

Person-centered wellness is the key to the future

Outcomes from the
ICAA Forum
April 2023



International Council on Active Aging[®]

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ICAA FORUM

The ICAA Forum Spring 2023

The ICAA Forum think tank gathers thought leaders from senior living and wellness-focused organizations to formulate philosophies and recommendations that benefit individuals and organizations.

At the ICAA Forum Spring 2023, hosted by International Council on Active Aging®, representatives from more than 32 organizations confirmed the value of person-centered wellness and detailed actions that transition person-centered wellness from philosophy to practice. With the goal of providing a framework for the senior living industry, representatives included active-adult, independent living, assisted living, memory care and nursing organizations.

International Council on Active Aging® (ICAA)

The International Council on Active Aging has led, connected and defined the active-aging industry since 2001. Founded in the belief that unifying the efforts of organizations focused on the health and wellness of older adults benefits both the people they reach and the organizations themselves, ICAA's vision is shared by over 10,000 organizations. ICAA's support of the active-aging industry includes industry research reports, program development, market development, education and research on healthy aging and wellness, strategy development, public relations campaigns and recognition programs.

ICAA Education, Inc., a sister company, develops and delivers courses to help active-aging professionals build needed skills and knowledge to impact older-adult wellness and the business bottom line.

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Why the future is personalization

At the heart of a person-centered wellness approach in senior living is a simple fact: The diverse population of older adults requires tailored solutions that recognize their unique characteristics and needs. Recognizing and acknowledging this diversity is essential, as it highlights the inadequacy of one-size-fits-all solutions and the importance of a person-centered wellness approach when catering to this group.

After all, older adults are individuals. Each person has unique experiences that have shaped their behaviors and preferences. These experiences influence various aspects of their lives, including living arrangements, health status and overall quality of life.

To effectively meet the expectations and needs of the individuals who can benefit from senior living, it is crucial to gain a comprehensive understanding of their physical and cognitive abilities, health conditions, work or marital status, gender, sexual orientation and culture. Family connections, access to transportation and disposable income add another layer to understanding, embracing and responding to the diversity of your current and potential resident and customer.

In this ICAA Forum report, you will find compelling reasons to focus on individuals rather than generic groups. Driven by the person-centered philosophy, funding, programming and staffing can be maximized, supported by updates to technology and the built environment.

When you develop person-centered policies, people and processes, you can unlock new opportunities for innovation and tailor your offerings to better suit their requirements. Embracing diversity becomes a catalyst for success in this rapidly growing market segment.

PERSON-CENTERED WELLNESS DEFINES SENIOR LIVING

Wellness is person-centered

Wellness is derived from our ability to understand, accept and act upon our identity and capacity to lead a purpose-filled and engaged life. In doing so, we can embrace our potential (emotional, environmental, cognitive/intellectual, physical, social, spiritual and professional/vocational) to pursue and optimize life’s possibilities.

Person-centeredness coordinates the concepts of wellness, well-being, customer experience and choice into a framework that can be implemented and managed. The terminology may vary: person-centered, person-centric, person-led, choice-driven, people-first, employee-first, precision, personalization The suffix may change from -centered to -centric to -driven, but all of these are aimed at the same result: placing each individual at the center of the program, process or procedure.

Applying person-centered wellness means seeing every interaction and process from the viewpoint of the resident and potential resident, their families and friends. Effectively “walking in the other person’s shoes.” Person-centered wellness has the same approach and the same rewards as person-centered care and the person-centered workplace. Individuality, independence, privacy, dignity and respect are person-centered values.^{1,2}

Who cares about being person-centered?

The identity, beliefs and needs of individuals cut across all the physical and cognitive abilities they have wherever they live, whether in active adult or independent living communities, assisted living and memory care homes or nursing care.

During the ICAA Forum, delegates combined their experiences with the residents and non-resident family members to develop a profile of the wants and needs of the aging population. A desire to be heard, to choose what to do and when to do it, and make their own decisions are characteristics found in most people. Every resident and non-resident deserves to have staff members pay attention to who they are and what they are saying.

Walk into a coffee shop and you personalize your order by naming the size of cup, flavor of hot or cold coffee or tea, and addition of frothy milk or sugar. That’s an example of a person-centered operation. The size of the organization does not matter, only the ability to allow the customer a personal choice.

