# What Do Senior Housing Prospects Really Want?

2021 Senior Housing Survey Results & Analysis

Survey conducted in partnership between:



### 2021 Senior Housing Survey

**Results & Analysis** 

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#### Survey conducted in partnership between:



### **About the Survey**

The 2021 Senior Housing Survey was conducted to gather perceptions from both Seniors (prospective residents) and Adult Family Caregivers (participants in residential decisions for Seniors in their care). The survey results are meant to provide insights for the Senior Living industry and for those developing innovative solutions to meet the needs of prospective residents in the future.

The survey was conducted independently and randomly by Qualtrics. Surveys were given electronically between June 15 and July 1, 2021.

### **Participants**

### Seniors

### Adult Family Caregivers

1,014 Respondents	1,083 Respondents
Ages: 70 - 95	Ages: 45 - 69
51% Male; 49% Female	41% Male; 59% Female

Qualifying criteria – Senior with investable assets \$35,000 or greater

The Adult Family Caregiver responses reflect their perceptions in making choices with the Senior for which they provide care or supportive decision-making. Adult Family Caregivers, in the context of this survey, are NOT paid, professional caregivers.

### **Overview** of Key Insights

### **Key Takeaway**

The year-over-year changes reflected in the results of the 2021 survey provide new insights into the living situations and priorities of Seniors and their Adult Family Caregivers. It may be surprising, however, that the continued months of the COVID-19 pandemic in the time between the 2020 and 2021 surveys has had a more positive impact on perceptions of Senior Housing than were thought possible following the devastating early months of the COVID-19 crisis. In the 2021 survey, we found the following themes:

- Increase in the number of Seniors living with family versus living independently
- Increasing acceptance and expectation for advancing technology in Senior Housing
- · Healthcare on-site in Senior Housing is a new value to prospective residents
- Most influential referral source for prospective residents and caregivers includes primary care physicians

