Into the future: experienced and full of ideas

Topics:
- Green light for a 250 million project
- New kindergartens for Bremen
- Exemplary living concepts for senior citizens

30 years: Specht Gruppe – innovating since 1988
Dear reader,

about 30 years ago we had the idea to build and operate our first aged care facility, ›Haus Rotbuche‹ in Bremen-Arsten, with room for 60 residents. Ever since the opening of this facility the Specht Gruppe has evolved into being one of the leading developers in the nursing care market.

Aging in a pleasant environment with professional care and leading a fulfilled life no longer has to be a dream for many. Our society ages significantly and demands in the aged care sector are changing. The need for inpatient care is growing and modern living concepts for senior citizens that include a variety of on-campus services and comforts are in high demand. The Specht Gruppe has anticipated this trend many years and started specializing in the planning and implementation of senior citizen residential homes with an integrative, lively campus character. Barrier-free living in prime locations with optional on-site services that make the senior’s life easier in conjunction with a fully equipped aged care facility are part of our portfolio. Our age appropriate living concepts also include kindergartens and daytime care facilities on site. The healthcare sector remains an exciting future market and deserves our full attention and commitment. The Specht Gruppe has always been geared towards the needs of the nursing care sector as well as the changing demands of today’s and tomorrow’s senior citizens. We have always stayed true to our motto ‘Others keep thinking, we think ahead’ in our corporate approach to meet the demands of the market. In saying this I hope you enjoy this issue of our corporate magazine.

Rolf Specht, Managing Partner of the Specht Gruppe
30 years on the road to the success

Rolf Specht and his company have been a successful provider in the health and care sector for 30 years. Let’s take a look back.

It is possible that Rolf Specht would have retired already if he had followed the advice of his parents not to give up his secure job as a postal clerk back in the day. But it felt right back then and it still feels right today. ‘I wanted to achieve something,’ says Rolf Specht and because his career as a postal worker with responsibility for personnel planning was very much predetermined he decided to take a different path. When he came in contact with the subject of construction financing at the United Postal Insurance Company, he met tax consultant Heinrich Kattau, who shared an idea with him: building a nursing home and dividing it up in accordance with the German Housing Act (WEG) in order to market it to private investors. The money for the first investment, a total of five million Deutsche Mark, was borrowed by Specht from a bank in the mid-1980s – taking a great deal of persuasion at the time.

A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE
Sometimes I think back to those days and I am glad that my decision was right!’ Changing his ways: ultimately paid off. Haus Rotbuche in Bremen Arsten was built and investors trusted Rolf Specht and his vision. Many of these early investors also committed to following offers of the Residenz-Gruppe Bremen – as Specht’s company was called at the time. More and more nursing homes and apartments suitable for senior citizens were implemented because Rolf Specht was one of the few people who at that time correctly anticipated the effects of demographic change and was willing and able to think his way into the needs of senior citizens. About 25 years ago he designed the residential complex ‘Rosengarten / Pro Dom’ in Weyhe near Bremen, suitable for senior citizens, providing a housekeeper and optional services – a true novelty at the time. So it was no surprise when real estate funds soon became aware of the agile Hanseatic entrepreneur and acquired nursing properties from him.

SAVING THE HEALTHCARE MARKET
Not only construction activities increased, but also the self-run operating company for nursing homes, Senioren Wohnpark Weser GmbH, grew steadily. In 2004, an outpatient nursing service was also established and five years later Rolf Specht decided to take over and invest in the insolvent acute hospital in Lilienthal. Additional doctors and medical staff were hired and an electrophysiology department was installed. Rolf Specht was awarded ‘Entrepreneur of the Year’ in Bremen in 2010 for his courage and hanseatic business skills. The following year he lived up to his name when he and Klaus Hübotter saved the Sendesaal Bremen, a historic broadcasting and concert hall, from demolition. Instead of the heritage building becoming a victim of a furniture store, the two businessmen were awarded the contract for the refurbishing of the old Radio Bremen broadcasting centre, which borders the Sendesaal, and Rolf Specht decided to turn the well-known venue into a rehabilitation clinic. His motto ‘Others keep thinking, we think ahead’ applies here too. He sensed before everyone else that elderly people would no longer want to leave their places of residence for necessary rehabilitation, but want to stay close to their relatives and familiar surroundings. The Reha-Klinik am Sendesaal was designed as a hybrid clinic where patients can switch from inpatient to outpatient treatment seamlessly – without changing the team of doctors.

SEPARATIONS ARE PART OF (BUSINESS) LIFE
As his Residenz-Gruppe expanded and employed more than 2,500 people, Rolf Specht had to make a decision to either fundamentally change the structures in the company or to part with some of his business. As so often in his life, he made a clear decision and handed over the Klinik Lilienthal to a private hospital group and the operating company of the senior citizens’ residences to an internationally active player in the aged care market. Since 2016 the ‘pioneer of nursing homes’, together with a team of long-standing employees has again been concentrating increasingly on the development and implementation of nursing homes and senior-friendly apartments, making new ideas come to life and working on new visions under the new company name ‘Specht Gruppe’. Nursing suites are integrated into senior citizens’ residences and holistic offers are created on the senior citizens’ campuses with a daytime care centre for seniors and outpatient care facilities for seniors. Properties are still being sold to real estate funds and also to individual investors. The Specht Gruppe can count more than 4,000 satisfied customers today.

