

St. Mark Village Enhances Resident Care with InformaCast



The Challenge

Due to outdated technology, St. Mark Village, a continuing care community in Florida, was seeing slow response times when residents called for help and had little insight into other critical systems that kept their operations running.

The Solution

St. Mark overhauled its communications by implanting InformaCast along with a new Cisco infrastructure for their phones and routing. This led to quicker response times and allowed them to receive vital information about other systems to be more proactive in identifying and remedying potential issues.

Communication Upgrades

When Dylan Fresh joined St. Mark Village, a continuing care community for adults 62 and older in Florida, as its Technology Director in 2019, he immediately identified an issue that needed to be addressed.

“When I arrived the phone system was in shambles,” Fresh explained. “The infrastructure was practically non-existent.”

With about 350 employees looking to care for close to a thousand residents, he saw an opportunity to take everything in place down to the wiring and build it back up using a Cisco infrastructure coupled with InformaCast for mass notifications. Fresh had experience using both solutions at a previous workplace and understood the versatility InformaCast offered could help transform the way St. Mark operated.



“In our independent living, the nurse calling system was 40 years old and was experiencing issues with reliability,” said Fresh. “As a critical life safety system for our residents, we needed something we knew would work whenever we needed it.”

The problem was cost. When Fresh scoped out the project, he was getting quotes back between \$500,000-\$1,000,000. By implementing InformaCast, his team was able to complete the project for less than \$125,000.

Adding to Resident Life Expectancy

With better tools in place, Fresh got to work addressing other issues with communication procedures at St. Mark Village.

“We call 911 several times a week,” Fresh said, “but when I talk with the first responders we work with they always said the hardest part of their job was just knowing where to go.”

With multiple levels of care in different buildings and floors, time was being wasted as first responders figured out where they were needed once they arrived at St. Mark. Using the CallAware feature within InformaCast, Fresh was able to configure messages that reached the security team and receptionist with information about the floor number where the call was placed and what level of care the person placing the call was in. This information then gets sent to a message board outside the facility so when first responders arrive all they need to do is look at the board to know where they should go.

Integration with InformaCast also helped with staff response times as well. Before it could take up to 8 minutes for someone to even realize someone had requested assistance. Now with InformaCast alerts that hit multiple devices, assistance is arriving in seconds.

“It’s a huge time saver,” said Fresh. “Our staff have a much better idea when residents need help leading faster response times which I believe is adding to the overall life expectancy of our residents.”



Proactive Monitoring

Due to its location in Florida, St. Mark faces threats from severe weather. Fresh has set up InformaCast to send alerts for events like extreme heat, hurricanes, and tornadoes. Since these events can also impact the power that keeps St. Mark running, the facilities also have backup generators to provide power in the case of an emergency. However, before implementing InformaCast, it was a difficult and inconsistent process to understand if those generators were working properly.

“We had an instance where we lost a brand new voice server because a generator didn’t turn on and no one knew,” said Fresh. “Now we have sensors with contact closures that send weekly test alerts as well as notifications if they detect any issue with the generators outside of those testing periods. We went from one person maybe getting a message when something went wrong to five people automatically receiving an alert so we can ensure any issue is addressed quickly.”

Room to Grow in the Future

Fresh has big plans for leveraging InformaCast in the future as well, including integration with digital signage for Code Blue alerts in our Health Care wing, training security on how to use InformaCast Command Center from safety concerns, and using overhead lights and speakers to indicate where the nearest emergency exit is.

“I have never found a better software suite than InformaCast to handle any communication challenge we’ve thrown at it,” said Fresh. “I have never had a system or device I have not been able to integrate with InformaCast, which has meant that we’ve consolidated hundreds of different pieces of software communicating hundreds of different messages, into a single system.”

Visit www.singlewire.com/informacast-healthcare for more information about how healthcare and assisted living facilities can implement InformaCast to help provide excellent patient and resident care.