



## **SC LTC Leadership Academy Pilot of a New Nursing Home High Value Business Model**

A collaboration to strengthen front-line staff retention as the foundation for high performance.

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### **Tip Sheet**

#### **Management Practices for Positive Presence, Communication, and Community Building**

*What a difference management makes!* Pilot homes found that their leaders' positive presence and consistent communication improves staff and resident outcomes.

#### **WHY:**

When leaders promote positive presence and consistent communication, all staff have the information they need to do their job. Leaders catch problems early because they are available for staff to share what they see. Solutions are effective because leaders combine the intimate knowledge of residents that front-line staff have with the clinical expertise of department heads. Including staff in problem-solving together and building strong relationships across staff boost staff morale and promote employee engagement. When a CNA knows there will be a huddle tomorrow and anticipates that leaders will be asking a her opinion about something discussed yesterday...they are more engaged.

#### **COST and SAVINGS:**

Cost is minimal for small thank you's and snacks or gifts given out during rounds and staff meetings. Savings are significant in less pressure sores, weight loss and hospitalizations because staff identify emerging issues before they become acute. Residents and their families are more satisfied when they see and know the nursing homes' leaders and they see that they are meeting residents needs consistently through good communication during rounds and huddles. Pilot homes found that through these rounds and huddles, they are decreasing falls and other adverse events.

#### **HOW:**

Pilot homes shared these tips:

1. Be positive. Use rounds and huddles to check in on people, not to check up on them.
2. Be consistent. Huddle and round with staff at a time that's good for them, each day. When staff know they can count on leaders being available, they bring their questions, concerns, and ideas to the huddle.
3. Keep huddles brief, on-time, and productive. Find a time that works for front-line staff.
4. For rounds make sure to include CNAs as well as other members of the clinical team.
5. For huddles, include CNAs, housekeepers and other staff closest to the residents. Several pilot homes received valuable information once they started including housekeepers, and they found housekeepers' performance improved as they understood more about residents' care needs.



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6. Homes that included the social worker in the huddles found that CNAs appreciated learning personal information about residents to help with providing a warm welcome to new residents and addressing psychosocial needs for all residents.
7. Facilitate to hear from everyone and include staff's input in understanding problems and finding solutions.

### **WHAT:**

Pilot homes described their most effective practices:

1. Morning rounds with all residents and staff. Leaders go room to room with staff to talk with each resident. They ensure residents' needs are met by surfacing and addressing any concerns.
2. Regular huddles with front-line staff. Huddles provide a forum for leaders to meet staff where they are. They ask if staff are worried about any residents, and if anything is adversely affecting their ability to provide care.
3. *"How are you"* rounds. Leaders check in with staff about how they are, as people first, and employees second. Their genuine concern for each person's well-being strengthens staff's feeling of connection with their organization.
4. Appreciation cart. Some homes describe a thank you cart through which leaders give out gifts or theme foods to staff. In one home, each department signs up for month and takes it around to each area of the building.
5. One-to-one check-ins with new staff to asking them how's it going, is there anything we could do better, or anything they would like to see implemented.

### **MEASURING IMPACT**

Pilot homes note that staff very appreciative. They learn to expect that you're making rounds and residents expect it as well. This leads to stability and predictability for staff, which contributes to their stability and performance. This leads to fewer grievances and complaints with staff and residents. "Making rounds and meeting staff where they are allows you to address issues head on. You can eliminate any grievances and complaints and find small issues before they even arise as big issues."

Pilot homes had decreased call light usage because they were able to address residents' issues proactively. Homes saw improved outcomes for residents and staff. Huddles and rounds to communicate proactively led to decreased falls. "The more you're present, the less needs the residents are going to have in reaching out or trying to get up on their own, causing falls."

### **ADVICE**

1. Stay persistent with the change. Just because it's not comfortable doesn't mean it's not going to be successful. Keep at it. Be consistent, especially when introducing a change in



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practice. As you do huddles and rounds regularly, staff will look forward to them. In the beginning, change can be hard. Not everyone embraces change so being consistent and making it fun and enjoyable helps to keep it going.

2. Stay positive and be approachable. Make sure you're available to your staff and accepting of their feedback.
3. Smile and try to casually fit into the existing conversation on the unit or neighborhood. Meet them where they are.
4. Be a problem solver – if it was brought to your attention...it matters to them.
5. Verbalize appreciation, gratitude and optimism.