Person-centeredness is a cross-cutting philosophy		
Quality of life is the goal		
Person-centered wellness	Person-centered workplace	Person-centered care
Life goals are considered	Life goals are considered	Life goals are considered
Values and abilities are respected	Values and abilities are respected	Values and abilities are respected
Needs and preferences are solicited	Needs and preferences are solicited	Needs and preferences are solicited
Choices are acted upon	Suggestions and advice are acted upon	Person guides healthcare decisions
Personal development is available and rewarded	Professional and personal development is available or rewarded	Preferences are followed if needs change
Wellness integrated into policies, services and programs	Wellness integrated into workday	Wellness and well-being resources available

Wants and needs are not limited by physical and cognitive abilities Functionally and cognitively able ←→ Needs help for physical or cognitive function	
I want to...	Be as independent as possible
	Make my own decisions
	Receive respect and maintain my dignity
	Stay connected with family and friends, meet new people
I want you to...	Understand who I am and what I want or need
	Acknowledge my wishes and goals
	Accept I am not a medical diagnosis
	Assume I am capable instead of incapable, I can do many things
	Recognize I have fears of decline and losing my independence

Resources

Going all-in for wellness

Action steps for organization’s culture, leadership team, belief systems, financial models and staffing models
https://www.icaa.cc/conferenceandevents/forums/reports/2022_06_allin.pdf

Leadership in Wellness Management certificate course

Modules on culture, communication, business planning, teamwork
<https://www.icaa.cc/certificate/leadership/reasons.htm>

Person-centeredness creates business value

A McKinsey & Company report on personalization noted that companies that personalize interactions with their customers generate more revenue than those that do not. This survey found that 71% of consumers expect personalization from the brands and businesses they choose.³ Another survey of consumers found that 42% do not find an age-based generational label relevant or helpful, and 76% want to be seen as individuals.⁴

What can senior living learn from other types of businesses? If consumers are more receptive to

personalization in retail, won’t they expect, even demand, the same experience when making the big, life-changing decision to move into a senior living community?

Do you feel every stereotype assigned to your age generation applies to you?

Person-centered wellness, delivered through dining, recreation, wellness, healthcare and each staff member leads to multiple benefits.

Increased length of stay. The number-one reason to promote the person-centered wellness culture and operations is the potential to increase the months and years residents stay, which maintains occupancy.

Long-term stability of occupancy levels. Person-centered wellness is a long-term strategy to maintain or increase resident satisfaction and referrals, which leads to easier marketing.

Adds a cultural upgrade to older properties. An active, person-centered lifestyle, where people are listened to and acknowledged, may be more important to current and potential residents than high-end amenities.

Attractiveness to younger-older generations. Call them demanding, but the expectations and aspirations of older adults, ages 60-80, need to be met for them to move in, or to pay for access to programs and services.

Positioning for the middle-income market. For residents, person-centeredness provides the lifestyle they had in the past and want in the future. They may choose a welcoming community they can afford instead of staying isolated in a private home.

Instills workforce satisfaction. A workforce that is acknowledged and has their personal needs met is satisfied and less likely to leave. In turn satisfied workers listen to residents and colleagues, provide choices, and act upon resident requests.

Person-centered wellness is practical as well as philosophical. It is an approach to overcome negative perceptions of senior living, unite staff members in all areas around a common goal, and meet the operational and capital needs of the organization.



Economics and technology are forcing change

Much attention among governments, policy-makers and the media is focused on the needs-based services of assisted living, memory care and nursing care. While there will always be older people who need assistance or care, the market is changing. Current trends may limit the number of people who move into a care environment.

Technologies (voice-activated, smart homes, robots, communication systems) and structural modifications (barrier-free entries, wide doorways) are helping people adapt so they can stay in their current homes for a longer period of time.

Home care is rising among Medicare beneficiaries (more than 30% from 2002 to 2019)⁵ who can access these services through some Medicare Advantage plans.^{6,7} Government programs are available to support family caregivers. And government subsidies may impact reimbursement for healthcare services.

Financial capacity to afford senior living has always been uneven, and post-pandemic finances cloud the picture. Older people left their jobs or retired. Savings are not enough to cover a “retirement” that can span two decades. Both the National Investment Center and International Council on Active Aging released reports on the size of the middle-income market, and the risk to senior living organizations that do not look to the finances of their future residents.^{8,9} People with middle incomes will be willing to dispense with costly high-end features as long as they feel safe, have a social and active lifestyle, and options to pursue their interests. That’s what wellness does.