GROWTH IN OUTPATIENT CARE
And of course Rolf Specht wouldn’t be himself if he did not come up with more interesting projects. When the Bremerhaven-based company Nordsee-Pflege ran into financial difficulties at the end of 2016 he took over the nursing service with its Bremerhaven and Cuxhaven locations, the four day care facilities and approximately 250 senior-friendly apartments. A few days before Christmas, he was able to inform the employees that they would continue to receive their salaries. The situation was similar with the nursing service AKB from Bremen, which was taken over by the Specht Gruppe in 2017.

BOTH FEET ON THE GROUND
One of Rolf Specht’s most important characteristics is his down-to-earth approach, typical for north Germans, which he transferred onto his management style. He is willing to take a risk – but only if his gut feeling is right and financial security is not endangered. His abilities, empathy, diligence and the courage to get enthusiastic about people and projects have brought the company to where it is today. The Specht Gruppe celebrates its 50th anniversary together with 300 employees. It has just been rated the leading developer in the German aged care sector. It will be interesting to see which projects await the Specht Gruppe and its founder Rolf Specht in the future.
EMVIA Living GmbH will operate the 17 senior residences that the Specht Gruppe is building for Aedifica. In addition to operating the stationary care facilities, the Hamburg-based company will also take over the operation of the more than 220 senior-friendly apartments and daytime care facilities. 'We are very pleased that we were able to win EMVIA Living, a company whose experienced players know all the essential aspects of the care sector,' says Rolf Specht, Managing Partner of the Specht Gruppe. EMVIA Living has 47 locations and employs around 3,200 people.
Kickoff for Aedifica projects

Last year, the Belgian company Aedifica commissioned the Specht Gruppe to build 17 senior citizens’ residences in Germany and in spring 2018 the first construction works have commenced.

In 2017, Aedifica commissioned the Specht Gruppe to build 17 new senior citizens’ residences worth around EUR 200 million. In total, the company is creating around 1,500 new and urgently needed inpatient care facilities to exist and will increase – despite all changes in the law,” emphasizes Rolf Specht, managing partner of the Specht Gruppe. Aedifica is a leading stock corporation in Belgium that invests in real estate for senior citizens in Europe.

Schwerin marks the start

The foundation for a new senior citizens’ residence was laid in Schwerin on 18 April 2018. The two and a half story building with a total floor area of around 5,100 square meters is about to open in late summer 2019 and become the new home for up to 87 senior citizens in need of nursing care. The building will offer single and comfort rooms as well as nursing suites in the attic. With an area of up to 55 square meters, the two rooms with porch and bathroom radiate the ambience of a separate apartment – with 24-hour care and all the other advantages of a senior citizens’ residence. The Specht Gruppe is investing around 9 million euros in the Schwerin location. In addition, a residential complex for assisted living, daytime care, an office for an outpatient nursing service, a physiotherapy practice and a hairdresser are currently being built on the site.

Start of construction in Lübbecke

On 25 April 2018, the foundation stone was laid for a new senior citizens’ residence in Lübbecke (near Minden). 80 vacancies for nursing patients will be created here, divided into single and comfort rooms as well as nursing suites. The Specht Gruppe is also building nine barrier-free apartments here. “The new senior citizens’ residence in Lübbecke offers senior citizens the opportunity to choose between four types of living,” explains Frank Markus, Managing Director of the Specht Gruppe. The investment volume is around 10 million euros. The three-story building with a recessed staggered story has a total floor area of around 5,000 square meters. The nine barrier-free apartments are located on the top floor, have two to three rooms and are available in sizes of 48 to 73 square meters. The opening is scheduled for late summer 2019.

Cutting the first sod in Kaltenkirchen

Directly at the railway station in Kaltenkirchen a new building is erected on the 2,530 square meter site. A senior citizens’ residence for 123 people in need of care. Approximately 17 million euros will be invested until the property is completed. An experienced team of architects of PGN (Planungsgemeinschaft Nord) from Rotenburg (Wümme) has designed this modern facility. A number of forms of living for senior citizens in need of care will be available on a living space of around 5,025 square meter in this new facility: “The 123 inpatient vacancies for nursing patients are divided into single and comfort rooms as well as nursing suites,” as explained by Frank Markus.
Construction of new medical centre in Bremen Mitte underway

Construction of the new medical center on St. Jürgen’s Street in Bremen is ready to go: Building will start in the summer of 2018. Space for medical practices is still available for rent.

Specht Gruppe and Johann Bunte Bauunternehmung from Papenburg are building a new medical centre at one of the most central locations in Bremen, right next to the Klinikum Bremen-Mitte. In fact, it is not just a medical center, because in addition to its prestigious location, the property is also the first building to be constructed in the New Hulsberg Quarter, the largest development site in Bremen’s city center.

