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Florida News

## BRISTOL COURT IN ST. PETERSBURG MEETS NEEDS OF MEMORY-CHALLENGED PATIENTS

By NITISH S. RELE



Dr. Prem Shah

In April this year, the Bristol Court Assisted Living Facility in St. Petersburg opened its doors. Licensed for 100 beds with capacity for more, the facility caters to Alzheimer's and dementia patients, including end-of-life care and hospice care. Instrumental in converting the former nursing home into a specifically designed memory care facility is Dr. Prem Shah, younger son of real estate developer Raxit Shah, CEO of Tampa Bay area-based Liberty Group of Cos. Prem's brother Punit is president of the Liberty; mother Ketki takes care of billing.

"With my parents in business, I decided to utilize their experience and success," said psychiatrist Prem Shah, who is working to earn an Executive MBA in health management from University of Miami. A full-time professor of Behavior Health and Psychiatry, he has taught at numerous prestigious schools in the country. "We built this facility because of the huge demand within the community as a whole, including the Indian community, who may have family members with or without dementia who may need assistance in their daily activities." Indeed, it is the largest Alzheimer's facility in Pinellas County.

At present, Bristol Court has 15 residents who range from ages 61 to 97. The majority of physician appointments, checkups, medication delivery, labs, imaging, blood work is done in house. "Our 24-hour staff, trained in memory loss and Alzheimer's, can accommodate vegetarian meals, diets, in and out visitors,

as well as religious preferences,” said Dr. Shah.



Dr. Prem Shah, left, and an employee with a Bristol Court resident.

The color-coded walls help in locating and remembering living quarters and common areas. And best of all, the facility with key cards for all 17 employees is secure. There are 20 closed-circuit cameras, 8-foot fences, and also a generator in case of emergency such as a hurricane. “Rehabilitation is available and we offer pet therapy since studies have shown that birds and fish can help stimulate memory,” said Dr. Shah. “We also have a hair salon, movie theater, activity room with piano, etc. as well as structured activities every hour to keep residents stimulated and occupied.” In the courtyard of this smoke-free facility, there is a secure gazebo for gardening, exercise and yoga. “Our staff cannot smoke or use cell phones in the building,” said Dr. Shah.

Shared rooms start at \$2,500 month; a private room cost is \$3,500. Rooms ranging from 230 to 440 square feet are equipped with new furniture but can be decorated and customized to each family’s liking. “Our rooms are bigger on average than at a typical assisted living facility,” said Dr. Shah with pride. And families can visit any time of the day or take the residents for an outing. St. Petersburg General Hospital, Northside Hospital, Bayfront Medical Center, St. Anthony’s Hospital and Largo Medical Center are within a 5-mile radius of the facility.

Dr. Shah plans to open at least 10 more such facilities in Florida and around the country in the next decade. “We want to be hands-on with people. I visit Bristol Court daily and know each of our residents on a personal level. Our mission statement reads: Treat residents as you are treating your parents and grandparents.”

Bristol Court is at 3479 59th Ave. N. in St. Petersburg. For more information, call (727) 686-2998, (727) 520-8888, e-mail [drshah@bristolcourtf.com](mailto:drshah@bristolcourtf.com) or visit [www.bristolcourtf.com](http://www.bristolcourtf.com)

## FAPI CELEBRATES ANNUAL GALA

Story provided by Dr. Renuka Ramappa