## They’ve Signed Up, Now Show Them A Sign!

If you want to increase referrals and move-ins to your senior living community, hosting special events is an effective strategy. Hosting professional events allows referral sources to meet your staff and get an idea of how your community would serve their older patients and clients. Hosting events for prospective residents and families offers a no-pressure opportunity for them to consider your community as a potential match.

Seasoned senior living community teams typically do a wonderful job with most event planning details. They’ve hired a great speaker or entertainer. The culinary team has prepared delicious food and housekeeping has ensured the building is immaculate. Perhaps most importantly the community relations and marketing team have effectively spread the word so there are plenty of guests signed up and about to arrive.

But one last logistical detail is frequently overlooked: signage. Signs pointing visitors in the right direction can positively impact your overall event success. Since many senior living communities have several buildings or even boast a campus setting, visitors are often unsure where to park and which entrance to use. Even smaller senior living communities with only one structure may have several entrances which can be confusing to guests. Because of this, signage can make the difference between a guest coming in relaxed and ready to evaluate your community or walking in with a prematurely negative impression.

Depending on the size and structure of your senior living community, it’s important to consider if guests need help finding:

1) Which vehicle entrance is most convenient to your event (if there is more than one)  
2) Where is best to park once they enter your grounds  
3) What door to enter (if there are multiple entrances)

Your entire goal in hosting the event is to increase occupancy. When a professional referral source comes into your event after having driven around the parking lot for ten minutes, she is frustrated and less eager to evaluate how you might help her clients. When a prospective new resident has spent fifteen minutes trying different doors to find your event, he is not in the best frame of mind to view your community as his possible future home.

Your guests’ opinions of your senior living community begin developing as soon as they enter your parking lot. With simple signage, you can increase the chance that your guests will view your senior living community favorably from the beginning.

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