

5 WAYS TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE EFFICIENCY AND RETENTION

As shelter in place orders remain for many senior living communities, operators continue to increase their care services without adding more burden to existing staff and routines. Limited physician office hours mean that more care decisions are made inside the four walls of today's communities.

At the same time, high staff turnover keeps a focus on improving employee efficiency. In a recent *Senior Housing News* article, Michelle Hamilton, the COO of Commonwealth, was quoted saying "registered nurses and frontline caregivers are still among the hardest senior living roles to fill in the face of stiff competition from hospitals or other health care organizations.¹

Today's technology can help make your frontline caregivers more efficient. Emergency call (eCall) and life safety technology does so much more than just provide a call button; it allows communities to improve care and employee efficiency. Look for solutions that have five critical capabilities.

1. Prioritize Alarms Automatically
2. Leverage Efficient Routing
3. Simplify Alarm Response
4. Provide Fingertip Visibility
5. Provide Actionable Insights

1. Prioritize Alarms Automatically

Alarm fatigue is a challenge in any community. When residents can call for help for everything from requesting a dining menu to confirming that help is on the way, it's hard for any staff to respond quickly to the most urgent requests. Today's systems leverage state-of-the-art technology to minimize informational calls and prioritize health needs. Look for solutions that:

- Prioritize alarms by urgency (smoke alarms, missed assurance checks, etc)
- Leverage a sophisticated rules engine to create alerts for certain conditions
- Reduce adverse incidents with geofencing, location management protocols, DME separation, motion monitoring and passive assurance

3. Simplify Alarm Response

The easier it is to close an alarm at the right time, the less likely it will be escalated. In the past, caregivers have had to return to a desk console to close an alarm. Modern systems allow a caregiver to close the alarm within a defined proximity of the resident. This means that:

- Response time is faster because it ends when the caregiver has eyes on the resident
- Closed alarms are removed from the list automatically to avoid sending more than one caregiver to the resident
- Caregivers can request backup more easily
- Communities can customize how alarms are closed (at the source, at the desk, from the caregiver's mobile app) to improve workflows

2. Employ Efficient Routing

Every caregiver cannot respond to every alarm; yet, that's the expectation when every caregiver receives the same alarm. eCall systems that leverage RTLS technology to identify staff and resident locations eliminate inefficient routing and allow staff to respond to resident needs faster. Today's RTLS-based solutions:

- Know the exact location of a resident to respond faster
- Identify the nearest caregiver
- Identify nearest caregiver that is not with a resident first
- Send alarms only to those responsible for responding
- Give the responder the ability to notify the team that they are handling the request



4. Provide Fingertip Visibility

Today's technology gives caregivers more information with an alarm to help them respond more efficiently and effectively. This allows them to prepare for the call as they approach the resident. Operators should look for the ability to:

- Provide the caregiver the resident's name and photograph, alarm location and type; the device that created the alarm; the amount of time the alarm has been open; who is responding (initials or photo); and a history of notes
- Allow staff to search easily for resident, staff or tagged item location
- Integrate EMR information to provide a complete picture of the resident's overall health and wellness including DNR status, fall risk, two-person assist (with applicable APIs and authorization)

5. Provide Actionable Insights

New technology provides a lot more than the standard reports. Community leaders can access graph-based dashboards and AI-based insights that make it easier to identify changes in resident and staffing trends that require review and a thoughtful response. Look for a solution that can:

- Display a change in staff time spent with residents
- Identify a significant or trending change in resident routine (e.g., a resident is spending more time in the bathroom, less time out of an apartment (socialization), is calling for assistance more frequently)
- Compare adverse incidents to changes in care plan and actual interventions taken
- Determine individual staff response times and time spent providing care to provide more insights for individual coaching

TECHNOLOGY CAN IMPROVE CAREGIVER SATISFACTION AND RETENTION

Communities are leveraging several strategies to retain difficult-to-hire care staff. Technology is one way to make caregivers more efficient, more focused on providing care, and more satisfied with their work. This in turn impacts their retention.

Equipped with real time location systems, passive monitoring and sophisticated alarm management, Ensure360SM is a powerful platform that can answer who, what, when, where, and why. It includes powerful analytics that alert staff into socialization changes, risk for common conditions like Urinary Tract Infections, and even automated contact tracing and case management protocols. Armed with these powerful insights, staff can move from reacting to an event to preventing one. The result is improved care, reduced staff burden, and increased family peace of mind.

Find out more today at sentricks.net/solutions/ensure360/ or call (888) 988-8210.

Sources:

¹ COO Outlook: Expect Senior Living Occupancy Rebound, Workforce Challenges in 2021. Senior Housing News, March 3, 2021. Tim Regan

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