



THE RACE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED MEMORY CARE DINING

info@seniorhousingnews.com | 312.809.5755 | seniorhousingnews.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	About Senior Housing News
3	Key Takeaways
4	Data and Dining: Why evidence in memory care dining remains elusive, and how to get one step closer
8	Staff Training: Why an observant staff leads to healthier residents
14	Dining Space: How normalization drives healthy consumption
20	Menu and Food Preparation: Person-centered dining keeps residents eating
27	The Future: Memory care dining becomes quantifiable



KEY TAKEAWAYS

By 2035, for the first time in U.S. history, people 65 years and older are projected to outnumber those under the age of 18, at a count of 78 million to 76.4 million. The year 2050 will see more than twice as many people with Alzheimer's — nearly 14 million — than there are today. That same year, there could be more than three times the number of dementia patients than there are today, a total of 152 million worldwide.

And no one agrees how to feed them.

In interviews with memory care operators of both standalone and multi-care-level communities, along with chefs, food service providers, dietitians, gerontologists and outside thought leaders, a clear picture emerges: despite developing solid methodologies, no one can say with certainty that their memory care dining program is best, because no definitive, evidence-based, industry-standard exists.

That's because with its wide range of both types and severity, combined with the prohibitive cost of studies, dementia poses a unique challenge to researchers. Every case is different. Today's memory care dining programs are often built around both clinical studies and guess-and-check procedures, but the ability to measure impact is limited, leading to a national discourse filled with uncertainty.

Still, despite the lack of a singular memory care dining practice, leaders agree on many general strategies, and even some specific dining practices and menu items.

Readers of this report will learn:

- 30 concrete tips for memory care dining
- How to connect with tomorrow's data-driven senior care decision-makers
- The clinical research and studies already driving elite memory care dining programs
- The training that can change the work of frontline staff
- The color schemes and room designs that put memory care residents at ease
- The cutting-edge menu items and new, evidence-based diets that are getting results



DATA AND DINING

Why evidence in memory care dining remains elusive, and how to get one step closer

Money is pouring into studies of Alzheimer's and other dementias as the hunt for evidence, and a cure, rages on.

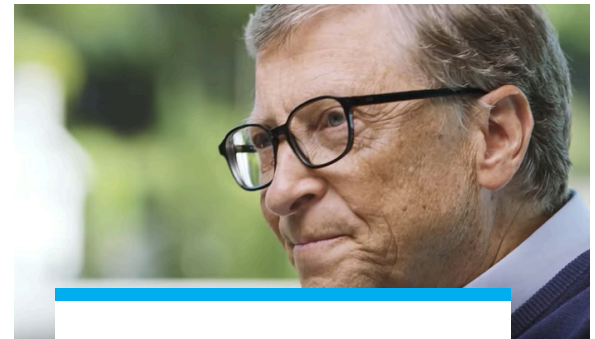
In November of 2017, Bill Gates announced a pair of personal \$50 million donations aimed at fighting dementia, with \$50 million going specifically to Alzheimer's research. In March of 2018, the UK's Business Secretary announced a funding initiative of £300 million (about \$400 million USD) toward healthy aging, which included £40 million for the UK Dementia Research Institute.

And in June 2018, the AARP announced a \$60 million investment into researching a cure for dementia and Alzheimer's. Driving these donations and others is the degree to which dementia continues to flummox experts.

"Dementia is a complicated illness," wrote Jo Ann Jenkins, AARP chief executive officer, in the announcement of that investment. "Hundreds of clinical trials have failed, and some advances once thought to be promising have turned into dead ends. Several drug companies have stopped conducting research. A new approach is needed."

Indeed, even in January 2018 when AARP announced results of its online survey that revealed a connection between healthy eating and a healthy brain, the article — with the bold, unassailable headline, "Eating Healthy Is Good for Your Brain" — opened with something of a disclaimer: "While there's still no magic bullet that will guarantee a healthy brain, a new AARP survey points to a promising nutritional formula..."

In another recent study from 2017, one used by Presbyterian SeniorCare Network in Oakmont, Pennsylvania, three university educators in health and human services with focuses on nutrition published "Nutrition and dementia care: developing an evidence-based model for nutritional care in nursing homes."



Bill Gates's \$100 million investment into fighting dementia is one of several recent high profile cash infusions toward the world's dementia challenge.

Photo: Screenshot from YouTube video and GatesNotes.com

