



The World Health Organization defines wellness as, “A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” In senior care communities, this concept of wellness is supported by the concept of person-centered care which means including the voice of the person throughout their stay, no matter their life story or cognitive and physical abilities. Wellness programming ensures a high quality of life, increased satisfaction and better business outcomes. A person-centered approach to care is increasingly in demand by care recipients, families and regulators.

MASTERING THE ART OF WELLNESS PROGRAMMING

- 1** | **Resist the 3Bs:** Activities created around Bingo, Bible, and Birthdays, have become the standard in institutional settings. Going beyond these basic activities is the first step of person-centered, and quality wellness programming.
- 2** | **Wellness Framework:** Your team needs to select a framework to work in when creating a wellness program. Use mind, body and spirit as dimensions to explore.
- 3** | **Life Story and Assessments:** These tools need to be built in order to capture data points that support the full wellness programming model your team creates.

- 4 Interest Supersedes Staging:** Taking into account the interests of each resident is more important than finding the most appropriate difficulty level of a program.
- 5 Regulations:** Building a successful wellness model is the best way to satisfy and then exceed regulatory standards, especially for people living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
- 6 Interest Change:** As in any other stage of life, the interest of a person can evolve. A hobby might become more or less interesting to a person – or disappear altogether. Therefore, it is important to frequently reassess and ask the residents how they feel about the way they're being engaged.
- 7 Corporate Guidelines:** Senior living communities have largely embraced the concept of wellness programming. Be sure to understand corporate wellness strategies, their requirements and how to use them to support the organization.
- 8 Marketing and Referral Sources:** Addressing the needs of the person is not only the best way to achieve better health outcomes but it also shows your commitment to high quality customer service. Advancing person-centered programming will improve your marketing and referrals and should be operationalized as a long-term investment in your community. These have direct impact on marketing and referral source.
- 9 Non-Pharmacological Strategies:** Whether a clinical or customer service strategy, wellness programming supports the voice and preferences of each resident. This can be the most effective way to prevent or mitigate behaviors associated with dementia. Beyond behaviors, non-pharmacological interventions have been shown to help manage and reduce unnecessary and harmful medication use and enhance quality of life.
- 10 There is Always a Person:** Even at the very last stages of life, there are ways to engage a person. End of life care studies have shown that people at the end of life still respond to sensory programs, music, massage therapy.

Linked Senior has made available assessments and other cheat sheets and other helpful resources to help you, they're available at [linkedseior.com](https://www.linkedseior.com). As always, feel free to contact us if you have any questions or want to learn more!