



Senior Living 100 Coronavirus Task Force Executive Summary – Call #3

COVID-19 Surge: Hot Spots, Preparation & Financial Implications

April 1, 2020

Through weekly **Senior Living 100 Coronavirus Task Force** conference calls with top experts and operators on the front lines, we aim to provide you with **best practices in crisis management** and **valuable business-scenario planning**.

This week, operators shared staffing and communication strategies, PPE shortages, financial implications and unexpected challenges.

Guests:

Jason Signor, CEO & Partner, Caddis Healthcare Real Estate

Brett Anderson, SVP & Chief Ecosystem & Operations Officer, Ecumen

Larry Gumina, President & CEO, Ohio Living

Todd Stivland, MD, CEO & Founder, Bluestone Physician Services

Dan Ogus, EVP & COO, HumanGood

Meredith Mills, SVP & COO, Country Meadows Retirement Community

Charlie Trefzger, CEO, Affinity Living Group

Key Learnings:

Overview

Senior living operators nationwide are concentrating on limiting resident exposure to hospitals, ERs and outside personnel. For some, admission activity has slightly increased while others are experiencing significant attrition. Financially, cash flows are in trouble as costs (both operational and care) exceed revenue. **Jason Signor** (Caddis Healthcare Real Estate) noted the newly passed CARES Act does not provide any assistance to the private pay senior living industry, and communities are encouraging residents join a [letter-writing campaign](#) to their Congressmen.

Staffing

Worker shortages are mounting (some communities are running at 50% caregivers), as staff members are calling out due to the growing fear of infection and/or childcare issues. Communities are increasing team appreciation efforts by providing incentive “show up” bonuses and meals to their homes. **Brett Anderson** (Ecumen) highlighted how they trained and deployed 250 non-clinical team members to perform basic clinical tasks and one-on-one activities with residents after the shutdown of communal activities.



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Communication

Communication continues to be critical. Operators are shifting from emails to posting live updates on a website (Google Suite); creating daily updates for staff, residents and family members; and launching a hotline. Communities are using dedicated hashtags (#EcumenStrong) on social media posts to establish brand loyalty.

PPE

As the last stop in the healthcare continuum, adequate supply of PPE is top-of-mind for all senior living operators. **Larry Gumina** (Ohio Living) shared his PPE concerns, as well as an [Op-Ed piece](#) he recently penned on the topic and a [PPE calculator](#) he uses to determine supply quantity. Some operators highlighted how they are making their own PPE, including using ponchos for gowns and head covers. **Brett Anderson** discussed how they are conserving PPE and launched a Facebook campaign to procure home-sewn mask donations, for which his organization will provide tax-deduction receipts.

Telehealth

Increase your use of telehealth to reduce staff and resident exposure to COVID-19 and manage polychronic residents. Establish “Clean Teams” that have minimal contact with staff and residents. **Todd Stivland, MD** (Bluestone Physician Services) acknowledged the importance of testing staff (more so than residents) and how an asymptomatic person poses the biggest threat.

Infection Control Protocol

Most COVID-19 cases can be traced back to a physician or outside provider. **Dan Ogus** (HumanGood) requires all visitors to change clothes and provides them with PPE. Most communities are instituting a full 14-day isolation of residents returning from the hospital, rehab or ER. **Meredith Mills** (Country Meadows Retirement Community) reinforced the threat of the health system as the point of exposure and questions staff who are sending residents out to the ER.

Financial Implication

As cash flow is negatively impacted by COVID-19, operators need to build up reserves through mezzanine lenders; lines of credit; deferred payments to vendors; and upfront monthly payments from residents. **Charlie Trefzger** (Affinity Living Group) noted that they created a white paper to share with lenders to allow for deferred interest payments for 90 days or more. Due to organization size (+/- 500



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employees), there's a great deal of uncertainty surrounding access to capital via the SBA loan, including how the [Paycheck Protection Program provision](#) can help small businesses retain their workforce with forgivable loans.

■ [Senior Living 100 COVID-19 Business Planning & Crisis Management Resources](#)

To receive an invitation to participate in task force calls, please contact:

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