



How to overcome staffing challenges using a senior living platform

Caregivers are at the core of any happy and high-functioning senior living community. They are the heroes who keep residents safe and connected to the world around them, taking their knowledge about each resident and using it to carefully curate activities and interactions that promote purposeful engagement. Caregivers help residents cultivate a sense of trust within their new community. They help residents bridge new connections while strengthening old ones. Well-qualified and long-term staff allow family members to rest at ease, knowing their loved ones are receiving great care. Studies support that higher staff and caregiver expertise are one of the biggest drivers of resident and family satisfaction.¹

Seems like an easy formula—keep staff happy and your senior living community will thrive! Unfortunately, keeping a senior living facility well-staffed with a long-term team has proven nearly impossible for senior living communities across the nation. The pandemic catapulted the industry’s staffing shortage to a “staffing crisis,” where it remains today. According to a survey released in 2023:

- Nursing homes have experienced the worst job loss rate of any health care sector
- 96% of nursing homes find difficulty in hiring staff
- 84% of nursing homes are currently facing moderate to high levels of staffing shortages
- 97% said the lack of interested or qualified candidates is a major obstacle to hiring new staff
- >13% decline in nursing home workforce
- 67% are concerned their facility may have to close due to persistent workforce challenges
- 54% of nursing home providers are having to limit new admissions due to staffing shortages²



Additionally, in a recent report that surveyed 110 community leaders, we learned that 91% of respondents are experiencing significant staffing and retention challenges.³

91%

of executives report hiring or retention challenges—and 63% confirm the issues have worsened since the pandemic’s onset.

Staffing shortages are detrimental to resident and staff satisfaction

With staffing shortages plaguing the nation, it should come as no surprise that caregivers' burnout and fatigue levels are higher than ever. A recent article revealed an influx in hiring temporary workers to support long-term care staff who are unable to keep up with the endless double shifts and taxing demands of the field. Nurse's aide Sherylon Hughes shared, "It's definitely like a last resort for a facility that is desperate," regarding the rise of hiring temporary workers. "By the time they figure out how we do things and they get comfortable and get to know our residents, the contract is over and they leave. So it's sort of a continuous influx of people who are just learning the ropes."⁴ Not only is this issue severely affecting caregivers, but it has a tremendous impact on residents who benefit from continuity in their relationships with staff.



Long-term caregivers impact your community's success

Temporary workers not only hinder critical operational standards such as community margins, occupancy rates, and resident safety—they also affect the quality of care that truly makes a residency a community. In fact, many studies indicate that staffing is one of the biggest indicators of quality care, and is carefully assessed by clients when researching senior living communities for their loved ones.⁶ Having long-term staff allows residents to feel seen and safe because they can cultivate meaningful relationships anchored in their knowledge of the resident, and that takes time!

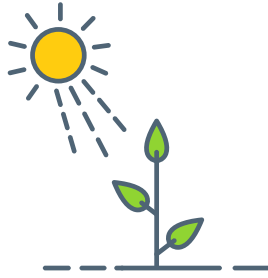
65%

of employees at elderly care facilities have witnessed a negative health consequence for a patient in the past two years caused by staffing shortages.⁵

Long-term caregivers take an environment that isn't initially perceived as "home" by residents and turn it into a place of safety, community, comfort, and eventually, their new home. Meaningful relationships allow caretakers and residents to develop deeper trust and social connections. Additionally, having long-term staff facilitates purposeful engagement, which in turn sends residents the message, "I have been seen as an individual. I know who my caretakers are, and they know me." As a result, residents gain a sense of belonging and feel more at home within their community. These authentic connections are paramount to any community's social capital. In the face of staffing shortages, many senior living operators will likely need to rely on technology to ensure high-quality, person-centered care. With 79% of operators surveyed acknowledging that staffing shortages impact their ability to provide residents with personalized care, the need for senior living technology solutions that increase staff efficiencies will be hard to ignore.³



