

SOCIAL AND CIRCULATORY SPATIAL USE IN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

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This study explores how assisted living residents' walking behaviors are affected by the social spaces and activities within their facilities. Older adults in an assisted living community depend on the facility to provide an environment that accommodates their needs. If social spaces and activities are not stimulating enough to evoke residents to travel to them, it could impact their health in a negative way (Lu, 2010). The researcher visited an assisted living facility and conducted open-ended interviews with residents and administrators, observed social activities, and documented the facility's layout. Results indicate that residents were directly affected by the social activities provided by the facility. For some, it was the only exercise they acquired during the day. These findings are significant to interior designers, facility planners, and coordinators looking to increase usable space and activity areas to encourage residents to participate and increase daily exercise.