



A Note from Executive Director, Lisa Zimmers

Look Back Period

Soon I'll be leaving for a weeklong beach vacation with my children: grandchildren; my mother- and father-in-law; and my husband's twin sister and her family. There will be 16 of us staying in one house. We've done these trips many times, and I look forward to it every year. The beaches may change, but the feelings of togetherness and family love never do.

Although it can get a bit cozy sharing a house with 15 other people, it's always been an amazing week together. Much of the fun comes from sharing memories of past trips or life events. We cackle about the silliest things over and over. We also remember any missteps or accidents that may have occurred. This helps us to (hopefully) not repeat the same mistake(s). This lookback period spans decades. The happy and fun times are what we remember most.

Vacations happen during this time of year and so do annual reviews for associates. The lookback period is one year. Each associate is evaluated for excellence, opportunity, and growth. It's time-consuming but an important process. Each associate completes a self-appraisal. Areas of review include impact on associate and resident experience; quality and safety; and efficiency. The evaluations come out on a quarterly basis, and the expectation is that associates look back over the past year. This format compiles a summary of feedback that aligns with the organization's operational pillars. It's a lot of work, but the investment in the individual and the relationship is impactful beyond the award of a merit raise.

Life Enriching Communities partners with WeCare Connect to obtain associate and resident feedback on a consistent basis. It's important for associates to consider the lookback period and provide relevant information. It's easy to repeat feedback even if it has been longer than the lookback period. Sometimes residents and associates tell me they didn't receive their surveys. We are flooded with surveys, and it is easy to suffer from survey fatigue. It is important to complete the WeCare Connect surveys, however, because they are a valuable tool that reinforces favorable service and helps to improve service that didn't meet expectations.

Recently, my husband and I celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary. We splurged and went to a very nice restaurant not too far from Twin Lakes. The venue is known for its award-winning steaks and service. The service was excellent; the steak and salad were not even mediocre. They were bad. I didn't receive a survey, but I did reach out to the organization through their website. The assistant manager was quick to respond and apologized for the lackluster meal. They made it right, and we will be returning. We won't ever forget the meal, but we won't dwell on it either. If we allow that one bad experience to taint our opinion of the restaurant, we will miss out on the opportunity to have future celebrations at one of our favorites. In the same way, we cannot let one misspoken word or bad day color our feelings about them as a person. We need to give everyone, ourselves included, that all-important second chance.

Although experiences never leave us, it's important to keep them in context. We can't allow the past to dictate our future endeavors. Whether you enjoyed it or regretted it, most things are a snapshot in time.

Lisa Zimmers