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850.906.9314

The Resident CONNECTION

3rd Quarter 2023

President's Message

There have been many inquiries regarding the recent changes to Florida Statute 651.085 - Designated Resident Representative. This is important to all CCRCs in Florida as it offers the opportunity for residents to be aware of, and perhaps to be a part of, changes in fees or services that affect all residents.

Some CCRCs are well aware of this statute, but for those who are less familiar, I will try to lay out what it all means and the importance of this law.

All CCRCs should have a resident council elected by the residents to represent them and act as liaison with their provider for any issues that the residents bring up to the resident council. According to the new changes, this resident council shall nominate and elect a designated resident representative to represent them before the governing body of the provider on any matter affecting financial changes to the residents.

This designated resident representative shall serve for at least one year. This person does not have to be a current member of the resident council, however, such individual must be a resident. It is not stated in the law, but one would assume the designated resident representative would have some knowledge of finances.

The provider's responsibility is to notify the designated resident representative at least 14 days in advance of full governing body meetings when the annual budget and proposed changes or increases in resident fees or services are on the agenda or will be discussed. The designated resident representative shall be invited to attend and participate in that portion of the meeting designated for the discussion of such changes. Designated resident representatives shall perform their duties in good faith. For providers that own or operate more than one facility in the state, each facility must have its own designated resident representative.

The provider is defined by Florida law as one entity/organization that holds the Certificate of Authority (COA) to operate a continuing care retirement community in the State of Florida. This COA is part of the annual report on file with the Office of Insurance Regulation.

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Issue at a Glance

2023 FLiCRA Board Of Directors

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For CCRCs with voting members on the provider board, there is still the requirement for a designated resident representative, who has one role and that is to represent the interests of the residents before the governing board of the provider.

For those properties who have renters in their community – a renter is not eligible to serve as the designated resident representative. Under Florida law, only residents that have signed a life care or continuing care agreement/contract can participate in resident council elections, and thus the designated resident representative needs to be a contract holder.

HOW TO PROCEED
All CCRCs should review their current resident council bylaws to determine if they have provisions outlining the process of electing a designated resident representative.

• It is recommended to outline the criteria (skills/experience) of a candidate for consideration.
• It is recommended there should be language whereby the council has the ability to appoint an alternate representative, should the elected individual not be able to fulfill their duties.
• There should be clear language regarding the term of office for the designated individual serving in that role. It may be prudent to have the term coincide with the fiscal year of the community/facility.
• There should be a process by which the resident council formally informs a representative of the provider when a new designated resident representative takes office, along with adequate contact information for that person.

Should you have any questions regarding the designated resident representative, feel free to contact your regional director, or FLiCRA's website at www.flicra.com, or call FLiCRA at (850) 906-9314.

On another topic, I'd like to encourage all CCRCs to send at least one representative to the FLiCRA annual meeting,being held this year at Indian River Estates in Vero Beach, Florida. This is a great opportunity to participate in the workings of FLiCRA at the state level. This year we will be electing two members to the state board. Our speaker will be Michael Yaworsky, Florida Commissioner of Insurance. You can enjoy a delicious lunch and enjoy the camaraderie with others who have chosen the CCRC lifestyle; and there's nothing wrong with checking out another CCRC and comparing it with your own!

Patricia Burdsall, FLiCRA President

Salaries Soaring, Nurses Still Hottest but Raises Moderating

Employees at continuing care retirement communities once again enjoyed healthy salary increases, but the fury of their rise tapered in 2023.

At the same time, the rise of turnover started to slow, another good sign for operators of CCRCs, or life plan communities.

Nursing titles enjoyed the highest average annual pay increases - all above 4.1% - among highlighted job classes in the overall 26th annual CCRC Salary & Benefits Report, which was released by the Hospital and Health Compensation Service.

Certified nurse aides (4.6%), licensed practical nurses (4.1%) and registered nurses (4.0%) led the pace of raises over top-level executives (3.8%) and management (3.7%).

