



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
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MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Monroe Community Hospital Celebrates Opening of Friendship Place,
A New Memory Care Neighborhood**

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello, along with Monroe Community Hospital (MCH) Executive Health Director Alyssa Tallo, today celebrated the opening of **Friendship Place**, a newly renovated 25-bed, 17,000-square-foot memory care unit thoughtfully designed to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia and other cognitive impairments.

"Anyone who has a loved one living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia knows the challenges that come with providing safe, comfortable, high-quality care," said **County Executive Adam Bello**. "But now with the opening of Friendship Place, that's the exact kind of care that we'll be providing in Monroe County. Alongside the leadership team at Monroe Community Hospital, we have made it a priority to ensure our neighbors living with these diseases can live in a facility where they are not only treated with respect, but also in a space that feels like home."

The opening marks a significant milestone in MCH's ongoing commitment to providing compassionate, person-centered care through specialized environments, evidence-based practices and highly trained staff.

"Friendship Place represents our vision for the future of dementia care," said Alyssa Tallo, Executive Health Director of Monroe Community Hospital. "Every aspect of this neighborhood was intentionally designed to promote comfort, independence, dignity and safety while supporting the unique needs of residents and their families. Combined with our specialized staff training, Friendship Place creates an environment where residents can truly thrive."

The project builds on years of planning and collaboration that began with a grant from the **Mother Cabrini Health Foundation**, which enabled MCH to partner with internationally recognized dementia care experts. Their guidance helped shape both the physical design of the neighborhood and the specialized education provided to staff.

Designed using best practices, Friendship Place features:

- Biodynamic lighting that supports natural circadian rhythms to encourage healthy sleep patterns and improve mood.

- Thoughtfully selected colors and intuitive design elements that support wayfinding and resident independence.
- Memory boxes outside each resident's room to promote orientation and recognition of personal space.
- Open, welcoming gathering areas that encourage socialization and meaningful engagement.
- A state-of-the-art bathing suite designed to create a calming, comfortable experience.
- Additional private rooms that enhance privacy and dignity.
- Concealed staff work areas, supply storage and meal delivery systems that minimize overstimulation and create a more home-like environment.
- Design features that promote safe wandering while preserving freedom of movement within the neighborhood.

Residents also have access to MCH's enclosed patio and garden, allowing individuals to safely enjoy fresh air and outdoor recreation in an independent, protected setting.

Friendship Place reflects MCH's nearly 200-year legacy of serving the community's most vulnerable residents, from infants through centenarians, through innovative, compassionate care.

About MCH

Monroe Community Hospital is a county-owned health care facility providing a comprehensive range of services for individuals with complex and chronic health conditions, including long-term skilled nursing care, short-term rehabilitation, hospice, memory care, and specialty care. With 566 licensed beds, MCH is one of the largest skilled nursing facilities in the nation and traces its roots to 1826. For more information about MCH, please visit **www.monroehosp.org**.