Connecting spaces with architecture

In the meantime, the old building has been demolished to make room for the design by Detlef Thomsen of GSP Architects from Bremen. The new medical center is also seen by the planners as the prelude to the new quarter and as a visual link to the modern Klinikum Bremen-Mitte. It will mark an important entrance to the New Hulsberg Quarter and lead from the small, colorful structures of the ›Viertel‹ to the larger volume of the hospital.

Medical practice rooms still available

Construction work will start in the summer of 2018. First Rental contracts have already been concluded with doctors from a wide range of disciplines. The ground floor houses a bakery, a hearing aid acoustician, a medical supply store and a pharmacy. The completion of the five-story medical center is planned for the 1st quarter 2020. Interested parties can contact Managing Director Klaus Unverzagt at (0421) 84 00 10.
BUNTE und Specht Gruppe purchase Deutsche Post real estate

The joint venture between the Papenburg-based JOHANN BUNTE Bauunternehmung GmbH & Co. KG and the Specht Gruppe acquired five postal properties in northwestern Germany in August 2017. The post office properties were previously owned by a Canadian real estate fund, which owns around 300 branches of the mail and parcel group. The fund has now sold five of them to the joint venture of JOHANN BUNTE Bauunternehmung GmbH & Co. KG and the Specht Gruppe. The assets are located in Borken (North Rhine-Westphalia), Delmenhorst, Leer, Stuhr-Brinkum (all Lower Saxony) and Norderstedt (Schleswig-Holstein). The total investment amounts to around 11 million euros.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION
‘Postmobilien are characterized by their convenient and central inner-city locations,’ emphasizes Rolf Specht, managing partner of the Specht Gruppe. ‘In future there will be various opportunities for exciting project developments in the residential, retail and commercial sectors,’ adds Jan Schütz, Managing Director of JOHANN BUNTE Bauunternehmung GmbH & Co. KG. His company had previously acquired the post office property in Berneburg (North Rhine-Westphalia) in cooperation, while the Specht Gruppe secured further Deutsche Post properties in Pinneberg (Schleswig-Holstein) and Hemer (North Rhine-Westphalia). The current main tenant of the properties is Deutsche Post Immobilien GmbH, which still has some long-term leases.

Knowing each other well
It is not the first cooperation between the JOHANN BUNTE Bauunternehmung GmbH & Co. KG and the Specht Gruppe. They are developing a new medical center, which is currently being built directly at the Klinikum Bremen-Mitte in the Neus Hulsberg Quarter, the largest development site in the city center.

Care properties are becoming more and more popular as capital investments with the result that more and more providers are entering the market. Unfortunatley some sellers only have the short-term, maximum profit in mind and endanger the reputation of an entire industry with their behavior.

Mr. Specht, 30 years ago you were the first provider of care real estate as a capital investment on the financial market. Today, numerous providers are coveting, including perhaps some not quite reputable companies. What should you pay attention to when you want to buy a nursing home as a capital investment? As with all financial products, you should always take a closer look. One of the most important pillars of a safe facility is the operating company that rents the care property. Here the buyer should make sure that it is an experienced and reputable company. Additionally, I would recommend examining the balance sheet of the respective operating company to make sure that your investment is in reliable hands.

When buying a property, they always say, one should pay attention to three things: Location, location, location. What about nursing homes? Well, the location cannot be completely ignored here either. First and foremost it is important to know whether there is sufficient demand for a new nursing home at the location. If a competitor has just opened a new senior citizens’ residence with 80 vacancies, one should of course be careful. Competition plays a major role, because if the places are not occupied the operator can hardly pay the rent. That is why we refer you to our well-founded Location & Needs analyses.

There are competitors advertising a state secured rent. What do you think? In my view, this is not entirely fair. On the one hand, care places must be occupied and, on the other, specialist staff must be available. In addition, personnel keys are agreed with the cost bearers, which must be complied with by the operators and checked by the authorities. This is yet another reason to pay attention to a good operating company.

Are there any clues that should make us suspicious? Absolutely, yes. If for example the net yield appears comparably high and the purchase price is rather small, one should examine the documents exactly. Since operators have to finance the rents from the home fee or the so-called investment costs contained therein, these should also be able to be sufficiently collected for the rent payment. In North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) for example, there is a de facto cap on investment costs at a fixed amount per care vacancy. If on the other hand, the rents are already agreed higher than the investment costs can actually be collected, a shortfall arises from the other components of the home fee. As a consequence, this difference must then be financed at the expense of care and support. If the seller then offers functional premises for sale that are not refinanced in NRW, the operator incurs an additional rent, which is also not refinanced and must be generated differently. According to this an operator will not be able to do this in the long run, so that after a short time the operator is threatened with insolvency, which can mean loss of rent or reduced rent and therefore a reduced return for the buyers.

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Stroke of luck for municipalities and investors

By 2030, at least 300,000 new care places will be needed in Germany. As the strongest company in the care sector, the Specht Gruppe can also make good offers for investors.

In addition to the commission from the Belgian company Aedifica for the realization of 17 senior citizens’ residences the Specht Gruppe is developing further properties that can be acquired by individual investors.

The cornerstone for the new senior residence was laid in Tarmstedt near Bremen on 13th April 2018. It is the Specht Gruppe’s third senior citizens’ property in this location and will offer 56 new vacancies. ‘They are a stroke of luck for the community,’ said Joint Community Director Frank Holle during the cornerstone ceremony.