**Staffing
impacts quality
of care**



**Quality of
care impacts
occupancy**

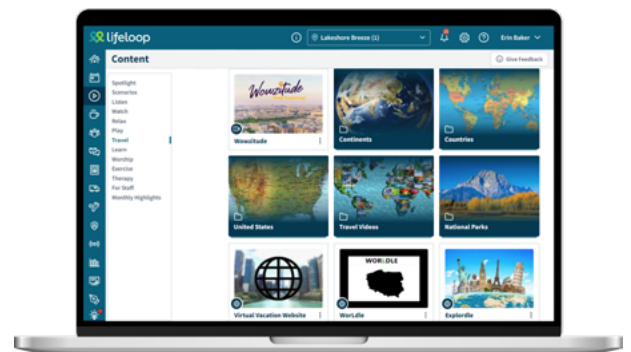
Senior living technology supports staff and residents

To help support staff and ensure resident satisfaction, senior living professionals must prioritize retaining staff and creating efficiencies in the workplace. With the help of technology specifically created for senior living communities, staff can do more with less! Here are four ways that senior living technology can increase staff efficiency in senior living organizations.

1. Decrease the amount of time staff spends planning, organizing, and executing activity programs.

Activity programs play a big role in resident satisfaction and community success. According to a survey of independent living or a combination of independent plus assisted living communities:

- 84% of residents who participate in a wellness program said they are satisfied/very satisfied with it.
- 94% of residents said they are satisfied/very satisfied with their overall quality of life in the community because of the community's wellness program.
- 44% said that they are much more satisfied with their quality of life because of the community's wellness program.⁷



While there is a direct correlation between resident satisfaction and a well-executed activity program, creating such a program can be a huge task for caregivers to take on, especially when they're already short-staffed. Activity directors not only have to learn about their diverse population's interests, care plans, and needs, but they also must find appropriate content, create calendars, send activity reminders, take attendance, and measure the success of each activity to ensure resident satisfaction and program success.

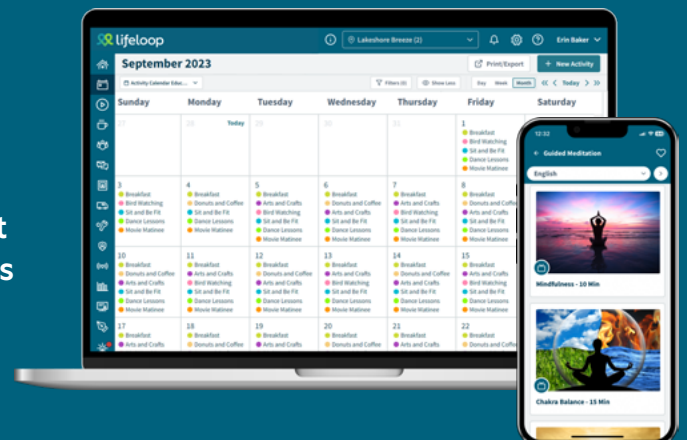
Finding relevant and appropriate content is only half the battle. Technology that also enhances operational efficiencies allows staff to focus more time on residents, and less time on searching and logistics. The latest senior living technology solutions come equipped with features and functionalities that allow staff to streamline program efficiencies as well as day-to-day operations.

For example, a calendar management feature can alleviate the workload of any activity director. This feature allows staff to quickly and easily build virtual calendars, which they can reuse week after week, cutting down on the time they spend planning. A good calendar management feature will also allow residents to schedule their own activities, send them event reminders, and track their attendance. Not only does this save staff from additional responsibilities, but it also provides them with valuable feedback they can use to create popular and well-attended activity programs.

Senior living technology features that assist staff in creating person-centered care encourage residents to function at their highest level. The LifeLoop enterprise platform offers over 6,000 pieces of content that are specifically curated for seniors of all abilities and interests. Our content library is easy to navigate, so residents can enjoy the content they love independently! Not only does this help promote purpose and independence in residents, but it also provides caregivers with a much-deserved break.

