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## At the Friendly Home, Lisa D'Angelo keeps residents' meals on track

### As nutrition chief, she sees they get what they like, and what they need

By: Nicole Sheldon   February 1, 2019

Lisa D'Angelo began her career at the Friendly Home in 2005 and has climbed the rungs of the promotional ladder to her role today as clinical nutrition manager.



Lisa D'Angelo

Over the past 14 years she has worked in the cafeteria, helped with meal preparation, worked on the tray line and assisted in transitioning Friendly Home's food system from tray line to meal service with staff serving food to the members. She was promoted to clinical nutrition manager in January 2014. Firsthand experience in many facets of the food service department at Friendly Home has allowed D'Angelo become a knowledgeable and understanding manager of nutrition.

D'Angelo, 38, oversees members' diets in Friendly Home's memory care unit and transitional care center, which totals 40 beds.

"I see people who have significant weight gains or weight losses and break down abnormal nutritional lab values," explains D'Angelo. "I work with the care plan team to develop the plan of care with the members for what each member needs based on their goals."

Each diet plan is highly individualized to meet the member's wants and needs. D'Angelo is sensitive to member's preferences and works with the care plan team to liberalize diets whenever possible to enrich the life of the members.

Friendly Home is a senior living center that provides nursing care, rehabilitation, memory care, hospice and other related services to enhance the lives of the elderly. Located on East Avenue in Brighton, Friendly Home is part of the Friendly Senior Living continuum of care facilities. Friendly Home has 184 beds as well as 16 beds for short-term transitional care for a total of 200 beds. The senior living facility currently staffs approximately 400.

D'Angelo lives in Livonia, but she grew up in Canastota, Madison County. She graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 2009 with an associate's degree in science and dietetic system management. Four years later she earned a bachelor's degree in health from the University of Medicine and Dentistry, which is now part of Rutgers University in New Jersey.

In 2008, D'Angelo became a volunteer emergency medical technician and spent years working every 10th night from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. She went on to serve as secretary of the board for Livonia Ambulance in 2011. Upon the arrival of her daughter, Cooper, in 2015, D'Angelo decided to discontinue those roles in order to concentrate on her growing family.

D'Angelo was drawn to the dietetic field because of her passion and fascination for food.

"Food can heal the body in so many way — it's amazing," says D'Angelo. "I've also developed a love for the members and the people that I work with since my first role working here. I can't imagine working any other place, and I love the values that we have here," which are friendship, teamwork, compassion, excellence, integrity and customer focus.

In addition to her primary role at Friendly Home, D'Angelo leads a volunteer initiative with Joy Community Church. She brings a group of Friendly residents to the Rochester church every month to help serve the community a meal, a perfect blend of her passion for food and fondness for community service.

Not only does D'Angelo focus on members' diets, but she is a resource for employees and their dietetic inquiries. For several years D'Angelo has organized a Maintain Don't Gain program to help employees keep their weight in check during the holiday season. With the holidays behind us, D'Angelo is now leading a Be a Healthier You program for staff.

"Employees come to us and customize their own goals, so it's individualized and personal," says D'Angelo. "It could be weight loss or lowering blood pressure or wanting to run a 5k. Be a Healthier You is an eight-week program and we guide them through it."

D'Angelo says she cannot imagine doing anything else than what she does today. The relationships she has built over the last 14 years—with both members and colleagues—have been incredibly meaningful and are what drive her each and every day.

"The whole dining experience is important for the members," says D'Angelo. "Food is such an important aspect of their life, from the beginning of their life up until the end, so it's important for us to make it great for them."

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