



Best Practices Series

Dimension #1: The Importance of Physical Safety in Your Senior Living Community

By: Lydia Manning, PhD | July 7, 2021

Resident safety is a critical priority for all senior living stakeholders and the industry. Many different variables affect resident safety, security in senior housing. Growing older presents the need for individuals to adapt to many changes such as vision loss, declining depth perception, and delayed adjustment to light and/or darkness. These changes may make older people more vulnerable to accidents, falls, and other injuries. When considering the various aspects of safety, it is essential to ensure that the physical and structural surroundings are sound and safe.

67%
of falls occur
from a slip
or trip.

DELE DIMENSIONS OF SAFETY #1: PHYSICAL

Dele Health's definition of physical safety considers the architectural and structural landscape of the buildings and rooms in the senior living communities. Best practices revolving around the physical dimension require that senior housing: **1) must be safe for older adults and staff; 2) remove barriers to incidents; and, 3) implement solutions to prevent accidents and injury.**



Technology is one pathway to ensure physical safety and security and can be implemented throughout the residence. When technologies are available and user-friendly, they help keep residents safe, while improving the quality of life.

Dele Health Tech Fall Management Solution Includes:

- Passive Monitoring Detection
- Fall Prediction with AI
- Research Based Design
- Academy for Staff Training

The Dele Health Solution is customizable and configurable, allowing for placement in bathrooms and other spaces where an optics solution is less ideal. The platform offers an integrated solution that allows for software and hardware to modify the environment in a way that predicts and prevents falling. Highly resident-centric, the technology can also integrate with other environmental systems such as lighting, flooring, and diffusers to create an overall environment that is age-friendly and safe.



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Dimension #2: Psychological Safety In Senior Living Instilling Independence, Increasing Well-Being

By: Lydia Manning, PhD | July 7, 2021

DELE DIMENSIONS OF SAFETY #2: PSYCHOLOGICAL



Psychological safety is a concept that refers to an environment or relationship in which members advocate for what is important and where they feel safe. There has been a recent resurgence of interest in psychological safety and its operationalization in senior living post-COVID 19. People working in the senior living field are demonstrating the need to advocate for safety and of the quality of life and care for their residents. Realizations include:

COVID19 pandemic has created an opportunity to address psychological safety, particularly concerning

fear management. There is a strong correlation between psychological safety, fear of falling, and falling.

Fear of falling (FOF):

- Results in negative emotional or physical consequences
- Predicts an increased risk of a fall in the future
- Common in those who have fallen previously

The harmful impacts of falls and the fear of falling are actual for many older adults, those living in the community and senior care settings.

Dele Health Tech has designed an innovative solution that offers senior living communities the ability to help manage the negative psychological impact of falls and the fear of falling for residents, families, and staff. Supporting a healthy mental and emotional mindset for people working and living in senior living communities is essential.

The Dele Health suite of solutions and services help decrease the fear of falling for residents and their families by offering real-time alerts and predictive alerts that provide caregivers with more insights..

For more information on Dele Health Tech and Dele Senior Fall Management Solution, email Hello@delehealth.com.

**An older adult
who is fearful
of falling is
50% more likely to
fall than someone
who is not
fearful.**



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DELE DIMENSIONS OF SAFETY #3: ENVIRONMENTAL

By: Lydia Manning, PhD | July 29, 2021

Environmental health has become increasingly more important in the wake of COVID-19. Senior living communities are recognizing the connection between environmental safety, health, and wellbeing.

Unsafe Environments:

- Place older adults at-risk for injury, with falls being the most common
- Prevent them from doing the things promote their living well
- Complications of falls include fractures, increased frailty, and fear of falling, all leading to an increased risk of a future fall.
- Intrinsic (underlying health conditions) as well as extrinsic (unsafe living conditions) factors can contribute to safe or unsafe environments in senior living settings.

Did You Know?

- 100% of ER doctors agree that an annual Safety Assessment is important to keep seniors safe in their living environments.
- Falls account for 25% of all hospital admissions and 40% of all nursing home admissions.
- 40% of those admitted to a hospital post-fall never return to independent living and 25% will die within one year
- When older persons fall, their hospital stay is 50% longer than those of who are admitted for any other reason
- Key challenges to creating safe environments in senior living:
 - Costs for older communities to be retrofitted for technology
 - Problems with recruiting, hiring, and consistently retaining qualified staff
 - Time constraints for staff education due to workload or understaffing situations
 - Lack of time and tools to provide and receive education for team members



**100% of
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Assessment is vital to
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their home**

Paying attention to environmental safety is an important way for senior living communities to manage falls. The use of technology is a pathway to address key challenges to environmental safety in senior living communities.

Promoting environmental safety incorporates:

- Gathering data and information in a dignified manner on resident safety hazards
- Staff that address resident incident trends, causes, and means of prevention, particularly related to falling
- Incidents resulting injury and significant potential injuries be investigated for cause with effective preventive follow up

Dele Health Tech believes that environments (including physical space) and the way space is used should be optimized to promote safety. Our solution, using innovative technology and state-of-the-art rubrics designed by fall prevention experts, aids in the design of rooms with strategic placement of objects and without obvious risks for falls.



