

Villa St. Joseph unveils new outpatient rehabilitation center and cafe

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Villa St. Joseph's Center for Outpatient Rehabilitation

The Rev. David Scharf blesses therapists and the new Center for Outpatient Rehabilitation at Villa St. Joseph in Baden Friday afternoon.

BADEN — Villa St. Joseph in Baden opened in 1997, growing out of a need for the Sisters of St. Joseph to provide care for their older sisters.

But even in the face of their own challenges, the focus was more on the needs of the broader community and filling the gaps in long-term care in Beaver County, Jim Pieffer, senior vice president of Presbyterian SeniorCare, said Friday.

Pieffer, whose organization provides management and support services to the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Villa, recalled those early planning discussions during a dedication ceremony for the nursing and rehabilitation facility's new Center for Outpatient Rehabilitation and expanded Cup O' Joe cafe.

The rehabilitation unit and cafe are just another extension of that tradition of outreach in the community, Villa Executive Director Mary Murray said.

"It's been wonderful to see what were really just seeds of ideas come to fruition in this process," Murray said. "We identified a while back, a need to serve persons more broadly in the community as part of our mission outreach. Rehabilitation is certainly a core strength, and so we were able to combine our strengths and community needs, which resulted in the Center for Outpatient Rehabilitation."

Murray said the cafe also provides a new opportunity for social and educational programs for the community, as well as Villa residents.

Board President Gary Chace said the Villa often conducts surveys to see what is needed in the community as far as care for the elderly, and the outpatient facility now will allow it to serve people in the community of all ages.

"It's wonderful to see the excitement we can create here in Baden for our friends and neighbors; and it's home. It's a bright and flourishing home," Chace said.

That home-like setting and the care provided within are what make the Villa unique, said Sister Mary Pellegrino, congressional moderator for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

"The way that the Villa cares for its residents is in the manner that the sisters would care for the sisters," she said.

Work began in May on the sun-filled 2,500-square-foot addition that houses the new rehabilitation center and cafe, designed by Rothschild Doyno Collaborative and built by Mistick Construction Company. The \$975,000 project was funded by grants, private donations and other revenue, officials said.

During the ceremony Friday, rehabilitation center staff members guided tours for guests and demonstrated the new equipment, such as the Biodex Balance System.

The machine, which looks like a high-tech scale, allows therapists to measure patients' balance and stability, and helps them improve through training exercises that require them to shift their weight in different ways.

“A lot of people after they have a hip surgery or a knee surgery, they have trouble putting weight to one side,” Erin Strojek, an assistant physical therapist, explained.

The new center provides physical, occupational and speech therapy, and the Villa also incorporated pieces of its unique music therapy program — which Chace pointed out is supported entirely on donations — into the center as well.

“It really stretches and grows our residents, and enriches their lives,” Murray said of the music and art programs at the Villa.