#### Survey conducted in partnership between:



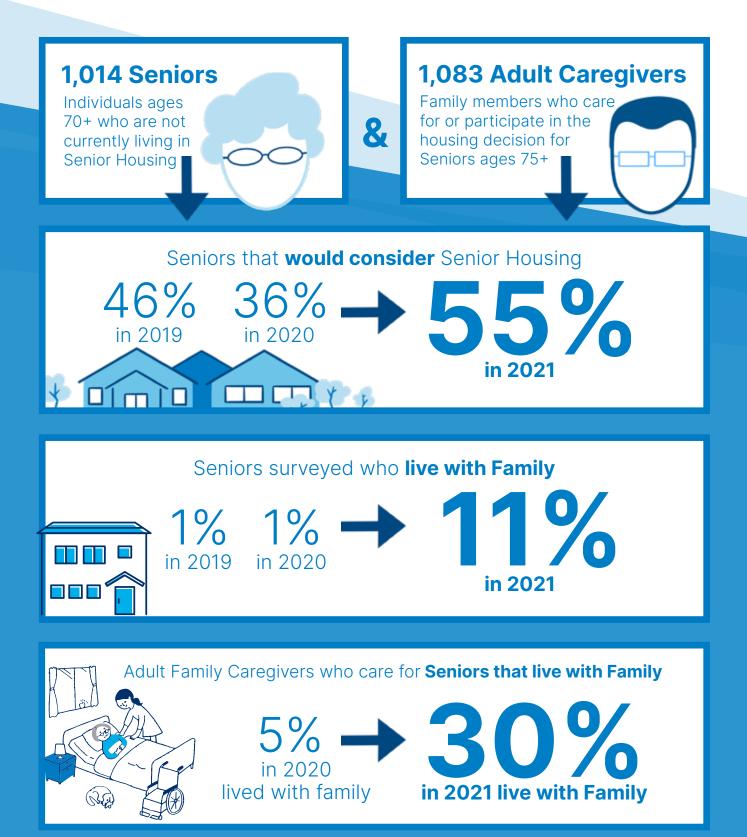
### **Survey Goal**

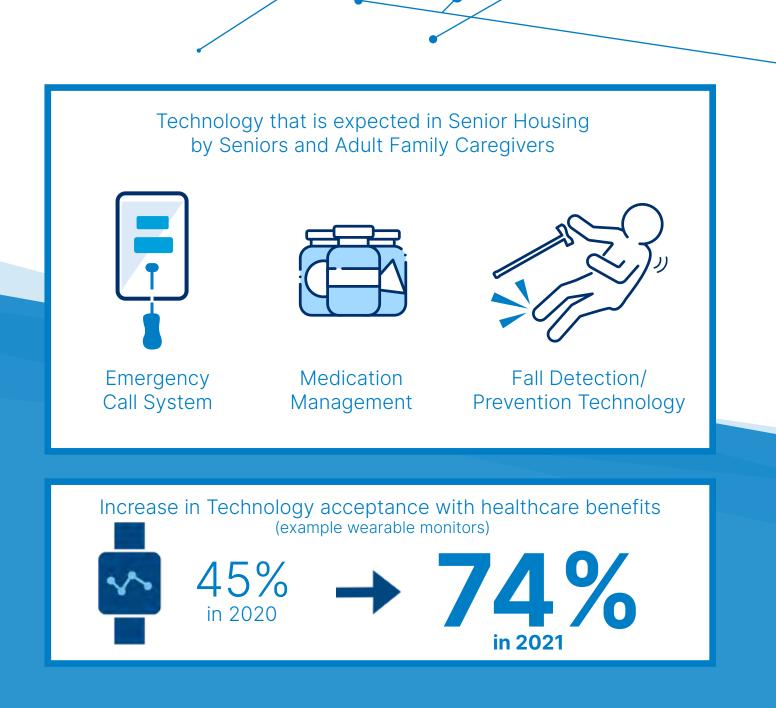
The 2021 Senior Housing Survey was conducted to discover the perspectives of Seniors on Senior Housing as a future residential option, as well as uncover insights that can be used to make the Senior Living industry more attractive for these Seniors. A similar survey was conducted in both 2019 and 2020, which provides a basis for comparison and identifying trends.

### What are Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers expecting from the Senior Housing industry going forward?

- 1. An increasing number of Seniors see Senior Housing as a way to **maintain their independence**.
- 2. Healthcare and Senior Housing are inextricably linked providing a safe environment and support that may not be available in a completely independent setting.
- 3. Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers find value in technology because of the healthcare benefits it can provide.

### Fast Facts 2021 Senior Housing Survey





Survey conducted in partnership between:



What type of residence do you currently live in? Seniors Adult Family Caregivers 17% 73% 42% 3% 30% 13% 11% Independently in a home With a family member Independently in an apartment In an Active Adult or or condominium Senior Care setting

**NOTE:** The Adult Family Caregiver responses reflect their perceptions in making choices with the Senior for which they provide care or supportive decision-making (they are not answering the questions for themselves personally, except where specifically noted). Adult Family Caregivers, in the context of this survey, are NOT paid, professional caregivers.

### Insight

**Question 1:** 

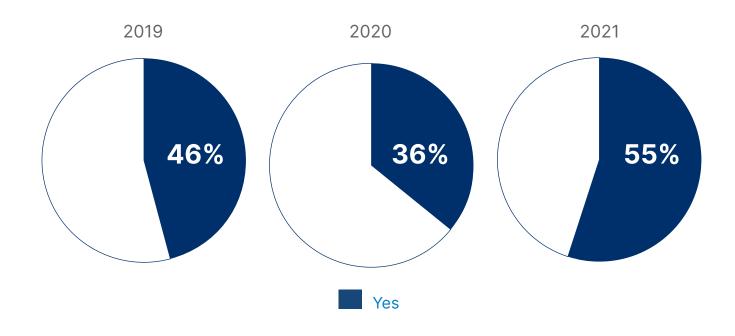
85% of Seniors live independently in 2021 compared to 97% in 2019 and 2020. 11% of Seniors now live with Family members versus 1% in 2019 and 2020. Among Seniors cared for by an Adult Family Caregiver, 53% of Seniors live independently in 2021 compared to 80% in 2020. **30% of Seniors now live with family members versus 5% in 2020.** 

Have there been delays of seniors entering Senior Housing for the first time, as a result of the COVID pandemic? Did Seniors or their family members feel an increased risk to living in Senior Housing due to COVID-19? Either way, there are fewer Seniors living in independent settings who are potentially feeling the loss of that independence, even as they live with family members. How might this affect their perceptions of Senior Housing? Could Senior Housing be seen as a way to INCREASE their independence? This could lead to a shift in the perception of Senior Housing as a means to gain independence, not lose it. (See the results of Question 4).



