

WHITE BEAR PRESS

Care center offers buffer between hospital and home

by Mike Morgan

Patients ready to flee the confinement of a hospital stay but not yet in condition to fully fend for themselves at home, have a new option in White Bear Lake. The Cerenity Transitional Care center in White Bear Lake opened last May for patients recovering from injuries, surgeries or illness. Patients who don't need the intensive care of a hospital, but aren't ready to cook or do daily chores at home, can recuperate at the facility, which is adjacent to the senior care center. The senior care center and transitional care center are housed in the same facility and operated by HealthEast Care System, Benedictine Health System and Clement Manor. The center changed its name from HealthEast Care Center White Bear Lake to Cerenity last October. The center routinely fills its 20 beds and has plans to add six more, according to clinical manager Gloria Kopp. Kopp said that HealthEast was alerted to the need for such a facility by area hospitals. A portion of the senior center was converted and renovated for use as a transitional care center. The 1891 Florence St. White Bear Lake center's focus is rehabilitation and therapy. The therapy room features a stove and large bathroom where patients practice making eggs and getting in and out of the shower ó skills that can be difficult after hospital stays. The goal, Kopp said, is to get patients well and make sure they're ready to go home. The average stay is 12 to 14 days, Kopp said. Many patients are seniors, but the center also serves younger patients recovering from accidents or surgeries, she added. We try to really serve the community Kopp said. Most patients at the center live in the White Bear Lake area. The center serves five meals a day and features a relaxed atmosphere where patients can sleep in. The center also has the ability to do X-rays, blood testing and IV's. Although stays are often short, some patients get attached to life at the center. The people are so marvelous here, said White Bear Lake resident and longtime community volunteer Jan Stellmacher, as she prepared to return home after 11 days at the center recovering from an illness. After giving Kopp a hug, she resumed packing.

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