

Case Study:

It Takes a Village: How Hartsfield Village Protected Residents and Employees During the Pandemic



leadingage.org/cast

Categories:

- ◆ Low Number of Infections
- ◆ Increased Quality of Life
- ◆ Increased Resident Satisfaction

About the Organization

Organization Name:
Hartsfield Village

Main Contributors:
Leslie Darrow, Vice President
Post-Acute Services, Community
Healthcare System
Susan Seydel, Rehabilitation
Administrator, Hartsfield Village

Organization Type:
Continuing Care Retirement
Community (CCRC)

Organization Description:
Hartsfield Village is a not-for-profit Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) located on 38 beautifully landscaped acres in Munster, IN. Opened in 1999, the village now consists of 106 independent living apartments, 70 assisted living apartments, and 112 rehabilitation and nursing suites.

Project Description

Frequent, transparent communication and unique, strong cleaning and safety protocols were implemented to proactively ensure staff and residents of a skilled nursing community are safe and protected from a COVID-19 outbreak. The environmental staff at Hartsfield Village take a strict approach to their cleaning regimen: wiping down high-touch surfaces and concluding with a rotating schedule of Surfacide UV System disinfection cycles in common areas, newly identified target areas, and patient rooms/resident apartment disinfections as warranted.

Infection Control Modality

Surface/Object Cleaning and Disinfection

System Embodiment

Multiple light-emitting robots that deliver UV-C energy to nearby surfaces.

Business Model

Return on Investment (ROI)

Implementation Approach

Hartsfield Village focused on reinforcing infection control practices as well as proper use of PPE. By providing continual education as well as surveillance, The Hartsfield Village team ensured both staff and residents were using available PPE efficiently and effectively.

In addition to routine cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces, Hartsfield Village Community Healthcare System incorporated the Surfacide Helios® low-level disinfection UV-C System, a trio of UV-C robots, to disinfect resident care areas routinely and thoroughly. The community was creative in its positioning of the robots to ensure the most energy to high-touch areas. Smaller areas like bathrooms or offices utilized one or two robots, while larger spaces like therapy gyms or common areas used the trio. The ability to adapt the Surfacide System to different areas of the community allowed Hartsfield Village to reduce bacteria and viruses in high-traffic areas. Hartsfield Village also established methods to provide routine phone and/or written updates to all patients, residents, and family members. The goal with this communication was to keep patients, residents, and family members informed of

the community and county COVID status. It also provided the education and resources necessary to ensure the safety of the community.

The admissions team developed a thorough screening process for all new admissions, which included COVID testing prior to admission. The community developed a system for bed management that allowed Hartsfield Village to safely place and/or cohort residents and patients.

The nursing administration team implemented a comprehensive assessment of all patients and residents each shift. Symptoms were identified and addressed without delay for all patients and residents in the skilled nursing and assisted living facilities. All employees and essential health care personnel were screened prior to entry into Hartsfield Village, which included a temperature check. The employee health nurse worked continuously with staff to identify and manage reported symptoms appropriately in order to minimize risk to their patients, residents, and personnel.

Outcomes

Thanks to the safety measures that Hartsfield Village implemented, the community maintained low infection rates and improved its overall Star rating. The increase in safety protocols also seemed to have an effect on the residents' moods and behaviors.

Hartsfield maintained a low total verified count of COVID-19 positive residents throughout the pandemic and was able to increase their CMS STAR rating from 4 stars to 5 stars during the pandemic and potentially avoid costly penalties. The outstanding results were accredited in large part to five safety interventions implemented by Hartsfield Village staff/leadership.

Employees at Hartsfield Village noticed that even during a pandemic, residents are continuing to stay calm and have overall less anxiety than anticipated.

“Nearly three years post-pandemic, what began as a targeted infection control intervention specific to COVID-19 has now become a cornerstone of our infection control and prevention practices at Hartsfield Village. The incorporation of the Surfacide UV into our daily practices has elevated our approach to infection control, allowing our community to achieve excellent outcomes while prioritizing the safety of our patients, residents, and employees.”

—Susan Seydel, administrator,
Rehabilitation Center at Hartsfield Village

Lessons Learned/Advice to Share with Others

“Covid-19 introduced an unprecedented set of circumstances in health care and beyond, affecting every area of our lives. The dedicated team at Hartsfield Village rose to the challenge each day, providing outstanding care and service while prioritizing the safety of our residents, patients, and employees. We utilized state-of-the-art equipment, such as the Surfacide UV system, in our quest to both serve and protect those who live and work in our community. I am exceptionally proud of our team and our outcomes.”

—Leslie Darrow, vice president post-acute services, Community Healthcare System

Protecting the continuing care retirement community is imperative even when the public isn't facing a global pandemic. Due to the increased vulnerability of residents, it was crucial to take proactive safety measures and provide an extra layer of protection for these groups. By outlining intervention steps and guidelines, Hartsfield Village provided its residents and staff with safer environments to receive care and kept their COVID-related outbreak and death numbers low while achieving quality outcomes.