KENDAL
at Oberlin

Before the COVID-19 global pandemic, Kendal at Oberlin offered personalized engagement for each resident every day. As the pandemic unfolded, the community had to address social isolation and find ways to augment staff through digital technology.

During the past year, Kendal at Oberlin went from having personalized engagement for each resident every day to a lockdown situation where it was difficult to even provide a few "touches" per day per resident. The community's engagement efforts had to pivot and find new ways to reach older adult residents and augment their existing team efforts by leveraging the power of technology.

CATEGORIES
- ✓ Reduce Social Isolation
- ✓ Reduce Feelings of Loneliness
- ✓ Increased Staff Efficiencies
- ✓ Increased Quality of Life

BUSINESS MODEL
Private Pay and Short Term Rehab

MAIN CONTRIBUTOR
Michele Tarsitano-Amato, MA, ATR-BC, CDP, AP-BC, Director of Creative Arts Therapy

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION
Kendal at Oberlin is a vibrant life plan community, located in northeast Ohio, just one mile from Oberlin College. The community is one where older adults can thrive and grow.

SOCIALIZATION MODALITY
Community App (Linked Senior)

SYSTEM EMBODIMENT
- ✓ Tablet
- ✓ Smart TV
- ✓ Desktop Computer
- ✓ Laptop Computer

"Linked Senior provided the right resources at the right time giving us quick access to technologies that assisted our residents to have meaningful interactions with friends and family during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their team was a true asset to our Life Enrichment staff, helping them to understand our options and assessing the best solutions for our unique needs at Kendal at Oberlin".

– **Stacy Scott Terrell, Chief Health Services Officer**

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

In 2019, Kendal at Oberlin had 4,000 volunteer hours dedicated to the nursing home and assisted living communities. In 2020, because of the pandemic, they had that cut in half, and in the beginning of the pandemic it was even worse. The only way they could augment staff to provide meaningful engagement was through remote opportunities and staff augmentation capabilities offered by digital technology like Linked Senior. The community focused on:

> ### "The social network was being disintegrated."
>
> – Michele Tarsitano-Amato, MA, ATR-BC, CDP, AP-BC, Director of Creative Arts Therapy at Kendal at Oberlin

1 | **Investment in Digital Technology:** The team partnered with Linked Senior which already had engagement resources packaged digitally in an easily accessible way.

2 | **Volunteer Engagement:** The community used weekly Zoom calls to train college student volunteers to use Linked Senior. Students learned how to remotely engage residents through phone and video calls. The programming for students was provided in the Linked Senior App. Students also helped create new courses that could be shared and uploaded using the Linked Senior platform like Spanish class, yoga and cooking lessons etc.

3 | **Staff Assignments:** Thanks to the real-time engagement analysis offered by the Linked Senior platform, leadership could assign engagement tasks based on staff skill level so that residents that needed the most attention were engaged by those with the appropriate skill set for that. This also helped with staff efficiency.

OUTCOMES

Technology implementation enabled the community by providing:

165+ hours of staff efficiency per month

250+ hours of volunteer time deployed despite lockdown

4.2x the numbers of 1:1

Per Month:	Staff	Volunteers	Volunteer hrs	Groups per Day	Group Size	One to One
PRE-COVID	4	36	466	7-10	5-20 people	25 people 2 hours a day
APR 2020	4	0	0	1-2	3-4 people	60 people 3.5 hours a day
SEP 2020	6	15	255	8-9	4-20 people via TV	60 people 3 hours a day
JAN 2021	6	24	300	9-12	4-20 people via TV	60 people 3.5 hours a day
			7.5 hrs a day			**7 days**

 * 2 staff added for visitation outdoor then indoor

** one on one does not include indoor or outdoor visitations but does include video conference calling.

The community found online exercise classes to be challenging. Without an in-person exercise instructor and without people to exercise with, residents didn't work as hard. To maintain physical endurance residents thrive on in-person instruction and camaraderie. Another challenge was that many of the residents were not technologically savvy and didn't have access to digital technology. Their interactions and socialization relied upon landline phones for communication and connection. These residents were reached directly by staff and part of a 1:1 focus effort.

COVID-19 has amplified an existing challenge for the senior living industry: the need for adequate staffing. This situation is explained with the following table that highlights the need for communities to increase staffing.

To provide every resident with the same quality experience, our teams need to work more*:	In Assisted Living	In Memory Care	In Nursing Homes
1 Our communities are under lockdown with restrictions on visits, so there is no outside help from volunteers or the community for resident engagement	49 hrs	44 hrs	48 hrs
2 Our residents need to be physically distanced from one another for their safety, so there are no group programs taking place currently	160 hrs	80 hrs	120 hrs
3 Life enrichment staff have more responsibilities, so they need to work more to support meaningful resident engagement while also supporting other departments	15 hrs	16 hrs	16 hrs

Total additional staff working hours per month required:
*Linked Senior survey 03/16/2021 - 728 respondents

224 hrs	140 hrs	184 hrs

What does this mean?
The impact of COVID19 requires the work of at least **1.2 FTE more**