

Before

After



Belmont Village's Secret To Safer Communities

By Meg LaPorte

When it comes to implementing new technology in senior living, some can take weeks, even years, to fully install and integrate. And then there's the training and the necessary cajoling of staff members who are not so fond of change. In fact, it's no wonder that our industry has lagged so far behind other health care sectors in adopting beneficial technological solutions.

But sometimes a technology comes along that is simple, straightforward, easy to learn, and easy to install. Such is the case with Accushield's badge-printing system that automates the sign-in process for all visitors to a senior living community. According to Carlene Motto, executive vice president of sales and marketing for Belmont Village Senior Living, [Accushield](#) (a Senior Housing Forum partner) appealed to her immediately when she was in search of an upgrade to the company's old-school visitor and third-party vendor sign-in system.

First Impressions Make a Difference

"I saw it in Atlanta and around the same time one of our executive directors, who was already familiar with the product, asked if we would consider it as a way to both improve technology at the front desk while also improving resident safety and security," says Motto. "We approached it from the marketing side because it obviously enhances visitors' first impression since it's right at the front desk."

In other words, she adds, it's a marked improvement to the three-ring binder sign-in system that had been in place for many years. "The Accushield system is a much more sophisticated way of doing it, and it gives communities more control with regard to who can access the buildings."

Staff and Residents Get On Board

Another bonus is that it was a very easy sell for staff and residents because it adds a layer of security that hasn't been in place before. "They got used to it very quickly," Motto notes. "Staff members now feel empowered to ask anyone who doesn't have a badge on to go back to the front desk. And from a resident and family standpoint we didn't get any pushback at all."

Yet another plus for Belmont was that implementation went so smoothly at the pilot sites, they made the decision to expand Accushield company wide to its 26 communities after just six to nine months of the pilot run in four communities.

Third-Party Credentialing Brings It Home

Belmont Village Chief Operating Officer Doug Lessard is impressed with the Accushield feature that credentials third-party vendors. The system confirms receipt of required credentials, such as criminal background checks, liability insurance, immunizations, and more, from third-party health care providers and other vendors working in the building and keeps them in the system. "Belmont does extensive background checks on all of its employees and vendors," says Lessard. "But for vendors that are new to a community, we sometimes have no way of identifying them beforehand. With Accushield, we have the certification process, which gives us and our residents and staff better peace of mind."

Lessard believes that the Accushield system gives Belmont Village a leg up over other providers. "I think it does give us a competitive advantage, although I am seeing more of our competitors signing on with it." Although he likes having that competitive advantage, he acknowledges that it's ultimately good for everyone to have a better system in place for the safety and security of residents and staff.

"It is in the best interest of the whole industry," he says.

For more information please email us at charles@accushield.com or visit www.accushield.com



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