When comparing the same facilities participating from a year earlier, however, top execs made up ground. Executive directors rose an average of 4.2%, to $196,666, and chief financial officers were nearly identical, with a 4.3% rise to $177,522.

On the increasingly challenged skilled nursing side of the CCRC equation, nursing home administrators rose 3.2%, to an annual $131,554, and directors of nurses leaped 4.5%, to $112,603. MDS coordinators (RN) saw the biggest skilled nursing rise (5.99%, to $82,367).

Among the senior living ranks, the assisted living/ personal care manager rose just 3.0%, to $84,460, while director of resident services/independent living rose 3.7% to $80,605.

“The data shows that while jobs are still seeing large wage increases, the increases are getting smaller,” said Rosanne Zabka, director of reports for HCS, in an email to McKnight’s. “And while turnover rates continue to increase, the rates are only increasing by 1% or 2% now and are not spiking up dramatically as they have previously. It seems all the positive steps CCRCs have been taking to attract new employees and stabilize their existing workforce are working.”

The largest salary survey of its kind, the 2023-2024 CCRC Salary & Benefits Report is published in cooperation with LeadingAge and includes feedback from for-profit and nonprofit operators. It includes data from 477 CCRC/life plan communities, covering nearly 79,000 employees, 13,000 more than last year, Zabka said. Responses cover 46 management and 54 non-management positions.

The 265-page report is available for purchase and includes data on hot topics such as turnover, vacancy rates, sign-on bonuses and more, broken down into national and nine regional averages. Information on salary and hourly pay, as well as 19 fringe benefits, is included.

Bonuses, vacancies impress

Some of the most eye-opening findings came in this year’s newly included categories, sign-on bonuses and vacancy rates, said one compensation expert.

“What really jumped out at me was the sign-on bonuses,” noted Matt Leach, principal and senior consultant for Total Compensation Solutions LLC. “For RNs, more than half of the organizations are offering sign-on bonuses, and the three ‘big’ - RNs, LPNs and CNAs - are all over 50%.”

In actual terms, that equals an average bonus of $4,578 for RNs, “a pretty big chunk of change,” Leach said. LPNs ($3,353) and CNAs ($2,247) also saw hefty average sign-on bonus rises.

Directors of nursing (RNs) had the highest average, with more than 30% of respondents offering a bonus, averaging $7,423. On the other end of the pay scale, at least one-fourth of all respondents offered sign-on bonuses of at least $1,100 to certified medication technicians, dining staff, kitchen staff, dietary aides and housekeeping/laundry employees.

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Thanks for Asking: What's the Mather Study

I wrote this column to share the results of the recently completed Mather Institute Age Well Study.

The study compared the wellness outcomes of residents living in a life plan community (LPC) versus the community at large. The study provides evidence that the decision to move into a continuing or LPC can have a positive impact on the physical and emotional well-being of seniors.

In 1999 the Mather Institute was founded. They partnered with other groups dedicated to improving the lives of seniors that live either in retirement communities or in their own homes outside those communities. In 2018, together with researchers at Northwestern University, Mather Institute launched the Age Well Study. The objective of the study was to better understand the impact of living in an LPC on residents' health and wellness.

Mather is based in Chicago, a not-for-profit company focused on improving the lives of seniors. They operate an independent living rental company and two LPCs, with another one scheduled to open next year. Mather also provides several educational and wellness programs that are open to all seniors.

The results of the five-year Mather Institute Age Well Study are getting a lot of attention in the senior living industry. Over the study's five years, more than 8,200 residents from 122 LPCs across the country were surveyed. Some survey questions were consistent from year to year while others focused on a specific topic for that year. In years one and five, the LPC residents' responses were compared to a similar control group of people who were not living in an LPC. They were home-based or lived in another type of retirement community. Responses from Year one and Year five were compared.

The following is a summary of the findings:
Year 1: Overall wellness.
a. The study concluded that LPC residents had better emotional, physical, social, intellectual, and vocational wellness than seniors living in the community at large.
b. LPC residents had healthier behaviors.
c. Over two-thirds of LPC residents reported enjoying improved social wellness.
d. Seniors living in the community at large, however, reported greater spiritual wellness compared to LPC residents.