**Question 2:** 

Would you consider Senior Housing as a residential option? (Seniors)

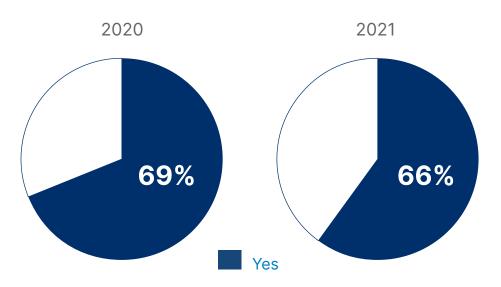


### Insight

The 10 point drop in 2020 was expected with the significant impact COVID-19 had on the Senior Housing industry and the negative media attention that resulted. Who would have predicted a 19 point gain in 2021 from those 2020 levels? Consider this as you take in the entire results from the 2021 survey. We believe the shift in acceptance of Senior Housing comes from the benefits of technology, on-site healthcare, social opportunities and more to uniquely provide greater benefit in a congregate setting.

### Question 3:

Would you consider Senior Housing as a residential option for your Senior? (Adult Family Caregiver)



### Insight

### While we saw an increase in Seniors considering Senior Housing, we did not see that same increase from Adult Family Caregivers, which remained more consistent with 2020 perceptions.

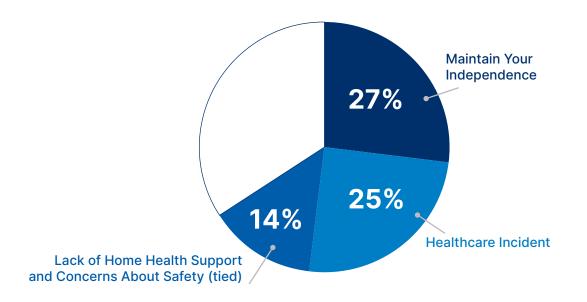
Perhaps longer held beliefs not as easily influenced, whether from past perceptions or pressure to care for family members themselves.

We continue to survey the Adult Caregivers because the industry does not have a lot of data that shows how these adult children/family caregivers impact a Senior's choice on where they live and how they make their decisions. From a caregiver's perspective, perhaps not that much has changed since the summer of 2020 with COVID-19 still presenting a risk to Seniors.



### **Question 4:**

Under what circumstances would you look at Senior Housing? (Seniors)



**NOTE:** Seniors were asked to choose all that apply from the options which also included isolation, peers moving into a community and cost of living independently.

### Insight

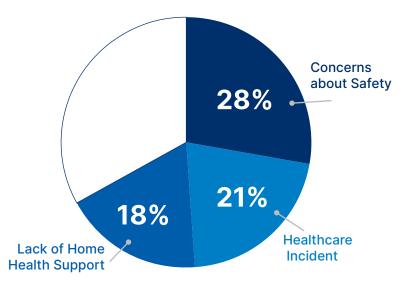
The number one choice for Seniors is a startling answer in many ways. **Contrary to popular belief that moving into Senior Housing limits independence, the number one circumstance that would compel Seniors to consider Senior Housing is to maintain their independence!** Does Senior Housing provide greater independence for Seniors when compared to living with Family members? The belief that congregate Senior Living provides independence is a game changer. This has not been seen in our data prior to this year and we'll be watching to see if this trend continues in the years ahead".

It is important to note that Senior Housing cannot extricate itself from the fact that, as an industry, we are providing healthcare. Senior Housing is an option that Seniors turn to when a healthcare incident occurs.

