like home. Also ask about privacy and how dignity is maintained during care.

Understand communication and family involvement.

Ask how families are kept informed, who your main contact would be, and what happens if care needs change over time. Facilities that welcome family involvement often create stronger, more supportive environments.

JASPER'S THEATER BUS TRIP

WAYLON, WILLIE, AND THE BOYS Wednesday, June 10

Hop on the bus with us for a toe-tappin', sing-along kind of afternoon filled with classic outlaw country featuring music from Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, and Merle Haggard.



Cost: \$55 per person
not including dinner

- Bus departs Perham at 12:30pm
- Showtime is 2pm
- Quick dinner at A&W
- Return to Perham around 6:30pm

Sign-up deadline: May 10

Make a New Connection!

Memory Café is all about community and meeting others who understand and support one another.

Use this space to write down names and numbers so you can keep in touch, share a laugh, or plan a visit between gatherings.



Did You Know?

Music lives in a different part of the brain
Even when areas for language and short-term memory are damaged (like in dementia), the brain regions that process rhythm and familiar songs stay active much longer.

☞ That's why someone may not remember breakfast... but can sing every word to a song from 1965.

Provider Q&A
with *Tim Fresonke, PA-C,*
MPAS, NRP



I have heard losing your sense of smell is a sign of memory loss. Is that true?

A change in the sense of smell can sometimes happen early in Alzheimer's disease and other brain conditions, but it does not mean someone has memory loss or dementia by itself. Many things like aging, allergies, sinus problems, COVID, or past or current smoking can also affect smell. It's best to think of smell changes as one possible clue, not a diagnosis. If it's happening along with memory or thinking changes, it's worth mentioning to your provider.



MEMORY
cafe where every story counts

When is it Time?

Creating a list of your personal 'turning points' can help you recognize when it may be time for change—whether that's seeking help and support at home, exploring new housing and potential wait lists, and making other arrangements. *Presented by Jess Buys, LSW from Perham Health.*

THURSDAY, MARCH 26 FROM 1- 3PM
at Crosspoint Alliance Church - 600 NE 8th St, Perham

RSVP Appreciated

WHEN BATH TIME BECOMES A BATTLE: GENTLE TIPS THAT CAN HELP

A question that came in a previous Q&A session from a Memory Café attendee was: “How do you get someone to take a shower when they don’t want to?”

If you’ve ever faced resistance around bathing, you’re not alone. This challenge shows up in homes and care settings alike, and the good news is that small changes can make a big difference.

Northwinds Memory Care Assisted Living LPN Tiffany Rodewald reminds us of an important starting point: bathing doesn’t have to happen every day. In many memory care settings, residents have just two scheduled shower days per week. And sometimes—despite our best efforts—the shower simply doesn’t happen that day. That’s okay. Reapproaching later, or even another day, is often more successful than forcing the issue.



“How do you get someone to take a shower when they don’t want to?”



Timing matters. Some people do better in the morning, while others are more cooperative in the afternoon or evening. Paying attention to when your loved one is most relaxed can help set everyone up for success. Flexibility goes a long way when the day is built around the person—not the task.



Comfort is key. A cold bathroom can make anyone hesitant. Warming the space ahead of time by turning on the shower and closing the door can help. Having everything ready—soap, washcloths, shampoo, towels—keeps the process smooth and less overwhelming. Even something as simple as a warm towel fresh from the dryer can make the experience feel safer and more inviting.



Encouraging independence can reduce resistance. Letting your loved one hold the washcloth or soap and wash the areas they’re still able to reach gives them a sense of control and dignity.



Engage the senses. Some caregivers find that calming scents like lavender essential oil can help relax a person during bathing. Soft music, whether a favorite old tune or gentle spa music, can also create a soothing environment.



And finally, don’t underestimate the power of connection. Talking about a favorite topic, reminiscing, or even singing together can serve as a comforting distraction and help ease anxiety.

Bathing challenges can be emotional and exhausting, but they are also incredibly common. Approaching the moment with patience, creativity, and compassion can turn a stressful task into a more peaceful experience for both you and your loved one.

You’re doing the best you can—and that truly matters. ❤️

NOTES

Use this space to jot down helpful tips, ideas you want to remember, or anything that stood out to you today!

UPCOMING EVENTS!

There's always more activities to enjoy. Check out these events for connection, fun, and community.

Caregiver Support Group

Tuesday, March 3 at 3pm at Perham Living - 735 3rd St SW, Perham

Connect with others who understand the journey of caregiving. Supervision for your loved one during the meeting is available by advanced request.

Coffee Talk: Let's Talk Vertigo

Wednesday, March 4 from 10-11am at PACC - 620 3rd Ave SE, Perham

Jennifer Thalmann, DPT from Perham Health will lead a friendly, easy-to-understand conversation about vertigo, covering the different types, treatment options, and even a live demonstration of the special goggles used during care.

Foot Care Clinic

Friday, March 13 from 9am-4pm at Perham Living - 735 3rd St SW, Perham

Each appointment includes a relaxing foot soak, nail care (cut and file), and a soothing knee-to-toe massage. To schedule your appointment, contact Julie at 218-731-4190.

Elevating Voices Memory Loss Chorus

Starting Tuesday, March 17 from 1-3pm at Crosspoint Alliance - 600 NE 8th St, Perham

We're warming up our voices for another season of singing, laughter, and connection! All are welcome to join us Tuesdays for music, snacks, and good conversation in a welcoming environment. **RSVP requested.**

Navigating Your Grief Support Group


Thursday, March 19 from 2-3:30pm at Elevate - 318 6th Ave SW, Perham

No one should have to face grief alone. This group offers a safe, caring space to share, listen, and find support with others who understand. Whether your loss is recent or years past, you are welcome here.


elevateotc.org

*Connect with
our team!*

 connect@elevateotc.org

 (218) 347-1974

 318 6th Ave SW, Perham