Year 2: Physical health and healthy behaviors.
a. LPC residents who were extroverted and formed strong bonds with others reported higher levels of healthy behaviors and positive health than other LPC residents.
b. 60% of LPC residents reported being sufficiently active. Most of those who weren't claimed health issues.

Year 3: Happiness and life satisfaction.
a. 92% of LPC residents were very satisfied with where they lived and with life in general.
b. Residents that were extroverted and agreeable reported a higher level of life satisfaction and general happiness.

Year 4: Resilience and coping strategies.
a. LPC residents exhibited less stress and more resilience during the COVID epidemic, especially those who were more extroverted and agreeable.
b. LPC residents that maintained close relationships with their children enjoyed greater resilience during COVID.
c. LPC residents who lived in smaller communities were less stressed than those in larger communities.

Year 5: Changes in health and wellness.
a. The Age Well Study was completed earlier this year and reinforced the findings of the previous four years.
b. LPC residents were found to have better physical, intellectual, emotional, vocational, and social wellness when compared to older adults in the control group who lived in their own homes outside of an LPC.
c. Residents had better self-reported health and higher levels of moderate physical activity compared to older adults from the community at large.

d. Residents showed greater social wellness on all measures as compared to the community at large respondents.
e. LPC residents ranked lower in one category of spiritual/vocational wellness - religiosity - as compared to older adults from the community a large, but ranked comparably or higher in other subsets of that category including purpose in life and retirement satisfaction.
f. For emotional wellness, LPC residents ranked comparably or significantly better than their community-dwelling peers in all categories, including satisfaction with life, optimism, and perceptions of aging. One exception was depressive symptoms, where LPC residents ranked lower than the control group.
g. LPC residents reported better self-rated memory and higher participation in intellectual activities when compared to older adults in the broader community.

There are many conclusions that can be drawn from this study. LPC residents thrived during the COVID pandemic and were much healthier and happier than those living in the community at large. The programs offered in senior living communities enhanced the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of their residents. There are always opportunities for improvement, and the study suggested ways to better encourage residents' emotional wellness, address ageism and support more positive feelings on aging, and nurture religious/spiritual preferences and practices. Overall, the Age Well Study is good news for LPC residents and is further evidence that the decision to move to community like John Knox Village (JKV) can enhance mental, physical, and emotional wellness.

One thing that the study didn't cover was the feeling that kids have about their parents moving to and living in LPCs. My wife Jackie and I have five between us, and they were supportive when we made the decision to come to JKV some seven years ago. In the intervening years, however, that support has gone from moderate to enthusiastic. Not only have they witnessed how we have thrived here, but they have seen the difficulties that some of their spouses' parents (our community-dwelling peers), are having as they deal with various aspects of the aging process.

Source: Dave Bayer, FLiCRA Region 5 Director, John Knox Village, Pompano Beach

Salaries Soaring, Nurses Still Hottest but Raises Moderating Cont.

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"When organizations are hard-pressed on the money side and they're offering this amount of money to potential employees, that jumps out at me," Leach said. "There aren't enough people in some of these organizations to do these jobs."

That would not surprise anyone familiar with the business. But even though employee turnover rates have moderated, vacancy rates still stood out to Leach. RNs (19.8%), LPNs (17.4%) and CNAs (17.3%) had the highest rates, but it was the top management's number that really caught his attention.

"Top-level or senior executives might be a little lower," he said of job-vacancy rates. "But we're still talking 13.5% and that's really high for management. For all levels of management across the board, we're seeing so many retirements and so much turnover."

Leach said that while average pay raises "were not astronomical," they're still outpacing all-industry norms and are worrisome.

"These increases are not sustainable," he said. He quickly added that "at least in theory," CCRCs are in the best position among senior care and living operators to deal with rising labor costs because they can raise resident fees.

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FLiCRA Region 7 Meeting

Top: Attendees enjoying the Region 7 meeting at Bay Village on July 26th.

