

eBook

## Five Market Pressures Reshaping Medication Management in Senior Living

How rising acuity, staffing pressure, and fragmented pharmacy workflows are reshaping medication management operations across senior living communities and what leading wellness teams are doing to successfully navigate these five market pressures.

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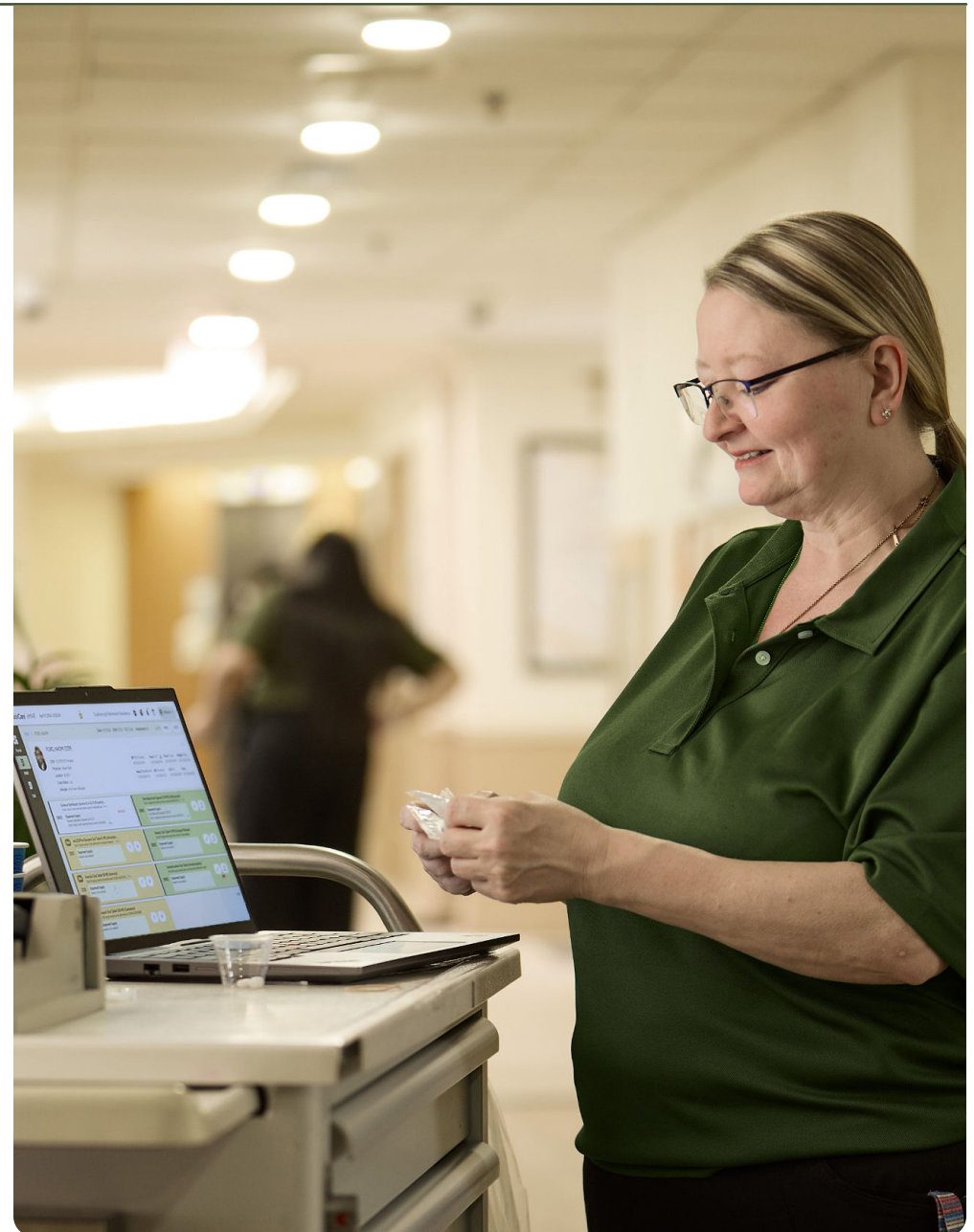
## The Medication Management Inflection Point

Medication management in senior living has always been operationally demanding. But something has shifted in the last several years that makes the current moment different from what came before.

The challenge is not any single pressure in isolation. Residents are arriving with more complex medication needs. Staffing remains stretched. Pharmacy coordination still depends on manual processes that were not built for today's complexity. What makes this moment harder is that these pressures are converging simultaneously, on the same teams, within workflows that were not designed to handle all of them at once.

The result is a compounding effect. More medications mean more coordination steps. More coordination steps on a short-staffed shift mean more opportunities for something to be missed. And in medication management, missed steps are where the risk lives.

This eBook outlines the five pressures reshaping medication management today, what they mean operationally, and how leading communities are beginning to respond.

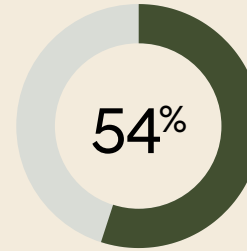


Pressure 1

## Residents Are Arriving with More Complex Medication Needs

The average acuity of a new senior living resident today would have once qualified them for skilled nursing care. Residents are arriving with more diagnoses, more functional limitations, and increasingly complex medication regimens.

Among senior living residents, the medication burden is even greater. Many wellness teams routinely manage residents on ten or more medications, each with its own administration schedule, food interactions, and documentation requirements. Multiply that across a full census and the cumulative weight on a wellness team is substantial.



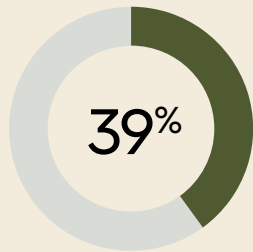
of older adults live  
with two or more  
chronic conditions.