The three-story building with a total floor area of 3,346 square meters is scheduled to go into operation in the first quarter of 2019. The operator is Specht & Tegeler Seniorenresidenzen GmbH. Investors receive a return of 4.6 % and have to hurry as the property has already been almost sold.

HIGH YIELD

In Hodenhagen (near Hanover) the green light for the extension of the existing Riethagenhof senior citizens’ residence was given on 17th April 2018. In this location 29 new vacancies will be created in single and comfort rooms as well as nursing suites. The three-story, free-standing building with a total floor area of 2,110 square meters is expected to go into operation in the 1st quarter of 2019 and will, like the existing building, be operated by the Tegeler Gruppe. For both facilities in Tarmstedt and Hodenhagen the Specht Gruppe is both the owner and marketer. Individual nursing apartments are currently being sold at a return of 4.7 % and are virtually sold out.

NEW OFFERS FOR INVESTORS

New care facilities are already developing – for example in Syke (administrative district Diepholz) at a central location (Gängeviertel). Planning for further properties is already well advanced in Riede (administrative district Velen), Bremervöde (district of Rotenburg) and Hille-Hartum (district of Minden-Lübbecke).
Awakened

The abandoned Sudweyher Gutshof will become a senior campus with a public café and a playground. Historical objects will be preserved and will add to the charm of this facility.

The old estate in Sudweyhe, a district of Diepholz, is a diamond in the rough that is now being cut by the Specht Gruppe. With the help of architects ›FSB‹ from Bremen the unique area is now brought back to life. Three of the four existing buildings will be demolished and rebuilt according to the old model. The buildings will be arranged in a way to preserve the courtyard character of the building complex.

**SENIOR CAMPUS WITH CARE-FLAT-SHARING**

According to the new plans, the property will house an inpatient nursing facility with 68 single rooms and 17 comfortable nursing suites as well as a nursing flat-sharing community with twelve vacancies and twelve service flats for senior citizens with two to four rooms.

**THE PUBLIC IS INVITED**

The old grain barn will be preserved. A restaurant for the residents as well as a café for both the public and residents will be part of the campus. There will be a public square in front of the building including a playground. The historical objects that are still stored on site have been secured and are going to be integrated into the new area in order to make the interesting past of the manor house tangible. ‘This is a special project that will positively change the community’, says Rolf Specht. The Specht Gruppe has made a 14 million Euro investment at this location.

The Council Hall was bursting at the seams when about 200 interested parties attended a citizens’ information event at the end of June 2018 in the Weyher Town Hall recently. The plans and architectural designs which were introduced at the event were very well received by the audience. The new ‘vital urban planning situation’ that is being created around the old estate in Sudweyhe – especially in the area of the so-called Kornzinshaus, a former barn – was particularly well received, as architect Michael Frenz explained. With a restaurant and café as well as a public square, the area has potential to become a hub for residents, visitors and citizens.
Comprehensive planning is essential before the construction work for an aged care facility can commence. This includes of course the search for a suitable building site, a task executed by Thomas van der Heyden within the Specht Gruppe.

Mr van der Heyden, please share with us what you think the ideal location for an aged care facility is? The ideal location for an aged care facility is an urban environment in a well-established district. We do not build senior residences in remote, quiet areas. Although the properties in remote areas would be much cheaper to acquire, we have experienced over the past 30 years with more than 100 nursing homes built, that seniors want to take part in life – they want to be part of a community. Locations close to periphery like supermarkets, kindergartens and shops are ideal because the seniors can continue to live in the midst of life. Rooms and apartments oriented to busy streets are more preferred than spaces facing landscaped and quiet gardens. Our residents simply want to see and feel what happens on the street and in front of the house.

How does the Specht Gruppe find suitable properties? We receive offers from property owners or real estate agents. Unfortunately, since these are often not suitable, it is necessary for us to examine district by district and municipality by municipality to identify existing supply gaps that need to be filled. For this purpose I use various internal and public databases to research the age structure at a location, including a forecast and the number of existing nursing homes. If we find a suitable spot a property purchase contract is concluded and often a development plan procedure lasting approximately one year is carried out. Of course we also present our building project to the local politicians. We then submit an official application and, if approval is received, a new aged care facility will be ready for occupancy and is handed over to the operator after a construction period of only 15 months.

How often is it that the Specht Gruppe is offered land? We receive 20 to 30 property offers per month. However, many of these are of no interest as they are either not located in our expansion area between Kiel and Cologne or allow for too little building space. Some are not located in the community or are simply too expensive.

Was there ever a plot of land that looked promising on paper and turned out to be a flop in reality? No, that has not been the case so far. If the figures on paper are correct, then the resulting project cannot deviate significantly from them. A project could only develop as a flop if we did not obtain a building permit or if the construction costs were considerably higher than initially calculated.

