



**Construction of a**

# *Healing Garden*

**a safe, secure and nurturing environment  
for residents with Dementia**

**at the**

**PROVIDENCE CARE CENTRE**

## *Healing Gardens*

*have proven to be a very beneficial contributor to the quality of life of those with Dementia*



## Summary:

We are now a society that has more seniors than young children and records show that Dementia has become a serious global issue with the age level of those affected dropping.

Alzheimer's and other Dementias, can be difficult and emotionally demanding for all concerned. Our residents who live with dementia need an opportunity to engage with the world around them and retain feelings of value, community, belonging and peace; to provide a special space for socializing and interacting with family, friends and staff, and for respite during stressful times. It is important for people with dementia to be able to continue enjoying outdoor activities as they have done throughout their lives. Exercise is beneficial for physical and mental health and may improve the quality of life for people in all stages of dementia.

Nature is known to be restorative, and research has proven that access to a specially designed garden which appeals to all the five human senses is beneficial to the physical, social, psychological and spiritual health of those with dementia. In one study 95% of those interviewed said their mood improved after spending time outside; *they moved from being depressed and anxious to becoming more calm and balanced.*

## Project Description:

We have a south facing 50' x 125' courtyard which is currently undeveloped. Our goal is to transform it into a **Healing Garden** which will provide the opportunity for our residents with dementia to have full access to a special space that is safe, secure and nurturing. The building of this Healing Garden will involve many components such as **Hardscape, Pergola, Gazebo, Benches, Trees, Shrubs and Perennials, Raised Planters, Pondless Water Feature, Patio Furniture, Birdhouse Towers etc.**

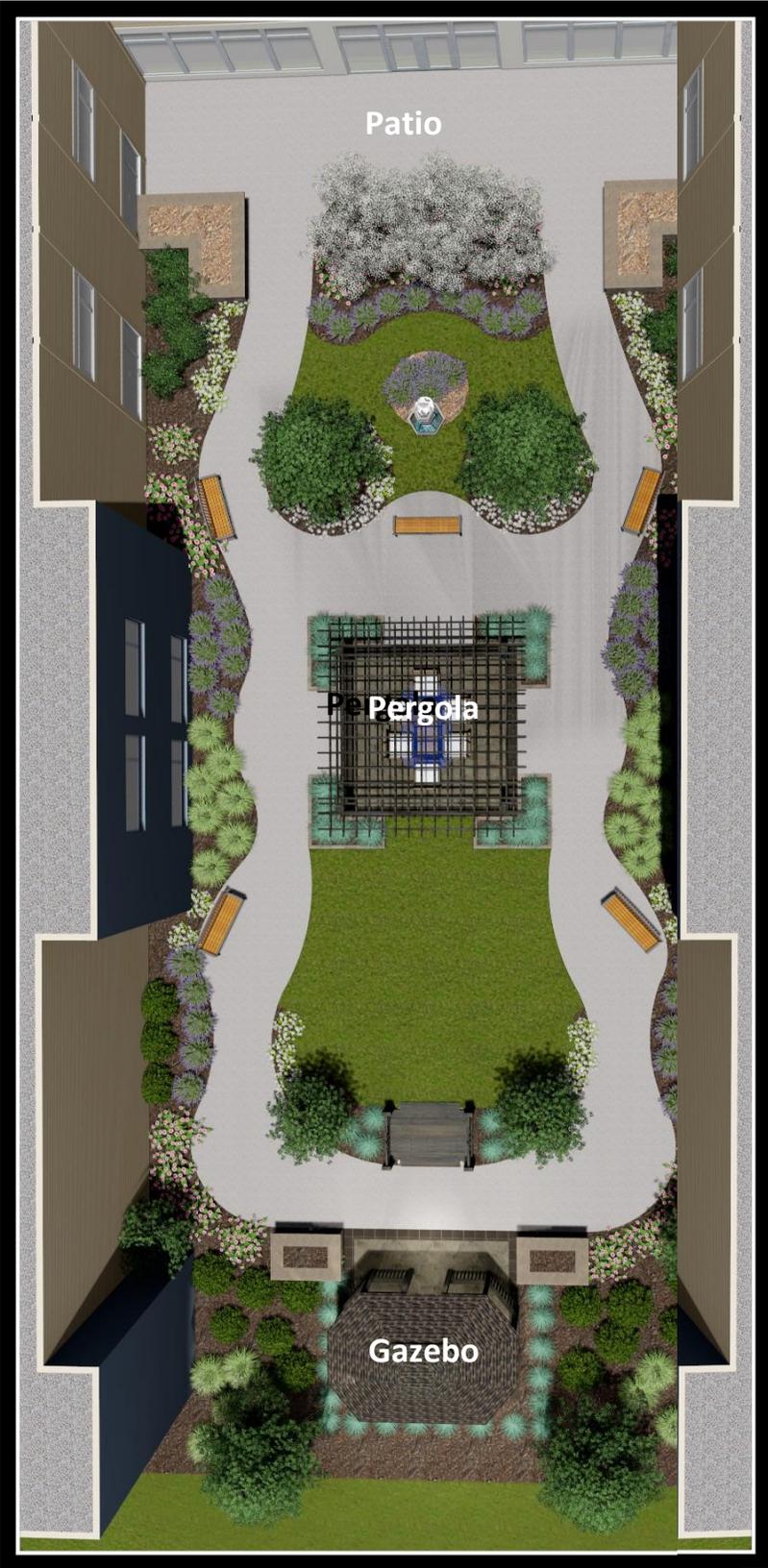
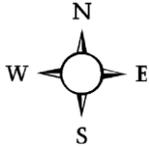
Dementia residents tend to wander. In conventional settings this could lead to a person becoming lost and disoriented. **Specially designed 6 ft wide garden pathways** will enable residents to explore the Healing Garden at their own leisure and return safely to the main patio. The safe garden area will give residents the opportunity to enjoy the things they used to; walking through the garden tending to their plants and vegetables; strolling or sitting in the sun taking in the sounds and fragrances of the garden. These normal activities can contribute to improving independence and self-esteem.

