

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Abe's Garden Community Announces \$16.5M toward \$20M 'Let's Grow Together' Campaign to Enhance Dementia Care and Research

The campaign will fund an expansion that aims to deliver high-quality care and engagement to a greater number of seniors, enhance residents' overall quality of life and establish a replicable model for memory care that promotes purposeful living

Nashville, Tenn. (Sep. 19, 2024) – Abe's Garden Community, a leading nonprofit senior living community specializing in dementia care, announced today a significant \$20 million campaign. Building on its legacy of innovation and excellence in memory care, this campaign will enable the organization to expand its grounds and services, enhancing residents' quality of life and further advancing Abe's Garden Community's internationally recognized person-directed engagement model.

The expansion will add 38,000 square feet to the existing building, increasing resident capacity from 130 to nearly 170 and accommodating a 50 percent increase in assisted living and memory care suites. A standout feature of the expansion is a new Music Therapy Lab offering movie screenings, performances and streamed shows, as well as facilitating groundbreaking research into how music affects the mood and behavior of those living with Alzheimer's.

"This expansion stands as a profound testament to our enduring commitment to provide unparalleled care and support for our residents," Mike Shmerling, founder and chairman of the non-profit 501(c)(3) Abe's Garden Community, which he co-founded with his sister Judy, said. "We are deeply excited about the opportunities these advancements will make both within and outside of our walls—to further elevate the standard of senior living and leading innovation in memory care."

Abe's Garden Community's person-directed engagement model regularly garners international recognition for its proven results in improving the lives of people with dementia and has been adopted by 22 memory care communities nationally and accessed globally.

Research shows that this model leads to a 42% decrease in anxiety symptoms, a 41% decrease in depression symptoms and a 32% decrease in neuropsychiatric symptoms among dementia patients. These results are achieved while also significantly reducing the number of medications residents require.

"Abe's Garden Community stands as a shining example of what senior living communities, and indeed all of health care, should aspire to be—innovative, compassionate and unwavering in its commitment to continuous improvement," said Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell. "This expansion promises to bring considerable benefits not only to the residents and families here, but to all those in senior living communities that adopt and learn from the research happening here."

Abe's Garden Community serves as a national and global model for senior communities. In collaboration with Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Abe's Garden Community has developed standardized protocols for resident assessments and staff training, supported by extensive databases to advance innovative dementia care practices.

Helping to initiate these efforts, Laura Dugan, MD, a geriatrician and the Abram C. Shmerling Chair of Alzheimer's and Geriatric Medicine at Vanderbilt, has been focused on research programs supporting geriatric medicine, a critical area of research which aims to enhance the quality of care for individuals living with dementia, including residents and all of those who benefit from Abe's Garden Community.

"As researchers, our role extends beyond conducting studies—it's about applying our findings in real-world settings," said Dr. Dugan. "Abe's Garden Community has been instrumental in research to ensure its accuracy and benefit to the dementia community. This expansion will not only advance our ongoing studies of the disease but also enhance the standard of care for patients worldwide."

Abe's Garden Community is thrilled to announce they've raised \$16.5MM towards their \$20MM goal, hitting 82% of target and moving into the community phase. They invite YOU to join in this exciting journey. Your support is crucial to continue benefiting residents and their families. For more information, please go to <https://www.abesgarden.org/capital-campaign/> or contact a development team member.

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About Abe's Garden Community

Abe's Garden Community, located at 115 Woodmont Blvd., Nashville, TN, provides independent living, assisted living and memory support. The organization also offers in-home care and community-based programming to residents and seniors living off campus. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Abe's Garden Community is establishing a replicable model for senior life that promotes brain health, wellness and purposeful living. The community enhances the quality of life for older adults through person-directed care and advanced programming, while researching and sharing best practices to elevate dementia care globally. For more information, call 615-997-3030 or visit [abesgarden.org](https://www.abesgarden.org). Gifts can be made online at [abesgarden.org/giving](https://www.abesgarden.org/giving). To participate in the *Let's Grow Together* capital campaign, contact Mandy Hansen, Senior Director of Marketing and Development, at 615-345-9575 or mhansen@abesgarden.org.