Only 5% of Seniors chose isolation as a circumstance that would lead them to look at Senior Housing.

### **Question 5:**

Under what circumstances would you look at Senior Housing for your Senior? (Adult Family Caregivers)



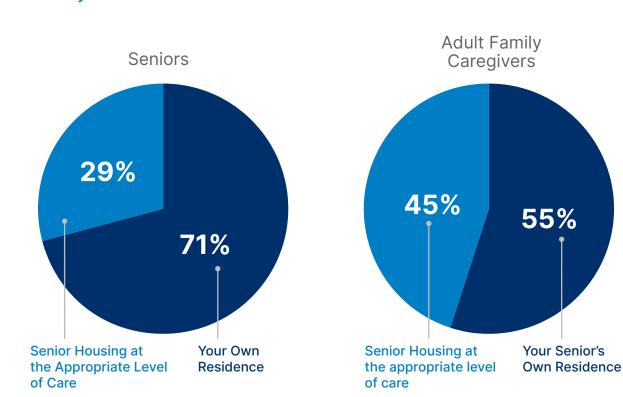
**NOTE:** Adult Family Caregivers were asked to choose all that apply from the options which also included maintain their independence, isolation, peers moving into a community and cost of living independently.

### Insight

In 2020, we asked several questions about the impact of isolation and the perception of the need for socialization by Adult Family Caregivers. Then, 70% of Adult Family Caregivers said they would be concerned about isolation if their Senior was living alone and more than 70% said that socialization opportunities found in Senior Housing were Extremely or Very Important to them. In 2021, isolation was only mentioned by 8% of Adult Family Caregivers as a circumstance that would lead them to look at Seniors Housing.

Supporting their Senior in maintaining their independence, which was the top concern for the Seniors themselves, was mentioned by only 9% of Adult Family Caregivers as a circumstance that would lead them to look at Senior Housing.





**Question 6:** Which do you feel would be safer?

### Insight

In 2021, there is very little change in the responses from Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers since the 2020 survey. There was a 7% increase from 2020 in Seniors who would feel safer in Senior Housing.

We continue to see the desire of Seniors to age in place at home and maintain their independence. Yet Adult Family Caregiver know that Seniors, especially individuals who live alone, encounter multiple dangers including falls that could lead to serious injury and trouble in maintaining the lifestyle to which they've become accustomed as aging progresses. Independence is vital to self-worth and plays a role in our positive mental and physical health. Providers in Senior Housing must offer a balance of individualized care and independence.

**Question 7:** Where would you have access to better healthcare? Adult Family Seniors Caregivers 44% 50% 56% 50% Your Own Senior Housing at Your Senior's Senior Housing at Residence the Appropriate Level **Own Residence** the Appropriate Level of Care of Care

### Insight

While 71% of Seniors feel they would be safer in their own residence, 56% of Seniors feel they would have access to better healthcare in Senior Housing. This trend increased since 2020 by 8 percentage points. Seniors feel they are they safer from COVID-19 in their own residence but have access to better healthcare in the form of immediate care in an emergency, medication management or reduced fall risk, as identified earlier in question 4.

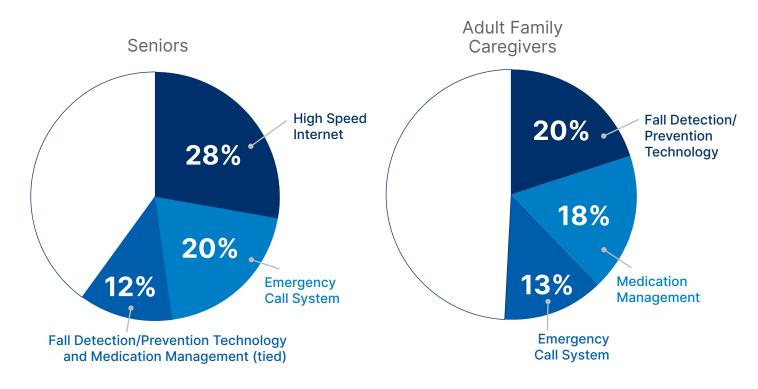
Are these Seniors looking to Senior Housing to support their needs as they age? Are they looking for an environment that will take this change into consideration and provide them a path to the greatest independence and health?