In a recent April 2023 release of data from the NIC Map, operators of the “wants-based setting” of independent living did report an increase in move-ins, but they did not expect occupancy to recover to pre-pandemic levels in 2023.¹⁰ Could a vital, engaging person-centered atmosphere attract new residents?

A person-centered wellness culture is an approach that counters these forces by attracting the younger, healthier older adult who desires an independent, social lifestyle and may not see the need for care. Person-centeredness is also a hallmark of organizations that apply the approach to staffing, which can inspire loyalty and reduce turnover.¹¹ Plus, when everyone has the single purpose of person-centered wellness, the silos between departments that collapsed during the pandemic can stay in the rubble of the past.

Wellness is person-centered, it has always been focused on the individual. The future may depend on enhancing the wellness culture with individual stakeholders driving the organization instead of the institutional structure driving the lifestyle.

Resources

Wellness attracts the middle-income market

Demographics and psychographics, operations, staffing and revenue potential

<https://www.icaa.cc/conferenceandevents/forums/forumreports.htm>

ICAA/ProMatura Wellness Benchmarks The National Benchmarks Report, 2017

Data from resident surveys and outcomes tracking
<https://www.icaa.cc/business/benchmarks.htm>

FIVE AREAS ARE KEY TO PERSON-CENTERED WELLNESS

Individuals create person-centered wellness

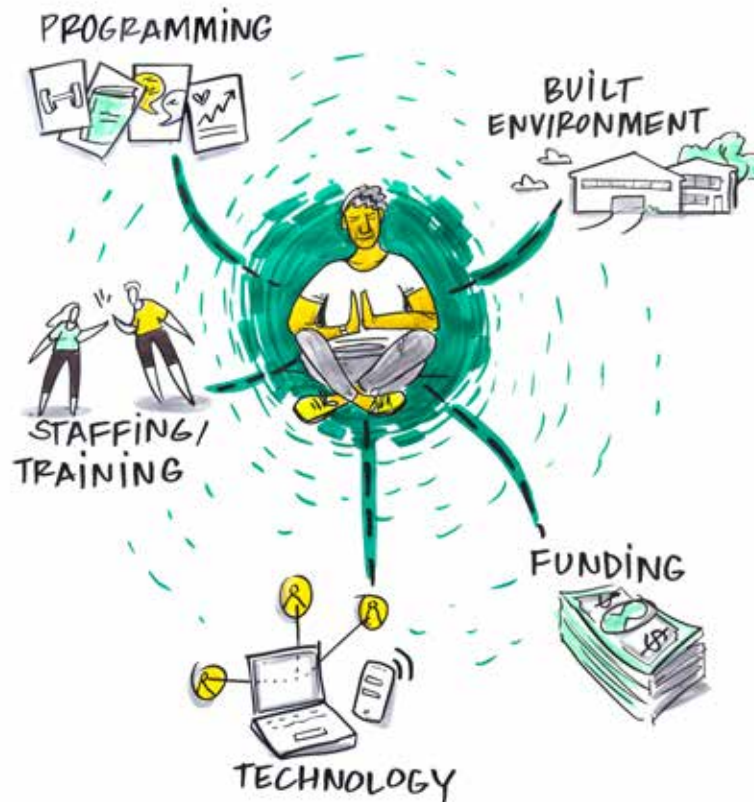
A culture of wellness involves all leaders and staff, in every role and department, in providing services and experiences that enable older adults to participate in life-affirming choices that include the dimensions of wellness. Older adults are active participants in developing the wellness culture.

The premise of person-centeredness, whether in care, employment or wellness (which overarches these) is the focus on individuals, not on large-scale generalizations about age groups, cultures or generations. One solution does not fit everyone. Person-centered culture tips the scale in favor of the individual resident, member and customer.

To integrate person-centeredness across an organization, look to funding, programs, staffing and training, technology and the built environment.

Ask yourself:

- What would person-centered wellness look like in your community?
- What changes are required to adopt a person-centered approach?
- What mindset shifts would need to happen (executives, residents, staff) to support these changes?
- What resources (people, processes, technology) could be leveraged to support these changes?
- If you could only make one change to support person-centered wellness, what would be the top priority?
- What quick wins could be implemented in your communities?



