



C-Suite Leaders Love These Chairs

By Wendy D'Alessandro

If you didn't make it last month to LeadingAge PA then you missed out on why dining chair selection in a care community is more of a C-suite decision than a delegated afterthought.

"Dining chair selection can impact the long-term health and profitability of a community," says Randy Schellenberg, CEO of [ComforTek](#), a manufacturer and provider of seating solutions for the industry, as well as a Senior Housing Forum Partner.

Because a chair isn't "just a chair"

Dining chairs do more than provide a comfortable place to sit during mealtime. The quality and function of a dining chair impact residents' quality of life and their dining experience, not to mention the well-being and safety of staff and caregivers and the perception of a care community's brand.

Do your dining chairs make the cut?

By taking an inventory of the type of mobility assistance residents require, you can determine if your dining chairs are a worthy investment or in need of replacement. Observe and ask:

- **Are your dining chairs lined against a wall to make room for residents eating at dining tables in their wheelchairs?**

Dining chairs put aside to make room for wheelchairs indicates residents may prefer the ease of staying in a wheelchair to the hassle of transferring into a dining chair that isn't easy to access or

maneuver. No one likes to stand out from their peers or be reminded of their physical limitations, but when transferring chairs at mealtime creates a scene, the resident experience is compromised.

- **Are your dining chairs accessorized with yellow tennis balls or equipped with casters on the legs?**
Modifying chairs so they better serve residents' and caregivers' needs indicates something is amiss, says Randy. Think about this for a moment. After investing \$300 on an attractive, high-quality chair, team members are attaching yellow tennis balls on the bottom of the legs or casters (thus reducing the chair's warranty) to help make it easier to move the chair. What started as a smart investment turns into a poor one; and unattractive, modified chairs reflect poorly on your brand during family visits or prospect tours.
- **Do your dining chairs (and floors) have excessive wear and tear?**
Dining chairs showing excessive wear and tear means they're being used in a way not intended by the manufacturer. Pushing and pulling on the arms of the chair to move the chair loosens the arms and over time the twisting action damages the floors.

If any of these descriptions sound familiar then it may be time to replace your dining chairs. Invest in chairs that are not only comfortable and attractive, but designed for the increasing degree of mobility assistance residents and caregivers require.

ComforTek Chair Options Fit the Bill

[The Titan 2 series](#) offers a standard armed chair, which is suitable for about 70% of a care community's residents, and three additional armed chair models for the remaining 30% of residents. These additional models offer:

- Extra-durability and additional width to support the needs of bariatric residents.
- Swivel ability and a 3-position lock feature for safety.
- Chair caddies, which allow caregivers to easily activate the release bar positioned at the top back of the chair and enable the wheels to move and turn easily. Once released, the wheels are prevented from turning or moving.
- Footstools for chair models 20-inches high.

The Price Point

Factor in the cost for a standard chair (about \$300+) with the cost for a chair with mobility assistance (about \$500+) and the average cost per unit is about \$350. *Remember, only 30% of residents typically require a chair with mobility assistance.* As Titan 2's are designed to include a mobility component, each of the chairs includes a 25-year frame warranty that is double that of wood or aluminum chairs.

Says Randy, "You've got a product with a similar price point and extended life expectancy. That's not a bad investment."



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