Middle Left: Laura Pardee, Bay Village Chapter President, welcoming attendees to the meeting.

Middle Right: Attendees participating in roundtable discussions.

Bottom: Ray Neff, Region 7 Director, updating attendees on regional activities. 85 attendees from 11 CCRC's attended the meeting.

FLiCRA 2023 Annual Conference & Chapter Delegates Meeting
October 26 • Indian River Estates, Vero Beach

Thursday, October 26

8:15 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
Registration & Continental Breakfast

9:00 a.m. - 9:05 a.m.
Call to Order, Welcome, Moment of Silence & Pledge of Allegiance

9:05 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Florida CCRC Trends & Overall Florida Insurance Market Trends
Michael Yaworsky, Florida Commissioner of Insurance

10:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Board, Membership & Chapter Delegates Meeting

12:00 p.m. - 12:10 p.m.
Break

12:10 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Membership Luncheon

Please call the FLiCRA Office at (850) 906-9314 if you require any special needs due to a disability.

Location
Indian River Estates
2250 Indian Creek Blvd W
Vero Beach, FL 32966
(772) 562-7400
All meetings will be held at Indian River Estates

Suggested Hotel Information for Lodging
There is no formal FLiCRA room block at a hotel.

Home2 Suites by Hilton Vero Beach I-95
9060 Americana Way, Vero Beach
Phone: (772) 410-0770
Rate: $144

Hampton Inn Vero Beach
9350 19th Ln, Vero Beach
Phone: (772) 770-4299
Rate: $144

Room rates are subject to change and based on availability.

Please mail/email all registration forms by October 12, 2023 to:
FLiCRA
325 John Knox Road, Ste L103
Tallahassee, FL 32303
Email: lauren@executiveoffice.org

FLiCRA 2023 Annual Conference & Chapter Delegates Meeting Registration Form

Please Duplicate for Multiple Registrants

❑ $35.00 per person (includes AM refreshments and lunch on Thursday)
❑ $10.00 per person (includes AM refreshments ONLY on Thursday - Does not include lunch)

Name: ______________________________

Community Name: ______________________________

Address: ______________________________

City/State/Zip: ______________________________

Phone: ____________________ **Email**: ____________________

Total Amount Enclosed (Please make checks payable to FLiCRA): ____________________

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Salaries Soaring, Nurses Still Hottest but Raises Moderating Cont.

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Another “silver lining” for governing boards and other operating heads dealing with labor pay is that “you’d be hard-pressed to find anybody who hasn’t heard about how much salaries are increasing.” Inflation and staff shortages are the two biggest influencers, especially for lower level employees, he explained.

Serving up the highest turnover

“It’s a numbers game. If CNAs aren’t able to afford their bills, they’re forced to look elsewhere,” Leach said. “You have to be competitive [as an operator offering compensation]. That’s what these numbers are saying. If you’re not being competitive, there are other organizations that have open slots that will be competitive and poach your talent.”

The annual turnover rate for all CCRC employees was 43.8%, led by dining services (52%), CNAs (48.6%), RNs (42.5%) and LPNs (39.7%). Top-level execs had the lowest turnover rate at 19.3%.

Among same-participating facilities from 2022 to 2023, nurses also fared well, with CNAs given the highest average raise among hourly employees. Nursing facility CNAs rose an eye-popping 9.44% (to $18.96 per hour), while LPNs leaped 5.92% (to $29.78). Staff nurses (RNs), meanwhile, rose 5.75% - down from a 7.7% raise a year earlier - to $37.88 per hour.

On the assisted living side, CNAs also had a huge jump (7.8%, to $18.55 per hour), while resident assistants rose 7.4% to $16.22.

By comparison, therapy titles experienced some of the most modest pay raises among hourly employees. Speech language pathologists went up 3.1% (to $51.07), while physical therapists (3.6%, to $48.97) and occupational therapists (3.7%, to $47.21) had slightly bigger bumps.

Source: James M. Berklan - McKnights.com