

LUTHERAN HOMES OF SOUTH CAROLINA: IMPROVING FAMILY COMMUNICATION AND REDUCING STAFF BURDEN WITH HOW'S MOM AUTOMATED CARE COMMUNICATIONS

Profile

Lutheran Homes of South Carolina (LHSC) is a faith-based, nonprofit organization providing a full continuum of residential, healthcare, and supportive services for older adults. The organization serves more than 1,000 residents and clients across five Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) campuses, offering independent and assisted living, memory support, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation. Beyond its campuses, LHSC extends care through hospice services, non-medical home care, and a continuing care at home program—creating an integrated, system-wide model of care.

As the organization expanded, leadership recognized that maintaining consistent communication with families was becoming increasingly difficult. Families wanted regular updates about their loved ones, but staff time and resources were limited. Improving family communication has become a strategic priority.

"When we looked at everything that could go wrong operationally, communication was one of the biggest risks," said Tracy Wilson, Vice President of Clinical Operations.

Without a scalable system, staff faced challenges in keeping families properly informed while also managing their daily clinical responsibilities.

The Opportunity

LHSC leadership recognized opportunities to enhance consistency and efficiency in communication with families:

- Families value timely, ongoing updates regarding their loved ones' care and wellbeing
- Nursing teams manage competing priorities, making individual outreach challenging at times
- Routine care updates were not always communicated consistently, which could occasionally lead to questions or concerns
- Workforce constraints highlighted the need for more streamlined and sustainable communication processes

While the organization valued transparency with families, traditional communication methods simply were not sustainable. "We weren't trying not to be transparent," Wilson explained. "We just didn't have the time to make all those calls."

Leadership needed a solution that would improve communication while supporting already busy care teams.

The Solution

After evaluating several options, LHSC selected How's Mom Automated Care Communications to modernize and streamline family communication. The platform allowed the organization to:

- Improve communication with families
- Reduce staff time spent on phone calls
- Increase transparency without creating a complex family portal
- Scale communication across multiple campuses

How's Mom enables staff to quickly send updates to family members, replacing many time-consuming phone calls while ensuring families remain informed. The platform was deployed across multiple levels of care. Adoption was strongest in skilled nursing, where communication needs are typically highest.

Implementation was designed to be simple and operationally efficient. LHSC began by launching the system at its largest campus.

"If it works at the biggest campus, it will work everywhere," Wilson said.

Family access was integrated directly into the resident admission process. Responsible parties automatically receive access to updates, and the organization created a dedicated "How's Mom" role to allow additional family members to receive notifications when appropriate.

This structure keeps communication organized while ensuring families receive the information they need.



Results

Faster Communication Across Campuses
How's Mom allows LHSC to quickly communicate both resident updates and campus wide announcements. For example, during a winter storm the organization used the platform to provide families with real-time updates on weather preparation, power status, generator checks, and resident safety. Instead of responding to dozens of phone calls, staff could proactively keep families informed.

Fewer Communication Complaints
Families receive more timely updates about both care and facility operations, improving transparency and reducing potential frustration caused by information gaps.
"It's been very effective in getting the information out there that needs to be shared," Wilson said. "When families have questions, staff can direct them to the information already available through the platform. This approach gives families better visibility into care while reducing the communication burden on staff."

Significant Time Savings for Staff
Nurses and administrators no longer need to call every family member about routine updates. Automated communication reduces the number of phone calls required and allows care teams to spend more time focusing on residents.

Strategic Impact
For LHSC leadership, improved communication delivers benefits beyond convenience. Strengthening communication workflows helps reduce organizational risk and improve overall operations.

Better communication supports:

- Regulatory survey readiness
- Compliance and documentation practices
- Reduced legal exposure
- Higher customer satisfaction and family trust

By improving transparency while reducing staff workload, LHSC has strengthened both operational efficiency and family experience. Wilson says the platform has become an essential part of their communication strategy.

"How's Mom has become an invaluable communication tool for our team. It has significantly improved the way we serve families—from sending winter storm notifications to sharing medication changes and vital updates. It saves us considerable time when responding to families about their loved ones and has evolved into an essential intervention tool. Overall, it has greatly increased our efficiency and strengthened our customer service."