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Northside East

This fantastic invention is

PLANNING &
NOTICES

transforming the lives of elderly Northside residents

Tuesday, 9th August, 2016 10:19am

A NORTHSIDE nursing home has gone the extra mile by giving its residents visual memories of the areas where they used to live.

Cara Care Centre, based at Northwood Park, Santry, have created a project which involves sending the centre's minibus, with three cameras inside, to record footage of the elderly residents' old neighbourhoods.

When the images are recorded they are brought back to the centre. Then, nurses and helpers play back the recordings on three screens in a car simulator for the residents, who may not be able to go outside anymore.

By watching the recordings of the journey on screen, the residents are taken through places that are familiar to them in Dublin, giving them the feeling they are actually travelling on a bus.

Matt Lacey, one of Cara Care Centre's maintenance managers, came up with the brilliant idea. His aim is to enhance the range of activities for residents who are confined indoors. He is hoping that it will prove positive and therapeutic for them.



A Cara Care resident tries out the simulator. PHOTO: DARREN KINSELLA

NOTICES
Book Planning Notices in our papers here

- Dublin City Council
- Fingal County Council
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

PLANNING DUBLIN
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will prove positive and therapeutic for them.

“I came up with the idea around a year and a half ago,” Mr Lacey told Northside People.

“There are a lot of residents in the nursing home who may not have a family or may not be able to go out on trips.

“A lot of the time they are reliant on in-house activities which wouldn’t cover the entire spectrum of needs for a person who used to be outside a lot.”

Mr Lacey initially thought of simply recording hours of footage in some well known areas of the city centre such as O’Connell Street. However, he came up with a much more creative idea after giving it further thought.

“With the advent of these dashboard cameras, I thought: ‘What if I put three cameras into one of our minibuses and drove around areas where the people used to live and work, just recording the imagery?’

“Then I would play it back to them on the car simulator as a platform that would give them the impression that they were driving down the road themselves.”

Mr Lacey added: “When you are sitting and watching back at the centre, what you see on the left hand screen would correspond with what was on the other screens on the bus journey. One patient on the first day of use even believed that they were driving an actual bus.

“One of the residents didn’t want to go for his tea because he told us he was driving the bus.”

Following the success of the initiative, Mr Lacey wants to drive past the homeplaces of all the residents, triggering their more vivid, younger memories.

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“We’re going to try and do a study with residents with dementia because visual reminiscence is a strong thing and a lot of the times when the residents would have dementia, they would revert back to where they were as a child,” he explained.

“Obviously, the areas [residents’ homeplaces] would have changed but the landmark buildings have more or less stayed the same.”

Brendan Coyne, director of nursing at Cara Care Centre, which caters for approximately 100 residents, gave the initiative the green light. All involved in this worthwhile venture are hoping that it will have a positive impact on the residents’ lives.

Brein McGinn

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