Our platform offers additional features that support staff in managing wellness programs:

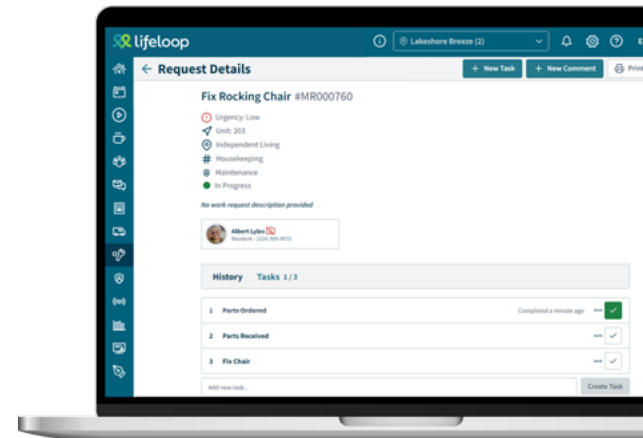
- Activity directors can **easily create calendars** using our Calendar Management feature
- Residents can **register for activities** that interest them and **receive event reminders** through the Resident Portal
- Staff can **track resident attendance** and easily access attendance data that help staff **build programs based on resident interests** using the Resident Tracking feature
- Staff and residents can **enjoy wellness content and programs specifically designed for seniors** such as yoga, chair dancing, brain aerobics, guided meditation, and more



2. Reduce paperwork, administrative tasks, and the need to learn and utilize multiple systems.

One of the biggest gripes senior living staff have with technology in the workplace is that there are too many systems to learn and use and not enough time to learn or use them! Providing your staff with one operational platform to manage maintenance, housekeeping, IT, and transportation is critical to ensuring proper documentation and operational efficiency.

Senior living technology that consolidates a community's operational workflows into one system and can be accessed through any smart device is a huge time saver! The time it takes for a staff member to walk over to a system, log onto a desktop computer, and input information really adds up. That time is increased even more when staff is asked to utilize multiple systems for multiple processes. It's simply unmanageable, especially when understaffed.



Providing staff and caregivers with one portal to access all their operational and resident engagement needs can exponentially increase their efficiency by decreasing the time they spend logging into different systems. Building operational workflows into one system also cuts down on the time staff spends on administrative tasks, increasing the time they can spend doing what they love...caring for residents.

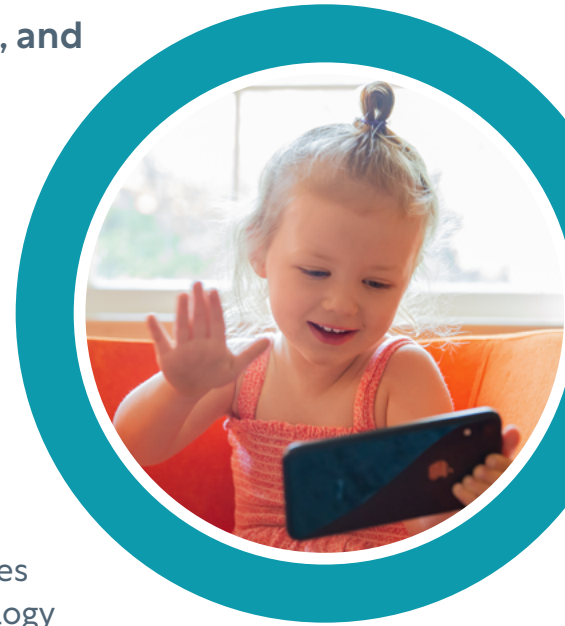
The LifeLoop enterprise platform not only offers engagement content—it also provides a full concierge management system! Staff can:

- Create a reservation system that **empowers residents and staff** to create and manage their own schedules
- Design calendars and newsletters **with customized images and text**, including options to add special events like birthdays and anniversaries to calendars
- Input and **manage work and transportation requests with live progress updates** and a detailed history log
- View requests in a list or calendar format to **get a clear picture of what needs to be done**
- **Input preventative and recurring reminders** for your community
- **Customize** what information they want to track and **build custom reports**

3. Offer communication tools that keep staff, residents, and families up to date on important information.

If the pandemic taught the senior living industry anything, it was that communication and staying connected are key to maintaining healthy staff and residents and happy families. Senior living technology that offers a powerful and secure communication feature ensures that staff can relay important messages quickly and efficiently. It also allows residents to stay connected with their loved ones every day, regardless of the miles between them.