What is your favourite property you have purchased for the Specht Gruppe and why? This has to be my first project for the Specht Gruppe in Hiddenhausen. In 2003 I was looking for a plot of land in the neighboring community. As there were no suitable plots of land with a minimum size of 5,000 sqm available at that time I examined the surrounding communities with regard to the population structure and existing senior citizens’ nursing homes. It quickly became clear that a nursing home was missing in Hiddenhausen. The department for economic development in Hiddenhausen was very cooperative and informed me in a personal conversation about some available properties in the community. After a visit to the properties we selected the one most centrally located and very quickly certified a purchase contract with the owner. The county subsequently provided us with strong support in creating the necessary planning rights. Everything was just right for this project. The large demand in the municipality, the good location in the town center, the quick conclusion of the property purchase contract within 34 days and the full support of the municipality.

How will the demand for nursing homes for the elderly develop? By 2030, the demand for nursing beds will increase by approx. 35 percent from the current 850,000 to around 1,150,000. This is an additional requirement of 300,000 nursing beds with a total investment of around 40 billion euros compared to the current level. In addition, there is a necessity to replace older facilities from the 1970s and 1980s that are no longer in line with the market. If we were to build only two percent of the necessary for us to examine district by district and municipality by municipality to identify existing supply gaps that need to be filled. For this purpose I use various internal and public databases to research the age structure at a location, including a forecast and the number of existing nursing homes. If we find a suitable spot a property purchase contract is concluded and often a development plan procedure lasting approximately one year is carried out. Of course we also present our building project to the local politicians. We then submit an official application and, if approval is received, a new aged care facility will be ready for occupancy and is handed over to the operator after a construction period of only 15 months.

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Not only care facilities but also kindergartens are urgently needed in Germany. Specht Gruppe is currently implementing two of such facilities with remarkable characteristics.

By summer 2020 the city of Bremen will be in need of an additional 3,800 child care vacancies. The Specht Gruppe obtained the necessary know-how in this area of expertise and supports the city by fast planning and implementing of projects in this sector. Other providers create new day care centres for minors by setting up container buildings. The Specht Gruppe, in contrast, focuses on the integration of kindergartens into new buildings and interesting, suitable old properties.

‘This field of work is not new to us,’ says Rolf Specht and refers to objects realized in the past in Bremen and Groß Schwülper, where kindergartens were successfully integrated into senior residences. In Arsten near Bremen, a kindergarten was integrated into the building later. ‘Our experiences show that young and old harmonize very well with each other,’ says Specht.

GENERATIONS CONJOINDED
Meetings between seniors and children are also very welcome at ›Kaemenas Hof‹ in Bremen-Oberneuland. In addition to the senior citizens’ residence currently being planned, architect Moritz Greiling of the Specht Gruppe has designed another building on site with a total floor area of 840 square meters for four groups of children. This very special 8,000 square meter site has a charming courtyard character due to the arrangement of the buildings and an impressive stock of rhododendrons. The new generation can look forward to an outdoor area of around 1,600 square meters, which meanders around the north-western side of the senior residence and flows into the large sun terrace for the residents. There is a separate garden for the children. On their way there they will pass swings, slides, sandboxes, playhouses and climbing equipment. Construction work is scheduled to start at the beginning of next year.

Another kindergarten is currently being built in a multi-story building in Bremen-Vahr, where the company’s own nursing service is also located. The former architect Herbert Anker is known for the conversion of the Park Hotel in Bremen and planning of the old radio station for Radio Bremen, which is now home to the Specht Gruppe’s rehabilitation clinic.

EVERYTHING IN SIGHT
Approximately 120 children, spread over 8 groups will be accommodated in the 1st and 2nd upper floors spread over an area of 2,210 square meters in the Sonneberger Straße. A 1,000 square meter outdoor play area with old trees will be waiting to be explored as well. In addition to the yard the children will enjoy a large exercise room with adjoining roof top garden, equipped with state of the art educational equipment as well as resilient sports flooring. The children’s safety is ensured by a fence and a protective green strip. According to current plans, the first children will be able to enjoy this facility at the beginning of 2019.

A COLOURFUL WORLD
The interior of the two kindergartens consists of grey, blue and green linoleum floors and light-colored wooden fixtures. Graduated landscapes in corners of the room offer a play area and a chance to retreat at the same time. The choice of colors for the flooring and the uniformity of the wooden fittings harmonize with the red brick facade and refer to the clear simplicity of the building. Moritz Greiling explains. The quiet restraint of the interior design also has another reason: ‘Life in the rooms should be created by the children themselves’.

The design of the day-care centers is geared to the needs of the children, both inside and out.

With a view
The nursery in Bremen-Vahr for eight groups receives a roof top garden.
Together against loneliness

The fifth Weser Tagespflege (daytime care centre) of the Specht Gruppe opens its doors in Stuhr. The facilities are a useful addition to the outpatient nursing service.

The advantages for seniors of attending a daytime care facility are numerous. Nevertheless, many people are not aware of the possibilities that are available and delay a move to an inpatient care facility for as long as possible.

The Weser Tagespflege Stuhr offers seniors the opportunity to spend the day sociably and create a structure for everyday life. It offers a variety of options for the resident and contributes to relieving the strain on relatives caring for them. The schedule is flexible so that seniors can attend either Mondays to Fridays or only on certain days. A driving service picks visitors up from home in the morning – right on time for breakfast in the day time facility. After a refreshment, there are lots of activities such as memory training, games, seated gymnastics and conversations about current newspaper reports available for the seniors. After a freshly prepared lunch, seniors may take a lunch break in the relaxation room or on the large balcony as a good weather option. After a coffee club or a walk, the driver will return the seniors to their home safely.

