

Report: Wellness and lifestyle activities build resident satisfaction and improve length of stay in retirement communities

National data from age-qualified communities that benchmark their lifestyle/wellness programs confirm the importance of wellness programs as a contributor to resident satisfaction and quality of life

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What impact does wellness have on residents' satisfaction and length of stay at age-qualified communities? Market research experts at ProMatura Group and wellness experts at International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) sought to answer these questions by developing the ICAA/ProMatura Wellness Benchmarks. The benchmarking system enables communities with independent living and assisted living to track the effectiveness of their nonmedical wellness program—and benchmark their results against other communities.

The answers are in: Residents in benchmark communities are highly satisfied with the quality of life at their communities, in part because of their participation in the wellness program (fitness, activities and recreation). And, they tend to stay in their communities for an average two years longer than other residents.

“These benchmark results are consistent with other large scale studies ProMatura has completed,” said Margaret Wyld, PhD, CEO of ProMatura Group, LLC. “The data confirm that customers (residents) who continue to actively maintain their fitness, flexibility and interaction with others are happier with their lives and the community in which they live.”

The perceptions of nearly 3,000 residents surveyed about life at their communities in relation to their participation in the wellness program are included in the first National Benchmarks Report.

Key points:

- In continuing care (CCRC) communities, over three-quarters (77%) of the residents who have participated in the wellness program are satisfied/very satisfied with the program.
- Most (84%) of the wellness participants in CCRCs are very satisfied/satisfied with their overall quality of life at the community. Nearly half (45%) of participating residents say that taking part in the wellness program has made them much more satisfied with their overall quality of life at the community
- In communities offering independent living or a combination of independent plus assisted living (IL and IL/AL), 84% of residents who participate in the wellness program are satisfied/very satisfied with the wellness program.
- Almost all (94%) of the participating residents in independent living or independent plus assisted living properties are satisfied/very satisfied with their overall quality of life at the community, and 44% state they are much more satisfied with their quality of life because of the wellness program.
- The wellness program is a valuable marketing tool. In addition to the high levels of satisfaction, nearly half of the participants in CCRCs (48%) and 43% of the participants in independent living or independent plus assisted living communities agree/strongly agree that the wellness program is one of the primary reasons they selected their particular community.

The length of time a resident lives in the community is a key metric, because it is related to occupancy and marketing costs. One of the objectives of the ICAA/ProMatura Benchmarks was to discover if residents who participated in the wellness program were able to live independently for a longer period of time before needing personal assistance.

New data collected by benchmark communities found wellness participants have lived an average of almost two years longer in independent living and assisted living and one year longer in memory care when compared to the average length of stay (ALOS) of all residents (both participants and nonparticipants). While these years may include time spent in two levels of living, it is still an indicator of longer residency.

“Communities that facilitate their customer’s desires to live well through fitness and health programs, equipment, experts and encouragement also engender greater loyalty and an enduring relationship with the customer,” commented Dr. Wylde.

“For the past 30+ years researchers have been looking closely at all areas that help us to age well,” said Colin Milner, CEO of International Council on Active Aging. “Their findings have shown, and continue to support, the need for older adults to remain engaged in all aspects of life. Communities that allow their residents to stay engaged are well-positioned to be home for consumers who seek to live their lives, as best they can, no matter their abilities, situation or socioeconomic status. The results of the National Benchmarks Report show that wellness is good for the consumer. Now we know it is also good for the community.”

The ICAA/ProMatura Wellness Benchmarks National Report is a rich source of information for planning budgets and services. The results are the aggregate of input from 62 continuing care (CCRC) and 24 independent living or independent and assisted living communities. Included is a profile of the amenities offered in benchmark communities, average length of stay of wellness participants compared to the entire resident population, staffing ratios, residents’ self-rated health, and resident’s perception of the value of the entire community.

The 34-page National Report is available by contacting International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) at 866-335-9777 or 604-734-4466 or info@icaa.cc.

About the ICAA/ProMatura Wellness Benchmarks

www.icaa.cc/business/benchmarks.htm

The ICAA/ProMatura Wellness Benchmarks system is an online, password-protected management tool that generates objective data to track how well lifestyle and fitness programs are being used, and how well they deliver value to the residents and to the organization. Once a year, residents answer questions about their satisfaction with different elements of community life, their perception of value and their self-rated health. The benchmarks support effective decision-making on the organizational level by bringing together resident opinions, participation levels and program features into a single analytical tool that is easy to use.

About International Council on Active Aging (ICAA)

www.icaa.cc

International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) is a membership association that supports professionals who develop wellness facilities, programs and services for people 50+ years of age. ICAA brings an in-depth knowledge of wellness facilities and programs.

About ProMatura Group

www.promatura.com

ProMatura Group is a global market research and advisory firm specializing in consumers 50+ years of age and their preferences for housing, products and services. ProMatura brings expertise in data collection, management and implementation along with their knowledge of consumers 50+ years of age.

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