



*The Florida Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
Innovation Exchange*

Submission

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Date of Submission:	5/30/03, Updated 9-15-08
Title of Innovation:	The Adaptive Olympics
Topic for Submission: (Please choose a topic from the list included in the attached submission guidelines which best describes the innovation you are submitting.)	Topic: Staff members further their understanding of resident needs and limitations by experiencing a variety of physical and cognitive challenges through the use of adaptive games. The event fosters friendly competition, promoting opportunities to establish positive interdepartmental relationships and build teamwork.
Audience: (Choose one or more, as appropriate.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing (HUD, tax credit, etc.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assisted Living Facilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home & Community Based Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nursing Homes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retirement Communities (CCRC or fee for Service) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All of the Above

1. Description of Innovation:

Residents at skilled nursing facilities live with a variety of physical and cognitive limitations that affect all aspects of their life (i.e. feeding, mobility, socialization, activities). Facility staff members need to work closely with residents daily. Therefore, it is vital that staff understand the difficulties that are caused by these limitations to appreciate the special needs and challenges of the resident. Hence, our Recreation Therapy Department created and implemented the Adaptive Olympics six years ago to assist staff in their understanding of these resident limitations. Participating staff members have the opportunity to meet staff members from other departments and engage in friendly competition. Furthermore, departmental staff need to work together as a team to win events. Thus, this team unity builds stronger departmental spirit while fostering improved teamwork.

The Adaptive Olympics take place yearly at John Knox Village. The two hour event challenges

departmental teams made up of up to twenty staff members. Events usually require five to six staff members. Departmental teams (i.e. Marketing Team, Dietary Team, Plant Operations Team) compete against each other in six exciting adaptive “learning” events. Events are held outside on the Health Center patio while residents view the games from the sidelines. Three events are held simultaneously each hour. There are usually three rounds each hour to allow each team an opportunity to compete in each event. John Knox Village has six participating departments each year; therefore, Recreation Therapy schedules each departmental team to play every other team in at least one of the six events. For example, team #1 plays team #2 in the 1st round, then team #1 plays team #4 in the second round. The team that wins the most events wins the Adaptive Olympics.

Example Schedule

2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

	Event 1	Event 2	Event 3
Round 1	team #1 vs. 2	3 vs. 4	5 vs. 6
Round 2	4 vs. 6	1 vs. 5	2 vs. 3
Round 3	3 vs. 5	2 vs. 6	1 vs. 4

3:10 p.m. to 4:10 p.m.

	Event 4	Event 5	Event 6
Round 4	team #1 vs.3	2 vs. 4	5 vs. 6
Round 5	2 vs.5	1 vs. 6	3 vs. 4
Round 6	3 vs.6	4 vs. 5	1 vs. 2
Round 7	4 vs.5	3 vs. 2	6 vs. 1

➤ There is a round # 7 in order to allow each team an opportunity to compete in each event and also compete against each team at least once.

Each event has been planned to allow the participant an opportunity to experience a limitation that a resident would commonly have. The events and their limitations are listed below. All events are lead by Recreation Therapy staff, interns and resident volunteers. Rules for each event are not completely listed; this paper would be quite lengthy if included. However, there is no set rules how to lead each event. Events could be “adapted”. Therefore, one could simply develop and change rules as seen needed. Please contact me if you are interested in the rules we used this year for each event.

➤ **Goggle Basketball** – An eyesight limitation (glaucoma / legally blind). Staff members shoot baskets from a “rock and go” chair or wheelchair. Participants wear goggles covered with saran wrap to hinder eyesight. Teams compete to see which team can make the most baskets. The team that makes the most wins.

➤ **Reach and Race** – An ambulation limitation (unable to walk) and arm/hand limitation (must use a “reacher” to pick up items). A staff member must pick up items at a station with the use of a reacher and put them in a bucket. To get to station to station, he or she must ambulate using their legs while sitting in a wheelchair. The team that completes all ten stations the quickest wins the

event.

- **Remember the Schedule** – A hearing limitation that may affect immediate memory recall. Two teams listen to a complete day schedule of a resident with cotton in their ears. At the completion of the reading, teams separate and answer questions that are listed on a test paper pertaining to the schedule. The team is tested on memory recall with the challenge of poor hearing. The team that answers the most questions wins the event.
- **Leg Bowling** - A complete limitation of arm use. Team members must sit in a wheelchair and bowl with their legs. Participants may not kick the ball, but must hold the ball between their ankles and roll it. The team with the most points wins.
- **Fishing For Supplies** - Limitation due to a fracture in one's dominant arm. Team members must fish items that are floating in a pool using their non-dominant arm while sitting in a wheelchair. Once an item is "caught", it must be placed in a bucket 6 feet away. The participant must wheel his or her wheelchair to the bucket. Items are worth different points. The team that earns the most points collectively wins the event.
- **Hurry.....Get Dressed!!!** - Limitation due to stroke. Only one arm is able to move. Team members must put on clothing using only one arm. The other arm is tied behind the participant's back. The team member that gets completely dressed first wins the event for their team.
- **Tug Toss** - Limitation in arm/hand motion. A participant's arms are tied together at the wrists. The staff member must throw rings around a pole while now having limited movement. The team that throws the most rings around the pole wins.
- **Wheelchair and Walker Races** - Ambulation limitations: Teams race each other to see who can reach the finish line first. During the wheelchair race, a participant must use their legs half way and then their arms the rest of the way to move the wheelchair. During the walker race, participants legs are tied around their ankles (not too tight). This makes the racer have smaller steps. These two events are usually the resident's favorite.

At the conclusion of the Adaptive Olympics, teams are awarded 1st, 2nd and 3rd place trophies!

The Adaptive Olympics has become a very popular event at John Knox Village. Residents enjoy watching staff members compete and look "goofy". Staff members enjoy the yearly competition and the opportunity to meet other employees in an "exciting" way. Most importantly, staff members leave the event with a new understanding and personal experience of the varying limitations that affect our residents. Employees have commented to me over the years that they are even more patient with their residents when rendering care because they now can understand, "if only for a bit", how it feels to deal with their daily limitations.

2. **Budget:**

The Adaptive Olympics is a yearly, one-time expense.

- The Recreation Therapy Department uses its own materials and games to run the six events. Wheelchairs and walkers are borrowed from the Health Center.

- One hundred dollars is spent to provide staff and residents with refreshments and snacks.
- Three hundred and fifty dollars are spent to provide participating employees with
- Adaptive Olympics” team shirts.
- Staff members are “on the clock” while participating in the events.
- Three trophies cost sixty-three dollars.
- The Recreation Therapy Department allocates fifty dollars for “odds and ends”; such as, film and dry-erase markers.

The Adaptive Olympics is run by the Recreation Therapy staff, interns and resident volunteers.

- Five resident volunteers assist with wheeling residents to and from the event.
- The entire Recreation Therapy staff of seven implements the events. Two staff members run one event and one staff member is “the master of ceremonies”.
- Usually the Recreation Therapy Department has one intern that assists.