1. Person-centered key: Funding

Historically seniors housing funding has been a competition among various demands. Should investment prioritize the medical model or the hospitality and wellness model? Where should capital be allocated, towards operational efficiency or wellness-capable amenities? Is the focus on passive entertainment or empowerment? The allocation of funds ultimately hinges on the perspectives of leadership and capital providers regarding the future vision of the community and its ability to remain relevant in a shifting market.

Investing in wellness is a long-term strategy that poses challenges when capital partners seek immediate returns. When wellness becomes highly personalized, the outcomes lead to greater satisfaction, which maximizes room occupancy to stabilize census. Reduced turnover minimizes the costs associated with redecorating vacant apartments, while lowering marketing and sales commission expenses required to fill vacancies. All these factors contribute to the overall financial health of the community, and the residents.

During the ICAA Forum, delegates placed great emphasis on positive resident experiences, lifestyle outcomes and improved financial performance over the next decade. They predicted that data would become available to personalize offerings and outcomes, government funding would increasingly support wellness and health initiatives to reduce medical procedure costs, and the implementation of robots, artificial intelligence and other technologies would help alleviate staffing expenses.

The why:

Person-centered wellness will increase lengths of stay by increasing resident satisfaction levels, attracting independent-minded and able residents, improving staff satisfaction and stability, adding names to the wait list, and improving returns for capital partners.

Key question:

Is the organization spending on low-value services and

programs with limited impact or investing in high-value services and programs with high impact?

Exciting ideas:

- Extend paid memberships to access programs and amenities to nonresidents.
- Develop family memberships so residents and family members can take advantage of amenities together.

More funding ideas:

- Offer a la carte, menu-based services so residents can “pay as they go” and nonresidents can access services. This would attract middle-income customers.
- Seek state, municipal government and research grants.
- Investigate if day programs for current residents or respite care provide private pay, tax breaks and partnership with health care maintenance organizations (HMOs).
- Add fee-based transitional living programs for current residents to provide resources before care is needed.
- Rent space to outside organizations with specific areas of expertise, such as those offering physical activities, arts programs, university lectures.
- Evaluate if money would be better spent on wellness for prevention, which is less expensive than care.
- Demonstrate that staff satisfaction results in less turnover and reduces costs to recruit and train.

Resources

Funding the new wellness model in senior living

Priorities, policies, operations and funding opportunities
<https://www.icaa.cc/conferenceandevents/forums/forumreports.htm>

Framing the return on investment (ROI) in wellness staff

Staff member’s impact on satisfaction, revenue and social accountability, evaluating ROI
<https://www.icaa.cc/conferenceandevents/forums/forumreports.htm>

2. Person-centered key: Programming

“Program” is a term that can refer to a single activity or to a schedule of multiple activities that may or may not be grouped by a theme or common interest. The wellness program invites and encourages residents and visitors to make a community their home through the collection of resident- and staff-led activities. Residents who participated in the wellness programs at ICAA/ ProMatura Wellness Benchmark senior living communities reported that the wellness program was one of the reasons they moved into the community.¹²

Today residents are looking for purpose and they are willing to try new things, agreed Forum delegates. Organizations nowadays are delivering programs virtually as well as in-person, but delegates noted that technology does not replace person-to-person contact.

Future programs will be resident-driven and developed by asking questions such as: “What is your new dream?” and “What makes you feel relevant today?” Residents with higher expectations want to challenge themselves and direct the program, rather than the program directing them.

The why:

Person-centered wellness is an exciting way to shift our entire industry, our outcomes and value proposition. The status quo does not support healthy, well-socialized lifestyles. Let’s talk about how to improve engagement among all stakeholders.

Key question:

How often is each resident—the person who does not participate and the person who does—asked what she or he wants to do, or try?

Exciting ideas:

- Gut check: Is the programming supporting person-centered wellness? Does it support the resident’s journey as they choose among self-directed or community-driven wellness opportunities?
- Align residents and staff members from all departments as joint stakeholders when developing and delivering programs.

More programming ideas:

- Assemble lifestyle biographies so staff members learn about individuals.
- Affirm autonomy and achievement.
- Rewrite interest surveys to ask what is desired instead of listing what is available.
- Provide purposeful activities instead of busy activities.
- Enable residents to self-select among the variety of experiences, according to their individual routines.
- Use interest-based groups for socialization.
- Partner with outside resources to increase program variety and expertise.
- Adapt programs for higher functioning and lower functioning participants.
- Organize staff across all departments to provide wellness opportunities.