**Raised Planters** will allow those with mobility challenges to still carry on their love of gardening, and residents with sensory loss will be closer to the plants enabling them to see or smell the herbs and flowers more easily.

Sometimes residents want to sit by themselves, away from a crowd; at other times they may prefer to have company. A mixture of **individual and shared seating areas** will accommodate their preference. The heart of the Healing Garden will be the **Pergola and its customized Patio** which will provide the space for family visits, celebrations and outdoor group activities.

The **lawn area** will host a number of recreational activities such as Bocce Ball, Horseshoes, Bean Bag Toss and the morning Exercise Program.

# Healing Garden Concept



## BACKGROUND:

### What is Dementia:

Dementia is the term used to describe the symptoms of a large group of illnesses which cause a progressive decline in a person's cognitive functioning. It is a broad term used to describe a loss of memory, intellect, rationality, social skills and normal emotional reactions that are often reflected in a person's behaviour.

Dementia is progressive, which means the symptoms will gradually get worse as more brain cells become damaged and eventually die.



Dementia is not a specific disease. Many diseases can cause dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia (due to strokes), Lewy Body disease, head trauma, frontal lobe dementia, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, Parkinson's disease and Huntington's disease. These conditions can have similar and overlapping symptoms.

### Statistics:

#### Canadian Statistics:

- An estimated 564,000 Canadians are living with dementia.<sup>1</sup>
- This number is expected to rise to 937,000 in 15 years, an increase of 66%.<sup>1</sup>
- More than 65% of Canadians with dementia are women aged 65 or older.<sup>1</sup>
- The combined health-care system and out-of-pocket caregiver costs total an estimated \$10.4 billion per year.<sup>1</sup>

#### Global Impact:

- As of 2015, 47.5 million people worldwide – more than the total population of Canada – are living with dementia.<sup>2</sup>
- The global number will increase to an estimated 75.6 million in 2030, and will almost triple by 2050 to 135.5 million.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prevalence and Monetary Costs of Dementia in Canada (2016) Alzheimer Society of Canada

<sup>2</sup> Dementia Fact Sheet (2015) World Health Organization (WHO)