



WHITE PAPER

# BEYOND BASICS: Four Fresh Strategies for Using EHRs

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## Four Fresh Strategies for Using EHRs

Fall prevention keeps residents out of the hospital. A dining program keeps residents not just healthy, but social. A smooth experience at intake, or transfer, keeps residents on solid ground. And vital sign documentation is essential for care.

To residents and family members, these four areas of senior living might seem disparate. To staff, perhaps equally so. But senior living operators know the connection between them. All four areas are integral to resident satisfaction and ultimately occupancy, and all four show the importance of a good electronic health record (EHR) partner.

This white paper tells a different side of the EHR story, showing the powerful impact the right EHR partner can have on operators. Seen through the eyes of four partners of Yardi EHR, this white paper shows how delivering four areas of senior living can serve a multitude of needs:

- **Fall prevention, with SafelyYou**
- **Dining programming, with eMenuCHOICE**
- **Resident intake and transfer, with Kno2**
- **Vital sign documentation, with DS smart**



# Fall prevention

Every second in the United States, an older adult falls. The cost, in more ways than one, is massive.

A fall can drastically change the trajectory of older adults' lives, limiting their movement and taking them out of their homes and into care settings. Falls cost our health system \$50 billion a year. By 2030, 72 million older adults are projected to experience a combined total of 52 million falls every year, which means that cost will double to \$101 billion per year.

One of the major falls-related issues for senior living operators is visibility. When residents are alone in their rooms and fall, operators lack information about the cause and severity of each fall.<sup>1</sup>

Fall prevention technology solution SafelyYou works with Yardi to solve that visibility problem and reduce falls in communities, allowing quicker responses and more accurate information gathering.

“As a caregiver, 99.9% of the time, you go back into the EHR to document that incident with the recollection of what that resident could tell you about that event,” says Carlo Perez, SafelyYou Chief Product Officer.

When SafelyYou's ambient care assistant program detects a fall, a privacy protected recording of the incident can be created, allowing staff to have a direct, clear understanding why and how the incident occurred. The EHR then gives staff a richer understanding of that resident's care needs.

“When you rely purely on human observation, you can miss unseen falls,” says Fil Southerland, Yardi Director of Healthcare. “The resident may recover, but there may be some downstream impact.”

Yardi is seeing more partners and vendors interested in deep integrations to pull multiple data points out of EHRs to support their models — and to send data back into EHRs to predict and prevent issues for residents.

## The importance of fall prevention in memory care

Clarity, another of SafelyYou's modules, allows care providers to accurately identify when care is provided to residents without the need for any kind of wearable. Data from SafelyYou combined with Yardi EHR helps providers understand resident needs in a new way and then deploy staff more effectively.

This is important in all areas of senior living, but especially in memory care, where fall risk is higher and wearable adherence is lower.

“One of the core areas we focused on when we started out was memory care,” Perez says. “We're really concerned about high acuity residents, because they wouldn't be able to tell you what was happening due to their cognitively impaired state.”



<sup>1</sup><https://seniorhousingnews.com/2022/11/15/the-state-of-falls-in-senior-living-new-report-new-data/>





# Dining

Out of all areas of senior living in the past 30 years, dining has seen the most significant changes. Residents have an abundance of options: where to eat, when to eat, what to eat, how to order, how to pay, how to tie dining choices into personal nutrition and so much more.

Operators who use a senior living-centric dining solution like eMenuCHOICE bring a deep connection to everyday dining. The eMenuCHOICE system helps build relationships between staff and residents. It allows staff members to remind residents of what they like to eat and, crucially, what they can and cannot eat — with a focus on resident allergies and diet. It also connects front-of-house dining to back-of-house business.