Resources

Key elements for developing a wellness program for older adults

Format for programs, people, planning and performance tracking

https://www.icaa.cc/listing.php?Page=5&c=&listing_search_value=&type=white_papers

ICAA Wellness Audit

Capture capabilities in staffing, programs and place to track progress

International Council on Active Aging

https://www.icaa.cc/wellness_audit/audit_promo.php

Active listening centers on the person

- Listen carefully to what the person is saying.
- Acknowledge you are listening by nodding your head or keeping eye contact or saying “yes.”
- Don’t interrupt, fidget, look at your cell phone or look bored.
- If you are not sure what the person means, ask the person to rephrase.
- “It sounds like you mean X, and I want to make sure I heard correctly.”
- Validate what the person is saying.
- Ask if you can make a suggestion or share your thoughts.

3. Person-centered key: Staffing/ Training

A senior living community is not a vending machine that dispenses a service. It is a human-centered business, where personal connections are paramount. Staff members are the bedrock that supports any service offered in senior living. Unfortunately, recruiting, training and hiring qualified staff members remains a top challenge for many communities.

The pandemic changed everything, agree delegates to the ICAA Forum, not only in terms of having an adequate number of staff members, but also the need to swiftly provide specialized training and switch to virtual recruitment and training. The outlooks of potential staff members also changed.

In the future, organizations will need to offer more flexibility, acknowledgement and appreciation of each person. Compatibility between the values of staff members and the values of the organization is a priority. Managers and staff members will also need expertise in collecting and interpreting data to drive personalized recommendations and outcomes.

The why:

In order to expect person-centric wellness, we must take a person-centered approach with our staff and train them in an individualized way. Embrace technology to handle tasks that require no human contact or interaction, put people with people and train them well in utilizing technology to the fullest.

Key question:

Do supervisors and managers take time to sit with each person and ask about their challenges, needs and vision of the future? How often?

Exciting idea:

- Offer “wow” wellness benefits! Transportation, to-go family meal kits, self-care at work opportunities, self-care kits.

More staffing ideas:

- Focus on an employee-first workplace that treats staff members as well as residents are treated.
- Change training to encompass a culture of living.
- Train staff members, supervisors and managers in active listening and motivational interviewing skills.
- Develop active leaders and mentors who can coach and train “in the moment” during the workday.
- Reimagine wages, accounting for employee expenses such as toll fees, transportation, food costs, child care costs.
- Begin benefits on day one. Offer a menu of benefits employees can choose from.
- Build an education fund for staff and family members.
- Reward loyalty with professional development opportunities.
- Plan for personal time off.
- Provide transportation or child care for staff members.

Resources

The future is an employee-first workplace

Strategies to update recruitment and retention of staff and management

https://www.icaa.cc/data/product/8914_8fd0a9aced81b85ea4740562e2ad5f5f.pdf

Strategies for utilizing the talent of 50+ workers

Skill sets, upskilling and reskilling, action plan and HR checklist

https://www.icaa.cc/listing.php?Page=2&c=&listing_search_value=&type=white_papers

4. Person-centered key: Built Environment

The built environment creates a sense of place, where people feel an attachment to the neighborhood, buildings and landscape because it provides what is familiar and important to them.¹³ Buildings, interior spaces and design along with outdoor spaces are part of the built environment. Hallways, paint colors, furniture and fixtures, park benches and sidewalks all combine to create the sense of place for the people who live there and use the spaces.

Transcendent design, which encourages people to move beyond the ordinary, is an approach to inspire wellness. This philosophy focuses on human interactions with their environment to create places where they find comfort or new experiences or a feeling of self-discovery. A garden or sensory room, virtual reality or art pieces can all encourage a transcendent feeling in individuals.

New and potential residents value spaces that are environmentally focused and allow for social interactions, believe ICAA Forum delegates. They are interested in outdoor places and spaces designed so they can move independently, pursue various interests and experience a sense of belonging. Three features of the built environment will be required: (1) internet capability, (2) spaces accommodating younger and older generations and (3) areas that inspire self-directed wellness.

The why:

A well-built environment offers a customized, person-centered experience where flexibility, discovery and innovation are key elements of a purposeful design. Whether indoors or outdoors, it curates a sense of community that promotes sustainability, a sensory-rich environment and welcomes all to engage.

Key question:

What is the vision and what are the values that your built environment is hoping to achieve?