The top reason family members would not recommend a community is if the community neglected to provide opportunities for socialization and connections for residents. The use of technology to enhance communication and connections has been proven to decrease feelings of isolation and loneliness in residents, which can be detrimental to a resident's well-being. A powerful communication platform arms your staff with one of the strongest tools they need to effectively care for residents and increase family satisfaction.



LifeLoop's enterprise platform comes packed with communication tools that make staying connected easy and secure! Our communication system provides staff with the following capabilities, among others, all on one platform.

- **Broadcast messaging** to facilitate sending urgent messages to all staff, residents, and families
- **Secure messaging** between staff, residents, and families to **keep loved ones connected**
- **Customized notifications and permissions** based on each staff member's individual preferences and needs

Families and residents can also enjoy using our mobile-friendly platform to stay connected.

4. Consolidate resident information in one place for quick access.

To provide residents with the highest level of care while also proactively identifying their needs, staff need a secure and reliable platform to input, access, track, and share resident information. Using a comprehensive senior living platform provides staff with one place to house resident information—no need for cluttered and out-of-date paperwork or searching through binders in a back office!

Consolidating resident information into one, easy-to-access repository makes it easy for staff to access the up-to-date resident information they need to efficiently create person-centered care plans for each resident. Providing temporary workers and volunteers with one system to learn allows them to walk confidently into a community, access resident information, and provide individualized care from day one. That's powerful!



The LifeLoop enterprise platform comes equipped with resident profiles that support staff by:

- Neatly **housing resident information** that staff need to create effective person-centered care plans
- Providing caregivers with **resident names, pictures, bios, history, room number, interests, their favorite content, and their family contact information**
- Allowing caregivers to easily compile a list of personalized resident likes and dislikes, which is beneficial for **creating meaningful engagement and person-centered care plans for residents**

A comprehensive senior living platform to empower staff

Happy caregivers yield happy residents, and happy residents yield a successful and lucrative community. Integrating technology into day-to-day operations allows senior care staff to actively support their residents' well-being, while also supporting their own. Investing in technology specifically created for senior living communities is the key to unlocking sustainable organizational and operational efficiencies that enable your staff to do more with less. Less stress, less paperwork, less systems, less hassle—and more time and care for your residents! A comprehensive enterprise platform provides your staff and caregivers with the resources and support they need to provide long-term and high-quality care that will set your senior living community apart from the rest. Being a caregiver is not easy! Being a caregiver in a world where staffing shortage is the norm can seem impossible. Senior living technology from LifeLoop can help.



Want to learn more about LifeLoop's support features?
Please visit lifeloop.com

Sources:

1. Song, E. O., & Jang, H. Y. (2020). Predictors of Satisfaction with Care Services among Family Members of Older Adult Residents of Long-Term Care Facilities. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(9), 3298.
2. American Healthcare Association. (2023). AHCA/NCAL Releases State Of The Nursing Home Sector Report.
3. iN2L + LifeLoop. (2023). Senior Living 2023: The State of Engagement and Technology.
4. Chatterjee, R. (2022, February 22). The pandemic pummeled long-term care – it may not recover quickly, experts warn. NPR. Retrieved February 23, 2023
5. Hedges, L. (2022, July 20). Staffing Shortages at Nursing Homes Tied to Poor Health Outcomes. *Top Business Software Resources for Buyers – 2022 | Software Advice*.
6. Cirillo, A. (2021, October 11). Choosing senior care? consider staffing – US news health.
7. HUR USA. (2020, January 14). How Wellness Programs Improve Resident Satisfaction and Length of Stay.