

A photograph of the Columbia Health Care Center sign, which is a large wooden sign with the name 'COLUMBIA HEALTH CARE CENTER' in gold lettering. The sign is set against a background of green trees and a building.

# Improved Nurse Call Response Times in a Senior Care Community

## An RCare Case Study

### About Columbia Health Care Center

Established in 1858, Columbia Health Care Center is a 95-bed senior care facility, located on 11 acres in Columbia County, Wisconsin. The center is committed to providing the highest quality of care with the emphasis on the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of the residents. Columbia provides long-term skilled care, memory care, post-acute rehabilitation, respite care and hospice services.

### Why RCare?

In 2014, Columbia Health Care Center selected RCare's wireless nurse call platform to replace their outdated wired nurse call system. They were especially interested in the RPhone, RCare's HIPAA-compliant smartphone, to replace their pagers, which were loud and provided incomplete information. The RPhone, powered by RCare Mobile, provided caregivers with complete resident and call information before they reached the room. With the RPhone's "I Got It" button, one caregiver can claim a call, preventing duplicated efforts, ensuring caregiver accountability and eliminating missed calls. As soon as the call is claimed, all other RPhones are silenced, reducing alarm fatigue. The RPhone prompts staff to record ADLs right on their phones, at the point of care. RCare also

provides a full suite of reports and analytics, allowing caregivers and their supervisors to assess response times, discover trends and patterns for better response times, and for more efficient staffing and billing.

*"Whenever we go outside, we have an emergency button. So if we have any problems, we just press that and they'll come help."*

— Frances Brenner, Resident

### Improved Response Times

Rapid response when a resident calls for help is critical for QAPI and for resident satisfaction. Columbia evaluated the impact of their RCare system on response times. They compiled a list that included every call made, on all three shifts, in one calendar year. With RCare, their average response time per call was 2:56, just under three minutes, and well within their 5-minute response time goal. The standard deviation was small, only nine seconds, because rapid response times have become very consistent for the community. Residents know that when they call for help, it will arrive promptly.

The incident record shows a timestamp for each call, the resident, and the caregiver responsible responding. The RCare dashboard allows nursing supervisors to dig deeper into those few calls that are the exceptions, to understand what makes those calls different, and if action needs to be taken in terms of staffing or resident care.



More Than a  
Nurse Call System

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## Powerful Communication Without the Risk

RCare's RPhones are dedicated, HIPAA-compliant smartphones. They put the communication power of a smartphone into the hands of caregivers, without allowing the distractions or security risks of personal smartphones. RCare allows phone calls and messaging between coworkers, and voice-to-voice communication with residents. There is no camera or access to social media. The RPhone provides secure access to resident data only when logged in, and only within the physical confines of the community.

*“RCare helps with communication. It's very useful to be able to send out one piece of information and have it go out to a wide variety of people, from the nurse's aides to the nurses on the unit, to the charge nurses. When it comes to the RCare system, it's like one-stop shopping. Everyone has the same information at the same time.”*

– Thomas Henry, Social Worker



*“We use the RCare system to ensure that the residents get the care and services they need at the time they need it, or as rapidly as they need it.*

*It's an integral part of our falls program. It's helped with accountability. It's helped with efficiency. It's really helped in terms of caregiver burnout. And it's helped in terms of resident satisfaction and safety.”*

– Janelle Zacho, Director of Nursing



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