“The residents know that we’re looking out for them and making sure they’re safe, making decisions that are in their best interests,” says Daniel Novak, Corporate Food and Beverage Director of All Seasons Senior Living, which connects with eMenuCHOICE through Yardi EHR. “I think they appreciate that component.”<sup>2</sup>

The key to this protective system is that it works directly with the EHRs. When new residents arrive, the information collected at intake includes dietary restrictions and allergies. That information then automatically feeds from Yardi EHR into eMenuCHOICE. When residents order food, the server enters their names and their profiles appear, their dietary needs included.

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— Daniel Novak, Corporate Food and Beverage Director, All Seasons Senior Living

## How an EHR drives success in billing



For All Seasons Senior Living, the ever-evolving and expanding world of senior living dining created billing challenges that Yardi EHR addressed.

“We have a lot of a la carte items and add-ons that a resident can partake in,” Novak says. “This allows us to capture the purchase and verify that we’re charging the right person, because a photograph appears in the resident profile when you’re doing the billing.”

Without this kind of automation in place, it could take billing up to six weeks to be completed and slow down the entire process of accurately charging residents.

Additionally, having EHR systems tied to dining helps provide caregivers peace of mind due to automated check in systems when residents sit down for a meal. If residents aren’t checked in through the system, staff can be alerted to seek them out.

“They appreciate that component,” Novak says.

<sup>2</sup>Adapted from SHN-eMenuCHOICE white paper “How Today’s Operators Bring Dining Choice — and Smiles — to Residents”

Yardi Integrations Manager Brandon Gardiner says that while Yardi launched the eMenuCHOICE interface in the fall of 2020, they saw a massive uptick in requests for these dining programs interfaces in 2024. The program allows swifter and easier census traffic information to a dining service, so it doesn't have to be populated manually.

Additionally, everything already documented into an EHR, such as allergies or food preferences, can be implemented without human intervention that might miss crucial information. If a resident is on a low sodium diet, for instance, the EHR automatically sends that information to the dining program.

"If we can automate this information that's already in the EHR system into the dining program, we're just getting rid of that extra layer of potential errors," Gardiner says.

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Integrations Manager, Yardi

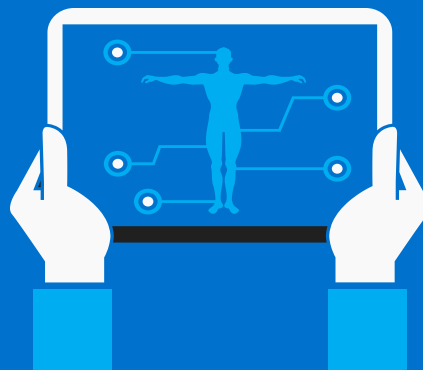
## EHRs and driving value-based care

A driving force behind EHR adoption is how to use it to better incentivize value-based care. Southerland says the industry is just beginning to approach this care model.

"By having an EHR in place, having an operation that's effectively using that EHR to proactively surface issues that may need attention, you can prevent expensive acute care encounters," Southerland says. "And you can bring dollars into our industry that traditionally went to doctors and health systems."

### EHRs allow staff to:

- Have a very clear picture of a resident's acuity needs to prevent falls and incidents leading to expensive events
- Help improve the overall quality of life for residents in senior living
- Have better access to clinical information at the point of care
- Play a more important role in health care for an aging population in the value-based care ecosystem
- Proactively identify at-risk residents in order to drive interventions and enable better outcomes



# Intake and transfers

Before residents can enjoy an operator’s wonderful offerings, they must first simply enter the community. Kno2, the nation’s largest health information network, integrates with Yardi to allow operators to exchange patient records throughout the care coordination process.

“During the pre-intake and intake process, clinical records on the patient can be retrieved from the community in which they receive care,” says Kno2 CEO Theresa Bell. “For instance, an EHR can query through Kno2 and request a patient’s records. Kno2 in turn queries the larger community of providers to find out if anyone has records on the patient, and, if so, can respond with the complete record.”