Exciting ideas:

- Embracing change is the first step in rethinking how each person will use the space.
- Design environments that inspire transcendent experiences for inspiration, contemplation or intrigue.
- Ensure residents and staff are partners with builders and architects during remodeling or constructing new structures. Listen to and adapt design to their input.

More built environment ideas:

- Build or create a more holistic sensory experience for all.
- Reimagine spaces for flexible usage; utilize modular design and movable equipment models found in tiny homes.
- Integrate smart home technologies and universal design into remodels and new buildings.
- Balance smaller indoor spaces with a greater use of outdoor spaces.
- Staff and residents work together to determine how a space will be used.
- Design spaces that encourage collaboration, social connections.
- Work early and often with regulating agencies to advocate for policies that allow indoor and outdoor spaces to adapt to the changing consumer.

Resources

Future-proof your senior living community

Models of built and unbuilt environments, culture, workforce, technology
https://www.icaa.cc/conferenceandevents/forums/reports/2020_11.pdf

The principles of future-proofing

The built environment
<http://principlesoffutureproofing.com/>

5. Person-centered key: Technology

A definition of technology is the application of systems, devices and methods, developed from scientific knowledge, for practical purposes. Senior living communities have adapted to technologies that aid operations, information-sharing and communication. Voice-activated systems, wearables, games, business software and health records are used in communities.

Interoperability is a long-standing issue for many businesses, including senior living, since many technologies do not connect with another manufacturer's brand. The age of a building can stand in the way of success in technology adoption because of the infrastructure requirements, which new construction can easily plan for.

Today, and in the future, the greatest challenge may be deciding which technology is high value for the resident and for the organization. How will artificial intelligence, virtual reality, home health automation and robotics support person-centered wellness that enables residents to create and experience purpose-filled activities? Cost effectiveness will always be a factor.

Enthusiasm for technologies that enable person-centered approaches was high among ICAA Forum delegates, who believe technology has an important role in collecting data that will be used to plan person-centered programs and procedures.

The why:

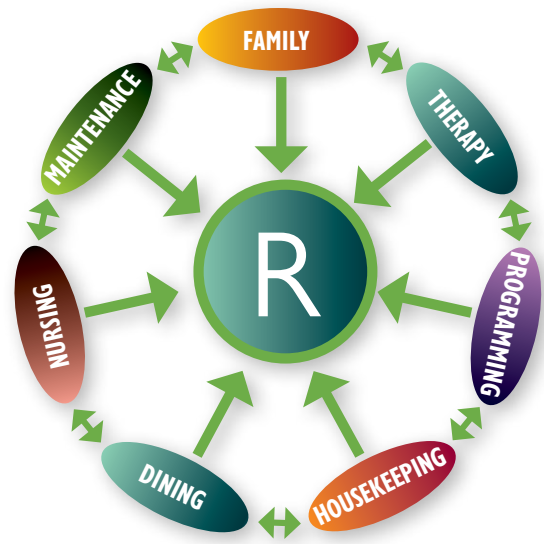
Empower users and staff to navigate their wellness journeys through technology.

Key question:

Are staff members and residents who will use the technology involved in evaluating potential purchases?

Exciting ideas:

- Develop a single platform with residents in the center and spokes that connect family, therapy, programming, housekeeping, dining, healthcare, maintenance.
- Adopt technologies that can personalize experiences for precise resident solutions, programs and outcomes.



More technology ideas:

- Look for technologies that connect disciplines and departments for appropriate information sharing.
- Install technologies for wellness staff and residents to track outcomes and show return on investment.
- Seek technology that is user-friendly according to residents' abilities.
- Include user-generated content.
- Evaluate success of technology that is already in place. Is it being used to full potential?
- Discover if technologies already in place can be used effectively to meet a need instead of acquiring another technology.
- Identify the impact and value of technologies (wearables, communication, DNA testing, apps) before purchase.
- Provide training by humans on an ongoing basis. Web-based training is not adequate.
- Use technology for precision and individualized wellness programs or healthcare.
- Include residents and staff when evaluating potential use of current or future technologies.

Resources

The future of technology for active aging

Components of a technology roadmap, checklist for evaluating technology
<https://www.icaa.cc/conferenceandevents/forums/forumreports.htm>

Future-proof your senior living community

Models of built and unbuilt environments, culture, workforce, technology
https://www.icaa.cc/conferenceandevents/forums/reports/2020_11.pdf

PERSON-CENTERED WELLNESS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Wellness is the new model for senior living

Organizations benefit greatly from a stable census offered by wellness. Wellness philosophy and actions deliver the brand promise, uniting disciplines and departments to support residents, staff and customers so all achieve quality of life while organizations meet objectives and future-proof sustainability.