Acuity creep is not a future concern. It is the present reality for most communities, and medication management operations need to be built around who is walking through the door today.

## Pressure 2

## Polypharmacy Is Increasing Resident Risk and Operational Complexity

As residents arrive with more medications, the coordination demands on wellness teams grow with them.



of adults age 65 and  
older take five or more  
prescription medications

**600K+ emergency department visits occur annually among older adults due to adverse drug events.** Approximately 50% of those events are preventable. The margin between a well-managed medication process and an avoidable transition is often a single coordination gap.

Many of these events stem from process gaps: an order change that did not reach the wellness team in time, a discontinued medication that remained in an administration record, a new prescription not reconciled before the next medication administration

Each medication is a coordination event. It has to be ordered, verified, dispensed, delivered, documented, and monitored. When any one of those steps is delayed, duplicated, or missed, resident safety and quality of life are at risk.

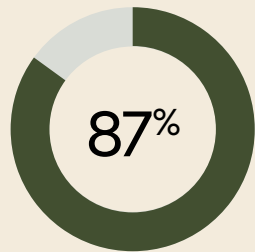
Managing medication complexity well requires consistent coordination across staff, shifts, and pharmacy partners—at precisely the moment when staffing capacity to support it is most constrained.

More medications do not just increase resident risk. They increase the number of coordination steps where something can go wrong, and the cost of getting it wrong falls on your team and your residents.

## Pressure 3

## Staffing Shortages Are Stretching Wellness Teams Thin

Staffing in senior living remains critically strained. For wellness teams, this creates a specific and compounding problem: the administrative work associated with medication management does not decrease when the team is understaffed. It stays exactly the same, and it now has to be completed by fewer people.



87% of assisted living providers are experiencing difficulty hiring new staff

Medication management is one of the most administratively demanding responsibilities a wellness team carries, especially when pharmacy coordination still depends on manual processes. The consequence is not only operational inefficiency. It is time and attention diverted away from residents.

With a 50% turnover rate in senior living, the teams managing these demands are doing so with a constantly shifting workforce.

The administrative demands of medication management do not ease when the team is thin. They pull time and attention away from the residents who need it most.

## Pressure 4

## When Pharmacy Coordination Is Manual, the Margin for Error Grows

The relationship between a senior living community and its pharmacy partner is one of the most operationally significant partnerships in medication management. When it works well, the wellness team can focus on residents. When it does not, the gaps that emerge are rarely visible until something goes wrong.

In most communities, pharmacy coordination still depends on phone calls, faxes, and verbal confirmations. These manual processes require substantial time and personnel to manage. And when information does not transfer reliably between the community and the pharmacy, the risk to residents grows. Medications get delayed. Doses get missed. Changes do not reach the right person in time. Without a connected workflow, these gaps may not surface until after they have already affected a resident.

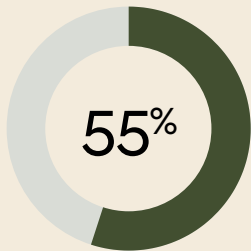


The risk in manual pharmacy coordination is not just the time it consumes. It is the conditions it creates for things to go wrong.

## Pressure 5

## Resident Variability Makes Standardization Harder and More Important

No two residents have the same medication profile. That has always been true. What has changed is the degree of variability wellness teams are managing across a single census and how frequently that variability changes.



of elderly do not follow  
prescription drug orders  
as directed

That variability shows up not just in medication profiles but in how every individual resident engages with their medications, requiring the wellness team to adapt their approach resident by resident, shift by shift.

A community of eighty residents today might include residents in memory care who need additional patience and a specific approach during medication administration, residents with swallowing difficulties who require liquid or crushed formulations, and residents on high-alert medications requiring additional monitoring. Managing that variability consistently across all shifts and all staff members requires the right information accessible at the right moment. When it is not, processes break down, documentation gaps emerge, and communities carry real liability when errors occur.

Inconsistency in how individualized medication needs are managed is a resident safety risk, a family trust risk, and a documentation liability. For communities managing occupancy carefully, any one of those is hard to recover from.

## What Leading Communities Are Doing Differently

The communities managing these five pressures most effectively have one thing in common: their wellness teams spend less time on coordination and more time with residents. They have built processes that hold regardless of who is on shift, so resident needs are met consistently even as staffing changes. Pharmacy coordination happens through connected and documented workflows rather than phone calls that leave no record.

The result is a care environment where:



discrepancies surface before they become errors



documentation is accurate and defensible



the wellness team is not constantly absorbing the friction that manual processes create

That is not a small operational shift. For communities managing complex resident needs with lean teams, it is the difference between staying ahead of risk and reacting to it.

## Take Action: Your Next Step

The five pressures described in this eBook are not going away. But the workflows do not have to stay the same. PointClickCare Pharmacy Connect directly connects your community to your preferred pharmacy, eliminating the manual steps and delays that consume wellness team time and create the conditions where errors occur.

Your team gets a dedicated Wellness Workspace to track, confirm, and manage medication orders with confidence. Standardized workflows and automated alerts support consistent, compliant practices across every shift. And with controlled substance tracking built in, your community has the oversight and documentation defensibility it needs. Less time on coordination. More time with residents.

Learn about how PointClickCare Pharmacy Connect can simplify medication management for your community.

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PointClickCare is a leading health tech company with one simple mission: to help providers deliver exceptional care. With the largest long-term and post-acute care dataset, we power AI-driven healthcare to deliver intelligent transitions, insightful interventions, and improved financial performance. Enhanced by our Marketplace of 400+ integrated partners and trusted by over 30,000 provider organizations and every major U.S. health plan, we're redefining healthcare, so it doesn't just survive — it thrives.

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