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DELE DIMENSIONS OF SAFETY #4: OCCUPATIONAL

By: Lydia Manning, PhD | August 10, 2021

Occupational safety addresses risk, illnesses, and injuries in the worker population and proposes and implements strategies and regulations to prevent them. In senior living this definition extends beyond workers to residents living in the communities in which people work.

• **\$50 billion** is spent annually on medical costs related to non-fatal fall injuries and **\$754 million** is spent related to fatal falls.

• In 2019, 880 workers died in falls, and 244,000 were injured badly enough to require days off of work

Senior living technology is vital in maintaining health and wellness in communities and enhancing opportunities for occupational safety for residents as well as staff.

Post-COVID-19 world, senior living communities, staff members, and residents struggle to stay safe and healthy. To ensure that individuals feel secure and safe, it is important to maximize occupational safety.

Ensure resident and staff safety and health through:

- Worksite enforcement
- Education
- Compliance assistance
- Cooperative programs

Key areas to concentrate on in terms of occupational safety include:

- Emergency preparedness
- Resident admission standards
- Fall prevention

Ideally, senior living communities should have a process in place to ensure occupational safety that incorporate:

- Risk management program
- Resident care systems
- Employment practices

Departments that need to be addressed from an occupational safety standpoint:

- Facilities management
- Dietary
- Fire protection and prevention
- Safety and security
- Transportation safety
- Technology and data/cyber security

The Dele Academy offers tools to support the safety of employees through education, training, and customer service by offering programs and certification opportunities. Developed by our consortium of clinical and gerontech experts, the Dele Academy provides ongoing support for fall management including individualized assessments and post-fall processing tools. Community staff enjoy extra care support. Dele Health Tech provides extra care support using sensors to support care teams in senior living communities. For more information, email Hello@delehealth.com.

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DELE DIMENSIONS OF SAFETY #5: FINANCIAL

By: Lydia Manning, PhD | August 10, 2021

The days of business as usual are over in the senior living industry. Similarly to all healthcare organizations, senior living communities are grappling with rising costs, uneven quality of care, and a new focus on safety for consumers and residents.

Senior living as an industry has attempted to address financial stability and security using several strategies:

- Reducing errors
- Enforcing regulatory and practice protocols
- Helping residents and families be better consumers
- Implementing electronic medical records
- Advancing technological solutions

There are additional strategies to help ensure the fiscal health, wellness, and safety for organizations in senior living. This requires communities to produce the highest value at the lowest cost for residents. Technology is a key in supporting senior living operators in achieving this goal.

Financial safety in senior living organizations involves making fiscally-responsible and safe choices within an organization. This means findings ways to:

- Reduce bottom lines
- Lengthen stays
- Prevent fewer hospitalizations
- Reduce costs associated with risk



Fall protection is an example of how senior living communities can operationalize financial safety into protocol. Putting a falls management solution in place can be helpful in increasing the financial success and safety for organizations.

Financial safety requires additional operational attention to:

- Administrative and clinical functions
- Expenditures
- Retention and training of staff
- Resident experience and safety
- Mitigation of risk

Technology helps senior living operators optimize safety protocol, and in turn, this provides avenues to help reduce costs related to injury, staff turnover, and resident satisfaction.

\$30,000
is the average cost
associated with
hospitalization
following a fall
related injury

Developed by our consortium of clinical and gerontech experts, the Dele Academy provides ongoing support for fall management including individualized assessments and post-fall processing tools. Community staff enjoy extra care support. Dele Health Tech provides extra care support using sensors to support care teams in senior living communities. For more information, email Hello@delehealth.com.



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DELE DIMENSIONS OF SAFETY #6: ORGANIZATIONAL

By: Lydia Manning, PhD | August 10, 2021

It is well established that safety culture interventions used in healthcare settings, senior living included, are associated with improved safety practices and overall improved quality outcomes. Having an organizational commitment to safety results in improved resident care. It is important for senior living leadership to commit to creating and sustaining a culture of safety. This requires an organizational approach.

Harvard's Workplace Integrated Safety and Health (WISH) Assessment is an excellent tool to help organizations stay on track. The validated tool covers 6 key domains:

- Leadership commitment
- Participation
- Policies, programs, and practices that foster supportive working conditions
- Comprehensive and collaborative strategies
- Adherence to federal and state regulations and ethical norms
- Data-driven change

Attention to these areas helps organizations adhere to best practices for protecting and promoting worker safety, health, and well-being. Additionally, here are concrete steps to build a strong safety culture in senior living:



- Articulate safety responsibilities for all levels of the community
- Develop upstream measures for communicating and reporting on safety outcomes
- Align leadership and staff through establishing a shared vision of safety and quality outcomes for the community
- Evaluate and rebuild any incentives and disciplinary systems for safety and quality
- Provide multiple paths for staff as well as residents to bring suggestions, concerns, or problems concerning safety to the attention of leadership

Organizational safety means creating a culture of safety from an executive perspective. This is done by implementing systems and putting processes in place that value, support, and ensure safe practices in care.

Technology providers and communities can differentiate their brands. Dele Health Tech helps sustain an organization's ability to integrate touchless sensors and data streams into their existing nurse call system or the Dele Health Tech fall alert app, reducing the amount of time needed to compile data from incident reports for compliance-related processes. Dele Health Tech also provides the opportunity for organizations to report

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