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Man Moving Into Senior Living Community to Test Theme Park Dryer's Potential for the Aging

Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 8, 2016 – Wayne Jacks is in his thirties, but he can empathize with people decades older who are affected by aging's physical challenges. His chronic degenerative disk problem makes getting out of bed each morning "a process that feels as though I've already used myself up." Now Jacks is moving into a senior living community for five days with the goal of seeing whether a new body dryer his company is adapting from the theme park industry can improve life for the aging. Jacks will reside Jan. 25 – 29 at Brookdale Green Hills Cumberland, 15 Burton Hills Blvd., Nashville.

His stay is part of Brookdale's Entrepreneur in Residence program, an initiative developed by America's largest senior living provider to help those designing products and services for the aging better understand their true wants and needs. While residing at Brookdale Green Hills Cumberland, Jacks will eat, exercise, participate in activities and socialize with its residents, living each day as they do. He will also find out whether the dryer, which has been temporarily installed there, makes a difference in their lives.

The British-born Jacks, 38, is American operations manager for U.K.-based Haystack Dryers, which invented a body-drying cabin that has become a standard feature at amusement and water parks around the world. Equipped with infrared lights on two sides and hot-air blowers in all corners, a Haystack Dryer can accommodate five people at a time. The company is now exploring offering a similar but smaller wall-mounted device, called the Care Dryer, to the senior living industry to make bathing more comfortable and dignified for people with a variety of physical conditions.

"Drying off with a towel can be difficult for seniors with arthritis, joint problems or other issues that impede dexterity and flexibility," said Jacks. "They may need a caregiver's help, which can cause a loss of personal dignity. All of this can turn bathing from an enjoyable experience into something that's unpleasant and even dreaded." Jacks developed an affinity for the aging as a child, when he would accompany his grandmother on her volunteer visits to frail seniors in their homes in an English town. He still cherishes a box of teddy bears one of them gave him as a boy.

The Care Dryer's infrared technology is an important aspect of how it works, according to Jacks. "It warms you the moment you turn the dryer on, which prevents you from feeling cold and shivering when you get out of your bath or shower. This can help with stiffness and muscle spasms. In fact, from what we've seen so far, a number of seniors like to turn the Care Dryer on to warm up and become limber before bathing and then use it again to dry off."

Haystack Dryers has piloted the Care Dryer in some senior care residences in Great Britain and in centers for the disabled in Holland. Jacks is taking part in Brookdale's Entrepreneur in Residence program to determine if it would be feasible to bring the device to the United States and offer it on a wider basis.

"My goal in living at the community is to see firsthand how the residents respond to the Care Dryer, how often they use it and which benefits are most important to them," Jacks said. "This information will be crucial for us in moving forward on what we hope is an important new product."

Donna Adlington, executive director of Brookdale Green Hills Cumberland, said: “All of us are excited about Wayne’s stay and about testing the Care Dryer. For our residents, having the opportunity to help shape products and services that benefit seniors now and into the future is very meaningful.”

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About Brookdale

Brookdale Senior Living Inc. is the leading operator of senior living communities throughout the United States. The Company is committed to providing senior living solutions primarily within properties that are designed, purpose-built and operated to provide the highest-quality service, care and living accommodations for residents. Currently Brookdale operates independent living, assisted living, and dementia-care communities and continuing care retirement centers, with approximately 1,132 communities in 47 states and the ability to serve over 110,000 residents. Through its ancillary services program, the Company also offers a range of outpatient therapy, home health, personalized living and hospice services.