



Why Is Everyone Looking at These Reports?

By Susan Saldibar

As one who remembers the days of painstakingly reconciling data from multiple Excel spreadsheets, I can really appreciate the strides that today's performance reporting has made. Now we have the ability to track so many areas within an organization and compare data in real time. The time I could have saved!

Reporting has really gone through a transformation in senior living, especially over the last few years. And no area is more important than staff response times to residents. I spoke recently with Jacquie Brennan, Vice President of [Vigil Health Solutions](#) Inc (a Senior Housing Forum partner). I know they have reporting and was curious as to what they report upon and how the reports are used to improve the level of care in senior living communities.

Jacquie breaks down reporting into four key areas, as follows:

1. Real Time Event Data

Real time event data is critical to making sure staff is notified when a resident needs assistance. But sending accurate call information to the right people is just the starting point. It needs to be accessible, anytime and anywhere. That means mobility through the cloud. "We developed our mobile app with cloud access to allow management to peek in, using the system, at any time of day from any location," Jacquie tells me. "They need to be able to see, at a glance, how many calls are currently live in the system and how long they have been active," she says.

2. Incident Reports

Clearly incident reports are a serious part of senior care. Having reliable data from your call system that demonstrates a reasonable response time to an incident, can be used as supporting evidence in your report.

Being able to show resident's families call response times for their loved ones also supports your community and staff in the event that a resident complains. "I've often heard residents complain that they push their call button and 'no one ever comes', or 'they take sooooo long'," Jacquie explains. "And I'm sure it feels like a long time to that person at the moment. But being able to produce a report showing an under 5 minute response time gives residents and families peace of mind," she adds.

3. Daily Snapshots

Longer call response times can be a leading indicator of other issues, ranging from quality of staff, to training issues, to staff turnover or other operational concerns. Having smart phone or desktop access, through the cloud, to a quick summary of call volume, call frequency and staff response time, lets you see at a glance whether things are moving in the right or wrong direction. It gives you data you need to take the appropriate steps.

4. Trends

Reviewing the report data regularly allows management to spot trends in call activity for individual residents as well as community wide. Trend reports help you to monitor each resident's call volume and call frequency to review acuity and service levels. "Trend reporting helps answer questions that might otherwise go unanswered," says Jacquie. "For example, let's say a resident goes from calling two or three times a day to calling 15-20 times a day. Could that be an indicator of a change to their physical or mental health? How does that affect staffing levels or assignments? That's where trend reporting really shows its value," she adds.

Community wide reports allow you to track overall response times to calls and benchmark those against other communities in your portfolio and the industry in general. And, once again, they can provide answers to some key questions. As an example, if 4 out of 5 properties are responding to calls in less than 5 minutes, why is the 5th community outside of that standard? What can be done about it?

After speaking with Jacquie I realize how far we've come. What a difference from the days when reports were just records of the past, sitting in a file cabinet or in someone's "in-box". Managers would only refer to them when something went wrong. And, by then, they did little more than point the finger of blame at someone who had long forgotten what they had done.

"The need be able to respond quickly to residents' needs and to use that responsiveness to gain a competitive edge has driven a new generation of reporting capabilities, combining real time, incident, snapshot and trending reporting," says Jacquie. "Those who are not using the full range of call system reporting options to improve quality of care and compete more effectively, run the risk of being sidelined by others who are."



This article has been brought to you by [Vigil Health Solutions](#) in partnership with [Senior Housing Forum](#).

