Transforming Care.
The aim of Zuckerberg San Francisco General’s Acute Care for Elders (ACE) unit is simple: treat and rehabilitate patients as efficiently and quickly as possible so they can return to active lives in their communities.

But with its soothing environment, cheerful, community-oriented staff, state-of-the-art rooms and astounding artwork, patients may just not want to leave. It is a response to the many hazards older adults face when they are hospitalized.

Things like worsening disability and increased confusion can threaten an older adult’s capacity to live independently in the community. These hazards also add significantly to healthcare costs. ACE units have been shown to improve the chances a hospitalized older adult will go home rather than to a nursing home.

The ACE unit occupies the top floor of the new building and offers an enriching rooftop garden. But besides the physical features, it’s the jovial leadership of founder and Medical Director Dr. Edgar Pierluissi that drives the unit, as he has created one of the most unique programs for elderly patients in the U.S.

“I’ve never seen anything like this,” Pierluissi said. And I’ve seen a lot of eldercare units.

Indeed he has, as he has spent his career including running the Veterans Affairs Hospital’s nursing home working on how to treat older patients and help them get back home to their lives.

The unit itself welcomes patients and their families with soothing, fall-toned colors that...
In February, the hospital launched its Acute Care for Elders Unit, the first ACE unit in California. The unit was developed to combat declines in cognitive and physical health that many older adults go through after hospitalization. The ACE unit offers inpatient care specifically tailored to the needs of older adults.

For example, older patients at Zuckerberg San Francisco General participate in programs specifically to maintain and improve their cognitive function in addition to their physical health.

Now, the ACE Unit features a rooftop garden where patients can relax and heal.