



Doing This Will Increase Your Resident Family Engagement by 75%

By Susan Saldibar

For obvious reasons, calendars take center stage in assisted living communities. Calendars are huge, not only for the residents and families but also for the staff. So I wasn't surprised when Paige Robertson, Life Enrichment Coordinator for Edencrest at Siena Hills assisted living, began our conversation with a rave review of their automated, integrated LifeShare calendars. ([LifeShare](#) is a Senior Housing Forum partner.)

To be clear, the calendar app is just one of many features of the LifeShare platform. But, it's an important one. Having integrated calendar access is critical, given the expectations of residents, families, and staff for on-demand instant access to everything.

"Before LifeShare, our system only allowed for the creation of a printed calendar," Paige explains. "Now we can, not only print the calendar, we can display it on common area TVs, iPads, computers, and on the TVs in residents' apartments," she adds. So, with the calendar app, it's all about the agility of the system enabling last minute changes and updating daily, weekly, monthly, or on an ad hoc basis.

What's great about that level of flexibility is that it flows through all the LifeShare applications so that anyone can communicate with anyone else at any time. And, I might add, in any way they choose.

Edencrest at Siena Hills is currently using the *LifeShare In-Room* application for the residents' rooms, the *Family Mobile App* for family members, and the *CommunityShare app* for the staff. The results are impressive:

- **25% increase in resident participation.** Residents can see events right on their TV screens. They can receive reminders about upcoming events via a call or text message on their cell phones or messages on their TVs. Residents can send and receive messages to and from loved ones and view photos without having to download them first. And staff can share their participation with family members. "Before we would have family members saying, 'Mom says she's not doing anything'. Now we can show and prove it. She is participating! She attended this and this," Paige tells me.
- **50% decrease in low-value work time spent by staff.** Staff can now use their time to engage in more meaningful, high-value activities with residents.
- **75% increase in family engagement.** Families can use the phone app to stay updated on what's happening, see photos and announcements, and create a family account.
- **80% less time spent scheduling and creating calendars.** Because the calendar is fully automated "we can make last minute changes and they show up everywhere. We don't have to reprint over and over again," Paige says.
- **100% satisfaction in the customer service and support from LifeShare.** LifeShare tech support is great. "I can email a new idea and, within an hour, they're on the phone with me with 'What do you want to see?' We're never told, 'No, we can't do that'," Paige says.

Since Edencrest at Siena Hills opened in 2017, they've enjoyed healthy growth, in large part due to the ability to show prospective residents the level of connectivity they have with LifeShare. So I'm not surprised that LifeShare has been rolled out to other Edencrest properties as well.

I asked Paige if she had some words of advice for communities that are still shackled to paper and other clunky, outdated methods of communicating. She urges them to take the first step. "It's absolutely worth it. Easier than you think," she says. "LifeShare came out and set it all up. The program is so user-intuitive, very easy to onboard. We contracted with LifeShare in July and by August 1st everyone was on board."

And LifeShare has allowed Edencrest at Siena Hills to incorporate more technology into their activities. They take advantage of their podcasts, music, games, and face-to-face programs. "LifeShare has helped me become a better life experience coordinator," Paige says. "It helps us to be more connected spiritually, cognitively, and physically. And it gives our residents, families and my staff a more well-rounded experience."



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