

QuietCare - An Innovative Home-Monitoring System

By Tom Rotz, Executive Director, Senior Lifestyles in Cincinnati, Ohio
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(HealthNewsDigest.com) - GE's QuietCare system is an innovative home-monitoring system that Seasons continuum of care retirement community Cincinnati, OH has in place for residents in assisted living.

QuietCare system transforms eldercare with advanced motion sensor technology that learns the daily living patterns of senior community residents and sends alerts when certain out-of-the-ordinary events occur. The system provides care staff with information that facilitates the delivery of personalized care to help improve response times and identify potential problems before they become emergencies.

The system consists of a series of motion activated sensors placed around the apartment to learn a resident's regular activity pattern. It works on two levels; first it learns a baseline of habits for the resident which allows staff to then monitor any changes to those standard patterns of behavior that may signal potential health issues. For instance, if a resident typically gets up to use the restroom once a night and suddenly is getting up several times a night, we know that the resident may have a health concern such as a urinary tract infection. It allows us to catch smaller health issues and remedy them before they potentially become larger, more painful and costly illnesses.

The second level is an alarm system the staff can set with help from the resident's family or doctor. We can set an alarm to sound if a resident is in the bathroom for more than 20 minutes and has not exited. This has helped us on several occasions where we've had an alarm and found a resident has fallen or is unable to stand without assistance.

Using this system permits us to pick up on behavior that could indicate physical or cognitive changes long before normal detection. Recognizing issues earlier benefits the resident by providing quicker, and in most cases more efficient, opportunities to remedy the situation.

The community benefits by having the ability to keep the senior residents healthier longer by offering proactive care instead of reactive. Our fall response times have improved greatly thanks to the system, and we can more efficiently track and be accountable for those incidents. Families of the residents benefit in better understanding the amount and type of care that the resident is receiving.

Seniors and Families

Seniors want to live life on their own terms - enjoying friends and family, while feeling safe and secure. But worrying about getting help if needed can seriously undermine quality of life. Now, many senior communities have taken steps to monitor their residents' well-being 24 hours a day using QuietCare.

Family members of our residents are also very pleased with the system and the fact that QuietCare helps improve the staff response time for possible accidents. One family member remarked, "Your new monitoring system gives me the peace of mind that my mother is safe and will be attended to in a timely manner if she falls." Local hospital social workers and physicians have communicated that they are very impressed with the monitoring system. QuietCare gives Seasons a distinct advantage in the quality of care we are able to provide, as opposed to other local facilities that don't have the system installed.

Tom Rotz has been with Senior Lifestyle Corporation for three years, recently coming to Seasons as Executive Director. He has eight years in senior housing experience and 17 years of hotel and hospitality experience, specializing in upscale and boutique-style hotels.

Seasons and The Courtyard at Seasons CCRC is located in the Cincinnati area on eleven beautiful wooded and landscaped acres. Seasons offers deluxe Independent Living and Assisted Living apartments as well as Skilled Nursing services and is operated by Senior Lifestyle Corporation.