**Elevating The Resident and Team Member Experience: The Three R’s**

Covid-19 and its accompanying policies disrupted senior living and healthcare and there’s no going back to the way it once was. Before the pandemic, burnout and compassion fatigue were at epic levels; over the last few years, they’ve only gotten worse. We all know resident, family, and staff satisfaction are interrelated, so what do we do to elevate everyone’s experience without increasing our stress as a leader? Embrace the three R’s!

*Recognize your existing team.*

*Revisit your hiring non-negotiables.*

*Reimagine what great resident/family service is.*

1. *Recognize your team.*

Never forget that in our current job seeker’s environment, our staff has lots of options. Are you thanking them for coming in every day? Do you compliment them when you see them handling a task or resident problem well? When they call out sick, does your mind immediately wander to how you will fill their shift, or do you take a second to tell them you hope they feel better? Yes, money and benefits matter but your team also cares deeply about feeling appreciated.

Also, make sure you are recognizing your team by insisting that they take breaks and time off. Not only will this boost loyalty to your organization, but you will also reduce the incidence of burnout and compassion fatigue. If you need help with filling in staffing gaps, check out resources like KARE, Accushield, and Connect RN.

1. *Revisit your hiring non-negotiables.*

Narrow it down to three qualities that are essential for a job you are hiring for. This does not include credentials like a nursing license. Obviously, if you are hiring nurses, they must be licensed and pass a criminal background check, but what three qualities are essential beyond that? Maybe compassionate, smart, and reliable? Stop expecting perfect candidates in this job seeker’s environment.

1. *Reimagine what great resident service is.*

Allow the resident and family to share what’s most important to them. Frequently we are so focused on what we *think* they care about that we overlook what’s most important to them. Consider this example I recently heard from a senior living executive. One resident’s family was very focused on Mom needing to drink more water, and the most important aspect of great service to them was that staff cue her to drink a bottle of water each morning. When hydration for that resident became a priority, complaints decreased, and satisfaction soared. Consider the individual needs and desires of your residents and their families rather than what you believe the most attractive aspects of your community are.

**Jennifer L. FitzPatrick, MSW, LCSW-C, CSP (Certified Speaking Professional) is a speaker, consultant, author and founder of Jenerations Health Education, Inc. One of less than 800 Certified Speaking Professionals worldwide, Jennifer is the author of Reimagining Customer Service in Healthcare and Cruising Through Caregiving: Reducing The Stress of Caring For Your Loved One. She was a gerontology instructor at Johns Hopkins University's Certificate on Aging program for over a decade and has been featured on ABC, CBS, Sirius XM and in *Forbes, U.S. News & World Report, Redbook, Fast Company* and countless other media outlets. Her board appointments include serving as a Care Advisory Board Member for Seth Rogen & Lauren Miller Rogen's non-profit HFC (Hilarity for Charity). For more information please go to** [**www.jenerationshealth.com**](http://www.jenerationshealth.com) **.**