



The Power of Technology:

Helping Skilled Nursing and
Senior Living Providers Overcome
Challenges Presented by COVID-19




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The COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant catalyst for change and innovation in long-term and post-acute care (LTPAC) facilities. Experts say it accelerated the adoption of digital health and virtual care by at [least three years](#).

We first spoke to our customers at the onset of the pandemic to [understand how they had immediately pivoted](#). Now, we're taking a look at how they have continued to innovate as the fight against COVID-19 continues. For these providers, the pandemic has brought to light fresh ways to use current technology, as well as new digital tools, to keep operations moving efficiently while always ensuring safety is the top priority.

Point-of-care kiosks, digital collaboration tools, iPads for telehealth visits, and technologies for streaming content have all played a key role in the fight against COVID-19, and will continue to be prominent as we move into the vaccine phase and beyond.



The Everyday Value of Technology

Technology has played a critical role in many areas of healthcare during COVID-19. Notably, it has increased collaboration across departments, facilitated engagement with providers, enabled telehealth and virtual visits, cut down on manual and repetitive tasks, served as a data and information hub for staff, and supported more consistent communication with families.

Here are the top technology solutions and digital tools our customers are benefitting from in the height of the pandemic.

Kiosks: 'On the Go' Documentation

Kiosks and point-of-care documentation technology emerged as integral tools to help skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) and senior living providers reduce the spread of the disease. Updated with information in real-time, kiosks help with everything from information transfer, staff collaboration, and delivery of care to in-depth tracking of symptoms and reporting. They also help to promote social distancing, as kiosks are generally kept in close proximity to where nurses are working or are completely mobile, reducing the need to shuffle unnecessarily between different points within the facility.

When looked at holistically, kiosks improve the user experience for both nurses and staff. In the midst of rising cases and high demand for care, kiosks and documentation tools have served an important function in making frontline workers' lives easier. They simplify the note-taking process while streamlining communication, and as a result, remove any guesswork that arises when information is not entered in real-time.



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Nancy McCune
Healthcare Systems Administrator
Westmoreland Manor



Kiosks and documentation tools used “on-the-fly” deliver real-time visibility into tasks and timelines of care to create a more accurate view of nurses schedules. Better insight into nurse timelines, coupled with more streamlined documentation during their shifts, delivers meaningful value to nurses who are already stretched thin. [Recent data](#) conducted by Mental Health America found that 93% of healthcare workers are experiencing stress and 76% reported exhaustion and burnout, illustrating the need for tools that simplify their day-to-day responsibilities.

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In the past nine months, point-of-care documentation tools have proven to be extremely valuable, not only in fighting the spread of disease but also for improving the nurse experience. Assisted living staff have more reasons than ever to leverage them and increase efficiency. In a post-COVID-19 world, kiosks will be more prominent in long-term care facilities than they were pre-pandemic.



Telehealth: Remote Care

Telehealth has also been a particularly useful tool for facilities for non-emergency and routine care cases. It eases up on internal resources, improves access to care, supports the continuity of care and of course, removes the risk of person-to-person transmission.

For Westmoreland Manor specifically, telehealth removed the burden on staff members who would typically need to take patients to and from appointments.

Digital Communication

Collaboration between physicians and care staff is more important than ever. Effective collaboration enhances efficiency by removing barriers and improves resident care by enabling the free flow of real-time information. It ensures all parties can be on the same page and work toward the same outcomes for each patient, every single day.

Jessica Benjamin, Clinical Informatics Specialist with The Rouse Estate shared, "With the Practitioner Engagement tool from PointClickCare, we have been able to communicate more efficiently with our providers. We have one provider who is a bit older and using secure conversations to communicate, which allows us to get responses back quicker. With the tool, we know that he will respond within a few hours and have our issues taken care of quickly. The tool has also helped cut down on paper and manual tasks since our physicians sign off on orders directly through the tool. If they give a verbal order or a telephone order, we can enter it into the tool and have them sign off electronically."





Beyond the benefits that technology has offered to providers, it has also played another very important role: enabling patients to stay close to loved ones and each other. iPads and tablets have been essential at a time when family and friends cannot visit in person.

Feelings of loneliness and isolation can be detrimental to the senior population, and these feelings are exacerbated when patients are spending more time in their individual rooms and less time with others. Using FaceTime and other apps to call family and friends goes a long way in helping patients to feel less alone.

Additionally, in speaking with customers, it's clear that using technology to livestream and broadcast content to patients has kept morale high in many facilities.

For Westmoreland Manor, streaming has enabled patients to attend prayer service, participate in exercise classes and even witness the wedding of a patient's granddaughter. With communication and congregation between patients absent during the pandemic, sharing live content has been a way for patients to feel a sense of community and belonging.



Improved Business Outcomes

Leveraging technology and digital tools not only helps in the moment of need but also supports higher-level business goals, such as more efficient use of resources, enhanced collaboration between different departments, improved staff experience, and boosted moral.

It's clear that implementing the right technologies — at the right time — has a positive ripple effect throughout the entire organization.

When nurses spend less time on documentation and have access to real-time data, they are able to up-level the quality of care they provide patients. Information sharing is important all the time, but it has proven to be absolutely vital during this period of crisis and in the fight against an infectious disease.

In the ongoing battle against COVID-19, we need to do everything we can to empower our frontline heroes. Technology is a key ally in this fight. While an unwelcome event, the pandemic illuminated new strategies that long-term care facilities can use to improve overall operations and provide the best care possible.

While senior-living care providers likely won't be going back to 'business as usual,' they have implemented new capabilities and strategies that will be essential to the way their facilities operate for years to come. As Jessica Benjamin put it: "I can't imagine doing this without technology."



In the midst of a crisis, digital tools are critical to keeping facility processes moving smoothly, supporting patients' mental health and slowing the spread of disease. For our customers, they have proved invaluable during the fight against COVID-19 and will become an even greater part of their operations in the future.

If you're interested in learning more about how you can achieve better patient – and business – outcomes through innovative technology solutions

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PointClickCare is the leading electronic health record (EHR) technology partner to North America's long-term post-acute care industry. To learn more about how PointClickCare can help your business, visit them at pointclickcare.com.

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