Throughout the ICAA Forum on person-centered wellness, the word “change” was heard. Some changes were occurring before the COVID-19 pandemic closures, and others that emerged remain. Global and national economies are changing, consumer interests and demands are changing, the old-style retirement community is changing—or not.

People are at the heart of all the changes. Consumers are individuals who choose what they want or need; executives make decisions that affect their employees, stakeholders and customers. A person-centered wellness culture is about paying attention to people, and their individual aspirations and needs.

For senior living, person-centeredness leads to better outcomes for residents and the community. Healthier, happier residents drive move-ins by a like-minded population that seeks autonomy, social connections and service. It can improve staffing, attract younger, healthier residents and open the window to updated approaches to buildings, services, programs and funding.

The future of senior living will be guided by:

- Empowerment.
- Mix of younger and older generations.
- Residents driving services.
- Workforce demands for flexibility, living wages and professional development.
- Plethora of technologies that can overwhelm people and organizations.
- Home-based wellness programs and health.
- Prevention as an intervention.
- Data to demonstrate resident outcomes for wellness return on investment.

Choose what matters

Does it truly make a difference whether we refer to person-centered wellness as centric or led, first or precision? Regardless of the terminology used, person-centered wellness revolves around the individual who possesses a unique identity and desires to exercise independent decision-making and choices, all while valuing meaningful connections with others.

Person-centered wellness:

- supports the individual’s journey to understand who they are, what capabilities they have and how they wish to be purposeful in day-to-day interactions. After all, how can you have a person-centered focus if an individual does not know who they are and what they aspire to?
- focuses on individual aspirations as well as needs and wants. The person-centered environment respects residents and staff members as partners in decision-making, and recognizes each person brings ability and knowledge to their roles.
- leads to outcomes that impact the powerful metric of length of stay. Length of stay reflects a long-term revenue stream from stable occupancy, reducing costs for marketing, apartment turnover and limiting move-outs for reasons other than care.
- is delivered through the people and policies within the organization, which means that older properties and newer high-end communities are equally positioned to focus on individual residents, and the people with potential to move in.

- appeals to the emerging market of people within the middle-income range. It opens the door to a larger population of residents and customers who expect choice, flexibility and value for the dollars they spend.
- reframes the mindsets of the executives and staff in senior living who assume older adults “can’t” or “won’t” embrace their identities and capabilities. Older adults across all functional levels bring with them a wealth of life experiences and knowledge.
- requires funding for wellness initiatives and the staff training, technologies and programs that support person-centeredness. An organization that wants full occupancy and full staff rosters will prioritize investment in person-centered wellness.
- overlays everything available in senior living. Recognizing individuals, enjoying their individual natures and preferences, seeing the workplace as a second, positive family group—these are the attitudes that unite all the services and people in any organization.
- offers an opportunity to move from general programming to precise solutions that drive greater outcomes for residents and the community.

If senior living is to reflect the societal movements that place the person at the center of their health, then person-centered wellness is vital to creating and supporting current and future models of senior living.



Person-centered wellness action plan

Barriers	Potential	Quick wins
Ageist attitudes: our residents don't want to do anything, let's keep them quiet and busy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve residents in new and meaningful ways to demonstrate their capabilities. Shift mindsets from making rules to being a wellness advocate. 	
Capital partners want short-term profit and are less focused on long-term revenues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with marketing to show new and future residents move in for the lifestyle. Utilize ICAA benchmarks data to show wellness increases length of stay. 	
Executives and some leaders consider wellness and lifestyle a cost center rather than a revenue producer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define successes and best practices. Utilize qualitative data alongside quantitative data to show results. 	
Regulations hamper adoption of new wellness-oriented policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlist residents, researchers and authorities to advocate for regulations that are aimed at current needs. 	
Lack of training and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elevate "flexibility" to the new motto. Integrate wellness into hiring, staffing and training. Reskill employees to deliver person-centered precise solutions 	
Lack of technology tools to capture data for personalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm with IT staff on how current tech or new products would enhance capabilities. 	
Interior design and buildings do not include features for transcendent experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design the built environment with sensory rooms, spaces for contemplation and more person-inspired places. 	
[list barriers at your organization here]	[potential solutions]	

ENDNOTES

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