

SPECIAL REPORT  
**HEALTH CARE**

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Slated to open in September, The Ivey will offer daycare for adults and offer services that will also appeal to their children, who are often their primary caregivers.

## Former banker expands services of adult daycare

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A different form of adult care is on the horizon for Charlotte. Lynn Ivey, a former Bank of America Corp. executive, is developing a daycare facility in SouthPark with several features to serve the elderly and their family caregivers.

The 11,000-square-foot facility, called The Ivey, will allow primary caregivers — often the children of aging parents — to work or take a break from their duties. A trained medical staff will oversee medications, and social programming will keep clients engaged.

Ivey came to grips with the growing need for adult daycare centers when confronted with the decline of her mother's health. Her mother, now deceased, had many health issues over the years and suffered a series of small strokes in 2003. Ivey took a family leave of absence from the bank and went to her parents' home in Wilmington for an extended stay. There, she was faced with a dilemma common to adults with ailing parents. Her father was trying to care for his wife at home, and it was not working.

"I discovered he was doing way too much caregiving," says Ivey. "It was a heavy burden."

Neither father nor daughter could bear the thought of depriving Ivey's mother of the tranquility of living in her home of 42 years. After some

research, Ivey discovered adult daycare.

"It was socially stimulating for my mother and my father got some breathing room," says Ivey. The new state of affairs gave Ivey's father a day on his own. Refreshed, he was ready to continue helping to care for his wife at home.

"I felt so good about it that I decided there was something I could do in that world and environment," says Ivey, who chose to not return to work. Instead, after a lot of research, she utilized the business acumen she developed during a 26-year career to develop a plan for a high-end adult daycare center in Charlotte.

There are 10 certified adult daycares in Charlotte and a need for more, says Rose Wilson, Mecklenburg County Social Services adult daycare coordinator. Charlotte's population is growing and so is the number of families who prefer that older family members age "in place," or in the comfort of home.

"As Charlotte grows, so does the older adult population," Wilson says. Factors include the aging of the baby boomers and area transplants, who are increasingly relocating elderly parents to the region after realizing the benefits of living in Charlotte.

In a study commissioned by Mecklenburg County, the Status of Seniors Initiative, the county's older adult population is estimated to be increasing at a

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greater rate than the child population. Over the next 27 years, Charlotte's senior population is projected to triple while the portion of the population under 17 will not double in size.

The average caregiver for members of this group is a 46-year-old female with a full-time job. The Ivey, in a departure from the usual services offered by adult daycares, will have as strong a focus on the caregiver as its clients.

Ivey plans to offer a menu of services that are offered at most adult daycares, but will also offer additional features such as take-home meals and concierge services.

"Some husbands who have become caregivers have never been faced with cooking," says Ivey. "The nutrition for both the caregiver and the patient decline."

Plans for the facility include a commercial kitchen, a hair and nail salon, a workout room, spa and speech and occupational therapy. The spa will offer bathing and personal hygiene services to clients, a service that could be a boon to weary caregivers, Ivey says. The center will also have music and entertainment areas, a library and a therapy kitchen.

All services are available to clients and their caregivers.

The daycare's decor will be a far cry from fluorescent-light institutional. The center's theme is "Arts and Crafts country lodge" and will be distinguished by warm earth tones, scattered fireplaces and murals of the outdoors. The center's exterior will feature raised gardens, a putting green and a long covered porch with a fireplace. "It will feel more like a home than a facility," Ivey says.

Cost of care at The Ivey will be comparable to home health-care options, she says, although pricing has not yet been set. The development cost is \$4 million.

The center, at 6030 Park South Drive, will offer bundled services to meet individual needs, with services in two-, three- and five-day packages.

Construction on the facility, which will have a 75-person capacity, is slated to begin in January with a tentative opening date in September.

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