QUALITY OF LIVING
‘A visit to a day care facility increases the quality of living of a senior,’ says Carsten Adenäuer, Managing Director of the operating company Ambulanter Pflegedienst Weser GmbH. ‘They find help and care here. They are supported in living a more active life and additionally they receive financial support from the nursing care insurance. Daytime care remains an important part of the care market.’
Exemplary living concepts for seniors

Many of the Specht Gruppe’s senior citizens’ residential facilities integrate daytime care and provide the company’s own care services directly on site.

‘Outpatient before inpatient’ is a much quoted guiding principle in German health policy. Even if the principle does not apply to all seniors with a determined nursing level / degree of care, the perception of the offers of outpatient and daytime care has increased considerably in recent months as a result of the Pflegestärkungsgesetz II (Care Strengthening Act II). In addition to the construction of senior citizens’ residences, Specht Gruppe has always relied on this principle. Already in the early 90s Rolf Specht opened the residential complex ‘Rosengarten/Pro Dom’ close to Bremen, where senior citizens could live in barrier-free apartments with the support of a house keeper. Nursing support was provided by the outpatient nursing service. Today, this model is often supported with integrated daytime care.

All from a single source

The residential complexes of the Specht Gruppe are located in Bremerhaven, Cuxhaven, Schiffdorf and Langen: The apartments are barrier-free, packages with a wide range of services are integrated and additionally services can be added on request. The company’s own nursing service provides the residents with care depending on the nursing level / degree of care and whoever wishes can visit the daytime care facilities in the building. In Bremerhaven and Cuxhaven the range is supplemented by the in-house restaurant ‘Schmaus’. ‘Our residents receive everything from a single source and are thus able to retain their independence in their accustomed environment as far as possible, even if they require nursing care,’ says Managing Director Carsten Adenäuer.

Convenient

Weser Wohnpark Cuxhaven: In the city centre, residents can enjoy their lunch in the company’s own restaurant

Comfy and close to everything

The Weser Wohnpark am Neumarkt offers 78 barrier-free apartments in a prime location

Central

42 apartments are located at Grashoffstraße 36, restaurant ‘Schmaus’ is located on the ground floor

Cooperation

In Langen, the Weser daytime care centre and the Weser residential park are located under one roof

Open

The Weser Tagepflege Schiffdorf can be used by the residents of the Weser residential park Schiffdorf as well as by outside persons

Cooperation

Managing Director Carsten Adenäuer offers living, day care and outpatient care in a complete package

Thoughtful

Managing Director Carsten Adenäuer offers living, day care and outpatient care in a complete package
Guest article

Life of elderly people in all its diversity. We are particularly interested in the study is to describe and understand the everyday experiences with residents, caregivers, social workers, home directors, and family members of the residents. The aim of the research that we are currently conducting in old people’s houses and nursing homes and in assisted living institutions is to work out the latent motivations with residents, caregivers, social workers, home directors, and family members of the residents. The aim of the research that we are currently conducting in old people’s houses and nursing homes and in assisted living institutions is to work out the latent motivations that are spoken quite naturally than in the direct interviews and group discussions. The interpretation brings up the deeper meaning behind the scenes - in order to continually improve the quality of living of nursing home residents. We keep research diaries to evaluate the participating observations and our interviews and group discussions are recorded and evaluated in our research community. In the evaluation we interpret text passages from the interviews and group discussions. The aim is to work out the latent meaning, which is addressed in these texts by the participants, but is often not fully explained. One experiences with these evaluations that more is expressed in the sentences that are spoken quite naturally than in the direct words. Through interpretations we try to understand the underlying meaning of everyday life as it accompanies the self-evident speech in the interview and in the group discussions. The interpretations bring up the deeper meaning of life in everyday speech. We hope that our evaluations will provide support for caregivers and social workers of the elderly. With our research we would like to contribute to improving the living conditions of people in need of care in old people’s houses and nursing homes and institutions of assisted living.

By Dr. Sünje Lorenzen and Dipl.-Psych. Katja Specht

In this article, we report on our socio-psychological research that we are currently conducting in old people’s and nursing homes and in assisted living institutions. It is a qualitative empirical study in which we conduct interviews, group discussions, and participatory observations with residents, caregivers, social workers, home directors, and family members of the residents. The aim of the study is to describe and understand the everyday life of elderly people in all its diversity. We are particularly interested in ‘productive orientations’ in the life habits of people in need of care. The term ‘productive orientation’ comes from social psychology: it was developed by the social psychologist and psychoanalyst Erich Fromm. ‘What is important (in aging) is first and foremost to feel more active and interested and to avoid the offer of a passive consumer existence. Older people, like young people, should try to respond to their environment, to react in the sense of feeling responsible. The elderly person (…) only has to be alive, and that means he really has to be interested in the world in a comprehensive sense’ (‘Psychological Problems of Aging’ (1966), GA Vol. IX, p. 457). It is a matter of developing and promoting as much autonomy and initiative as possible in old age and of avoiding a merely passive attitude to care as far as possible. The elderly person also has a chance to develop a lively ‘productive orientation’. In our interviews, group discussions and participatory observations, ‘productive orientations’ of the elderly are revealed in a variety of ways. Friendship and creativity play a special role in the productive lifestyles of old people. At this point we would like to give three examples: An old friendship couple, Anna and Luis*, decided to move into an old people’s home together. Anna told us in an interview how she and her boyfriend experienced the new life situation: ‘During the day Luis is always in my room. In the morning I go over there and wake him up because he no longer recognizes the clock properly. And when the nurse comes, she dresses him. In the evening I help him to bed. We go to the cinema together and on Sundays we almost always go out together. We do a lot together.’