Intake and transfer are, together, a huge area where EHRs affect senior living, particularly considering that around 70% of adverse events happen within 30 to 90 days of a resident transfer.<sup>3</sup>

“Having the right data at your fingertips is incredibly important because care transitions are where risk of adverse events is highest,” says Southerland.

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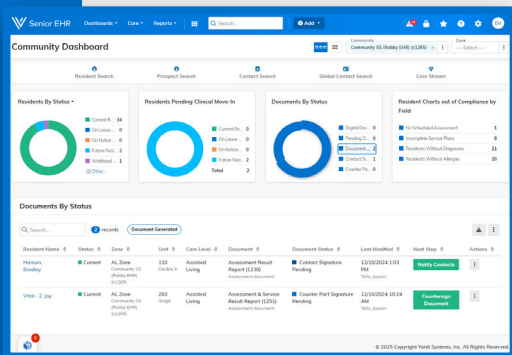
## How an EHR helps organize clinical data

Whether in falls, dining or intake, a common theme in senior living today is the challenge of sorting data coming from multiple sources. Bell notes EHRs and systems like Kno2 easily overcome this challenge by cleaning data and then assimilating it into a single record.

As automation and AI tools continue to improve, they offer opportunities to use EHR data to innovate the intake experience and all care, Bell says.

While it may be too early to have measurable results in senior living, Kno2 and EHR partners like Yardi are focusing on near-term success through connecting as many senior living communities as possible through their EHRs.

“Until today, post-acute and senior living have been a disconnected, and often looked down upon, sector of the health care market,” says Bell. “However, with the aging population, this sector is increasingly getting the attention from payers, care coordination and risk bearing organizations.”



<sup>3</sup><https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6646976/>

## Vital signs documentation

With advances in technology, getting vital sign documentation for residents has become easier and more automated than ever before.

Gardiner says this is a benefit caused by everything moving to digital platforms, which entirely removes the need for manual transcription. An added benefit is that digital platforms are now more discreet.

EHRs represent a significant leap forward from pen-and-paper documentation by enabling long-term data storage and unlocking trend analysis, says Scott Boyce, program director of DS smart. A study found manually transcribed notes had a 19% error rate.

“DS smart addresses this challenge head-on by virtually eliminating transcription errors,” Boyce says. “With accurate and reliable data, EHRs can truly shine, allowing operators to leverage emerging AI tools that further enhance care.”

Southerland notes the digital adaptation to EHRs allows med passes to become more efficient because of the need of vital sign documentation across a resident population. He says this simply speeds up the process.

A study found manually transcribed notes had a **19%** error rate.

### The four major benefits that EHRs bring to vital sign documentation

- **Eliminating transcription errors:** After implementing DS smart, Generations Living reduced transcription errors by 18%, resulting in cleaner, more reliable data. This improvement directly enhanced their ability to provide proactive, data-driven resident care.
- **Reducing data gaps,** such as eliminating missed elevated temperatures that DS smart caught for one community.
- **Enhancing efficiency and time management:** Automating the vital sign documentation process allowed Generations Living to save 69 hours of work in one month, along with reducing documentation time by 68 seconds per resident.
- **Allowing for more proactive care:** EHRs allow communities to better understand trend analytics with more complete data and allowing for real time care adjustments as needed.

“The success stories from communities like Generations demonstrate how EHRs and DS smart not only solve the top challenges in vital sign documentation but also transform the way senior living care is delivered,” Boyce says. “By improving efficiency, reducing errors and enhancing data quality, DS smart helps operators unlock the full potential of their EHRs, paving the way for higher-quality care and better resident outcomes.”

# Get the most out of your EHR — in all areas of your operation!

With more accurate information from their EHRs, senior care providers can deliver more efficient care and a better daily experience. Yardi continues to look for new ways that EHR data can enhance everyday life in communities.

“Interoperability is a game-changer for the entire senior living industry,” Gardiner says. “It will significantly impact resident care, and we can expect some impressive developments in the next year or two.”

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**This white paper is sponsored by Yardi.**

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