Touchmark is now offering a new, distinctive model of care, coming later this year, for those living with Alzheimer’s disease and other age-related dementia. The opening of the new memory care service will offer families a choice—and control over the environment for their loved ones.

“With the availability of this one-of-a-kind program, families won’t have to wait for suites to become available,” says Executive Director Leanne Gugenheimer. “They can choose an environment that is uniquely tailored to meet the needs of those living with dementia.”

The Best Friends Approach is a groundbreaking method of care for individuals living with dementia that focuses on building meaningful relationships and encouraging respect, empathy, support, and trust.

Touchmark nurses Bernie Plesniewicz, RN, and Fatuma Seif, LPN, recently have become certified master trainers in the Best Friends Approach. Between them, they share about 25 years of nursing experience. Both have been a part of the Touchmark team since 2008.

“This is a great accomplishment,” Leanne says, adding that the only other master trainers work for the Alzheimer’s Association in Calgary.

Earlier this year, the nurses completed comprehensive training with David Troxel, MPH, cofounder of the Approach, who administered the requisite testing and evaluated their skills as they demonstrated proficiency. They will use the research-based information to design and implement programs and train Touchmark staff in the Best Friends Approach.

“Touchmark has excelled and done amazing work with its memory care design and evidence-based approach to care,” says David, who adds that Touchmark is distinctive, “and it draws my attention.”

The addition of memory care services means that Touchmark will provide a full continuum of care across the community.
“When the earth is sick and polluted, human health is impossible. ... To heal ourselves we must heal our planet, and to heal our planet we must heal ourselves.”

– Bobby McLeod, Aboriginal activist and poet

Being resourceful is the ability to be inventive and find ways to creatively accomplish. A resourceful life can benefit the environment, and environmental well-being is part of the seven dimensions of wellness. How we feel about our environment can also have a huge effect on our well-being.

About one quarter of global disease is caused by environmental factors that we could change. Consider how your environment affects almost all parts of your body: the safety of the food supply, the food we eat, the air we breathe, the water we drink, noise, our work environment, the climate, and ecosystem. We can strive for a physical environment that supports our wellness, not diminishes it.

“Thereunto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Consider nature to be an “other.” Nature freely gives many things: clean air, clean water, beautiful landscapes, and breathtaking views.

There are a number of ways we can give back to nature and practice resourcefulness to improve our environmental wellness and overall well-being:
- Practice the three Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle
- Buy in bulk—less packaging, which translates into less energy
- Donate or recycle what you don’t need
- Consciously conserve energy in your home (electricity, water, etc.)
- Walk; take the bus; carpool when possible
- Garden; compost
- Purchase recycled items; limit use of nonbiodegradable items (water bottles, etc.)

No matter how small or insignificant your actions may seem, they matter. It only takes one person to start a movement that could possibly lead to a major environmental breakthrough. Our well-being can thrive if we live in an environment free of pollution. A healthy environment, including the social environment, promotes better health—and our overall well-being benefits.
There was lots of fun to be had at the Ponoka Stampede! This seven-day event is on the pro rodeo circuit and includes bull riding, calf roping, and bucking broncos.

Touchmark Food Services Manager Laila Rezaie continued her popular culinary series. This time, she focused on some fun and creative beverage concoctions as well as delicious wings—the perfect combination for your next gathering!

Students from the Centennial School junior and senior choirs visited Touchmark to perform for residents. After their performance, they delivered handmade friendship cards to all in attendance.

Touchmark Memory Care Support Manager Wendy Schrag, BSN, RN-BC, covered the different types of dementia and what to expect after a diagnosis during a recent presentation. Memory care at Touchmark opens this fall!

Save the date!

Active Aging Week will take place **Sunday, Sept. 27 - Saturday, Oct. 3.** This year’s theme is Live Your Adventure. Stay tuned for full details in next month’s newsletter!
The events listed below are just a sampling of opportunities offered to enhance wellness and new interests. Visit our {FULL} Life calendar at the link below for a complete list of this month’s events. For additional details of an event, including registration, transportation, and participation requirements, contact a Life Enrichment/Wellness team member.

**Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2:30 pm**
**Understanding Sundowning.** Join Memory Care Manager Bernie Plesniewicz, RN, to learn about sundowning and receive helpful tips and suggestions on how to reduce these behaviours. RSVP by Aug. 2. Marquis Room.

**Wednesday, Aug. 12, noon**
**Lunch ’n Learn: The Most Important Documents for Effective Estate Planning.** Melissa Smith, lawyer from Nickerson, Roberts, Holinski & Mercer, will discuss power of attorney, trusts and wills, and health care rights. Lunch will be provided. RSVP by Aug. 4. Grande Hall Dining Room.

**Friday, Aug. 14, 1:30 pm**
**Laila’s Culinary Expressions: A Taste of Touchmark.** Join us for a cooking demonstration and sampling of our finest appetizers prepared by Laila Rezaie, Food Services manager. RSVP by Aug. 10. East Activity Room.

**Monday, Aug. 17, 2 pm**
**Birthday and anniversary party.** If you’re celebrating this month, you’re invited to join us for a fun afternoon of good company and great tunes by the Old Smoothies. Marquis Room.

**Wednesday, Aug. 19, 6 pm**
**Sock hop and car show.** Don your poodle skirt and take in the sights and sounds of the ’50s and ’60s at our car show. The Edmonton and Area 567 Car Club will display their impressive collection of General Motors vehicles, and we’ll provide the popcorn and sodas. Parking lot.

**Wednesday, Aug. 26, 7 pm**
**Memory care support group.** Open to caregivers, spouses, and anyone else seeking support in caring for a loved one with dementia. Join Memory Care Support Manager Wendy Schrag, BSN, RN-BC, and Memory Care Manager Bernie Plesniewicz, RN, for this first meeting. East Activity Room.

*View our {FULL} Life calendar online: [TouchmarkEdmonton.com](http://TouchmarkEdmonton.com)*

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**Construction update: Expansion progressing**

The expansion continues to take shape, with all roofing completed and mechanical units set in place. Exterior siding, windows, and painting are expected to be done by August 1. Inside, room partitions are finished on the top two floors as work continues on the first floor. Overall, drywall installation throughout the building is about 25% completed. Work continues on roughing in electrical, mechanical, and plumbing and fire suppression systems, with the third floor already finished.