Anna and Luis have a very close and intimate friendship in old age. They support each other and take care of each other. They do not submit to a mere provision, they actively take their lives into their own hands wherever they can. For them, dignified aging has to do with the fact that one can support each other in a productive way in everyday life. In their friendship they realize their everyday life productively.

Another pair of friends, Elsa and Charles*, only met after moving into a nursing home. Both are widowed and have found each other through conversations, shared passions and their stories and memories. In our interview, Elsa told us what friendship with Charles means to her: ‘Well, what does friendship mean to us? That we support each other. When we go for a walk, Charles holds on to my wheeled walker and I push forward. Because it is also very important for me to walk a little more. But Charles has problems with his legs and I don’t have any problems with that. I am much more off-road, as they say so beautifully. I am still mobile. And we also show consideration for each other, because I depend on him for that.’

There are many other examples of single women and men in nursing homes. Friendships with other residents also play an important role for them in the productive shaping of their lives and everyday life. For many single people the development of their creativity means a lot for a winning life. A model in our study for this is a 92-year-old children’s book author from Lower Germany. It is very close to her heart to pass on her almost unique knowledge of the Low German language to future generations. With the support of the home management, she organizes afternoons, where she reads from her books and stories and motivates her roommates to sing together. These afternoons are also very popular with visitors to the old people’s home. People laugh and reminisce together and everyday life shows its cheerful side. Contemplative experiences are exchanged, as the Low German children’s book author expresses them in her poem ‘Dat Leben’:

‘Dat Leben’

In Komen un Gohn is dat in ‘n Leben. De Tiet steilt keer ‘n Ogenblick still. Just bun ik doe, denn is ‘t ok al wesen. De Stünn tözeit nich, as ik dat wil! Dat Vorjohr is komen, de Sommer vergusen. Kort weer de Tiet, de so hell in mi klung. Vördi flüggt meen Leben, das so veel mi schünk. N drööm von de Stünnen, as mi Hart lach un sün!


We keep research diaries to evaluate the participating observations and our interviews and group discussions are recorded and evaluated in our research community. In the evaluation we interpret text passages from the interviews and group discussions. The aim is to work out the latent meaning, which is addressed in these texts by the participants, but is often not fully explained. One experiences with these evaluations that more is expressed in the sentences that are spoken quite naturally than in the direct words. Through interpretations we try to understand the underlying meaning of everyday life as it accompanies the self-evident speech in the interview and in the group discussions. The interpretations bring up the deeper meaning of life in everyday speech. We hope that our evaluations will provide support for caregivers and social workers of the elderly. With our research we would like to contribute to improving the living conditions of people in need of care in old people’s houses and nursing homes and institutions of assisted living.

* All names are anonymous.
Geriatric rehabilitation instead of the need for long-term care

Geriatrics is on everyone’s lips. Hardly any clinic without a geriatric department, hardly any health lecture that does not cover the concerns of geriatric treatment and rehabilitation. What is behind this term and why is geriatrics in the focus at the moment? Christian Wolkenhaar, Managing Director of the Specht Gruppe’s Reha-Klinik am Sendesaal in Bremen, and Diethelm Ulrich Neetz, the clinic’s geriatric chief physician explain the background.

What exactly is geriatrics and why is it currently on everyone’s lips?

Wolkenhaar: In a nutshell, geriatrics is the ‘old-age discipline’ of medicine, whereby age alone is not a mandatory criterion for classification. The typical geriatric patient is usually over 70 years old, but accompanying illnesses in particular constitute the characteristic of the geriatric treatment. The importance of geriatrics has grown enormously in the last 20 years and is above all due to the demographic development of the population.

What would a typical geriatric patient look like? Neetz: A typical geriatric patient is around 80 years old, has undergone cardiac or orthopedic surgery for example, or is on the verge of becoming in need of long-term care. She or he has several concomitant diseases – multi-morbidity – such as paralysis, amputations, nutritional deficiencies, incontinence, dementia or dizziness at the same time, which makes adequate treatment on a purely cardiological or orthopedic ward impossible. The geriatrician, on the other hand, specializes in age-related diseases and multi-morbidity and has a holistic view of the patient, including his or her social environment. He has a geriatric team from various disciplines such as doctors, nursing, physiotherapy, ergo-therapy, speech therapy, psychology and social services which plans and carries out treatment and rehabilitation of the patient. The aim of geriatric rehabilitation is to restore as high a degree of independence as possible and to minimize the need for nursing care.

Is geriatric rehabilitation open to every patient? Wolkenhaar: Geriatric rehabilitation requires a prior application for rehabilitation from the health insurance company. This can be applied for by the doctor treating the patient on an outpatient basis as well as by the hospital where the geriatric patient is treated beforehand. Another scenario is that when an application for a nursing degree or nursing allowance is originally submitted and, after this application has been examined by the MDK, geriatric rehabilitation is recommended.

What is the course of a geriatric rehabilitation? Neetz: At the beginning of the rehabilitation measure, the doctor records the previous history and carries out a detailed physical examination. Together with the geriatric team, a so-called geriatric assessment is recorded. Specific tests are used to determine the physical, cognitive, emotional and social condition of the patient. Subsequently, an individual treatment plan is drawn up on this basis under medical supervision. In weekly team discussions, the course of therapy is evaluated, documented and the therapies adapted accordingly. In addition to medical treatment, all therapies involved such as physiotherapy, ergo-therapy, speech therapy, physical therapy, lymph drainage, heat, cold or electricity applications as well as social services are of great importance. The latter is primarily responsible for further care, such as organization of a nursing service or a transfer to a nursing facility.

How long does a geriatric rehabilitation usually last? Neetz: On average, an in-patient geriatric rehabilitation measure lasts about three weeks; if necessary – after approval by the health insurance company – the duration of the in-patient geriatric rehabilitation measure can be extended. In principle, patients can choose the rehabilitation clinic for rehabilitation themselves, however, some health insurance companies have agreements with special rehabilitation clinics, so that these are partly proposed or determined by the health insurance company. Geriatric rehabilitation is usually performed as an inpatient, but it can also be performed on an outpatient basis. Patients are picked up from home within a certain radius of the rehabilitation facility and driven home again after the therapies.

What is the significance of the geriatric department for the Specht Gruppe? Wolkenhaar: The opening of the Reha-Klinik am Sendesaal in 2011 is a consequence of the development of increasing urbanization and outpatient treatment of rehabilitation facilities. This is due to not only the demographic development of the population but also to the trend for patients to find their way from hospital to rehabilitation earlier and earlier, which means that they are much more ill than before. In conclusion, it can be said that the older and more ill a patient is, the more important the quality of medical services and care as close as possible to the patient’s place of residence are to him and his relatives. With the establishment of geriatric rehabilitation and our additional outpatient rehabilitation services, we have begun to close a supply gap in Bremen. The expansion of the Specht Gruppe’s range of services to include the Weser Nursing service follows this logic. In geriatrics, however, the demand is still much higher than we can offer. We have therefore been looking for a long time for an extension possibility for geriatrics, have designed various scenarios and have now decided and are hoping to add one floor to the main building, so that in 2019 the existing to be able to completely close the supply gap in Bremen.
Specht and Tegeler establish joint operating company

The Specht Gruppe of Bremen and the Tegeler Gruppe of Wunstorf have founded a joint operating company for senior citizens’ residences. Both companies have been working very well together for years.

The new name was obvious: Specht & Tegeler Seniorenresidenzen simply says what it is. These are senior residences built by the Specht Gruppe and operated jointly with the Tegeler Gruppe. Both names stand for quality which does not require any further explanation. This is how Jens Tegeler, Managing Partner of the Tegeler Gruppe sums it up: ‘It is with great joy and pride that we, together with Rolf Specht, are embarking on another journey and will make the S&T Seniorenresidenzen in Germany one of the renowned and above all, forward-thinking operator models of the future.’

Friendly connection
Rolf Specht, Managing Partner of the Specht Gruppe, also confirms that there has always been good cooperation in the past and that he is therefore looking forward to further cooperation with the Tegeler Gruppe.

The Bremen-based company, which at that time still operated under the name Residenz-Gruppe Bremen, has already built three senior residences for the Tegeler Gruppe in Langenhagen (2010), Hodenhagen (2010) and Benefeld (2012). And the Tegeler Gruppe took over the catering for the operation of the nursing facilities of the former Residenz Gruppe Bremen for a long time.

First assignment in Jünkerath
The first joint building is located in the local community of Jünkerath, about 100 kilometers west of Koblenz, in Rhineland-Palatinate. It has been actively operating since 1st December 2017 following insolvency. For both companies this is their first deployment in this federal state. During ongoing operations extensive conversion and modernization work was carried out on 78 single and comfort rooms, as well as large parts of the furniture, especially the nursing beds, were replaced. Everything was renovated in summer 2018. Further locations operated by Specht & Tegeler Seniorenresidenzen GmbH are in the planning stage. The new company is based in Wunstorf.

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- Wohnanlage ›Rosengarten‹, Weyhe
- Weser Wohnpark, Bremerhaven
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› A strong partner - since 1988: As a successful project developer and property developer, the Specht Gruppe with its managing partner Rolf Specht has already realised more than 100 care facilities. The Specht Gruppe also includes an inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation clinic, an outpatient nursing service and around 500 apartments for senior citizens in Bremen and Lower Saxony. Rolf Specht was named Bremen Entrepreneur of the Year in 2010.

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