Adult Caregivers showed a small decrease in their perceptions of Senior Housing providing access to better healthcare. Interesting to note that Male Caregivers' perceptions of Senior Housing providing access to better healthcare were 10 points better than Female Caregivers.



#### **Question 8:**

What are the top three technology solutions you would want included in residential pricing?



**NOTE:** Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers were asked to choose their top three from the options which also included Air Quality (Ionization, Ultraviolet Technology, etc), Access to Virtual Communication Platforms (Zoom, FaceTime, etc.), Voice Activated Devices (Echo, Home, etc.), Wander Management and Wearables to Provide Constant Monitoring of Vital Signs.

### Insight

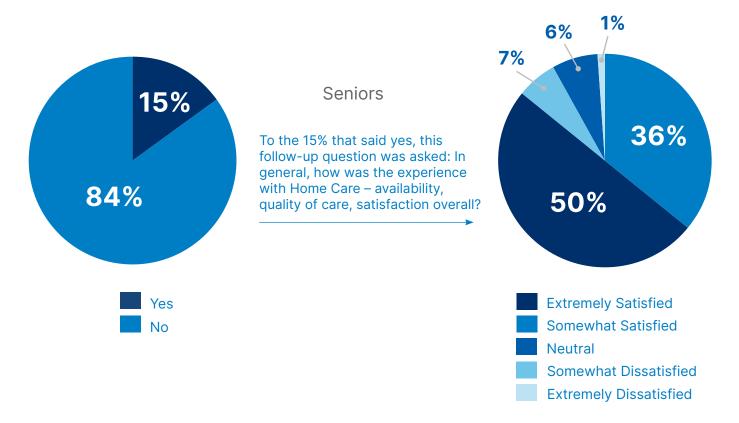
This is the first time we've asked a question in a way that also reflects a value statement. The choices are presented in the context of the price a resident would pay for Senior Housing. In some ways it could be presumed that these items, chosen by both the Seniors and the Adult Caregivers, have become table stakes for a Senior Housing offering.

It is important to note that while Adult Family Caregivers did not mention high speed internet, it was clearly most important to Seniors themselves. This could be understood as a result of the COVID-19 separation from family and friends, and the high value that Seniors now place connectivity as a lifeline to their loved ones. Their primary means of communication and social interaction is dependent on stable Wi-Fi.

In 2020, technology investment in infection control was extremely or very important to Seniors and Adult Caregivers (75% and 85% respectively). The infection control technology on this list (Air Quality) did not make the top three in 2021 (10% and 9% respectively).

**Question 9:** 

### Have you had experience with in-home care provided?



### Insight

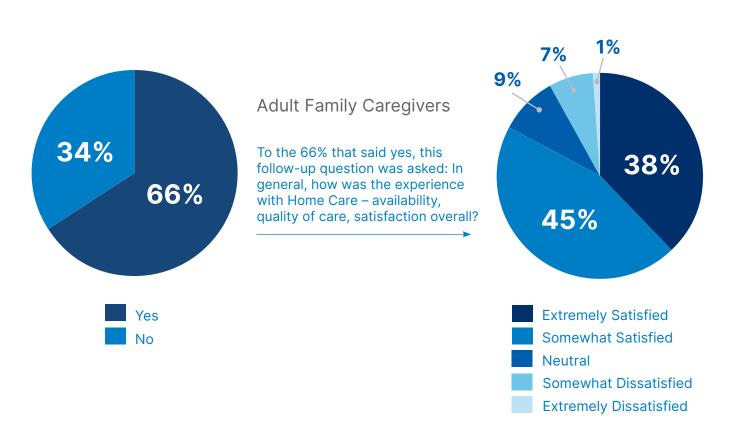
First, remember that Adult Family Caregivers are responding in relation to in-home care for their Seniors.

We asked this question about in-home care for a couple of reasons. The greatest competition to Senior Housing is the desire of a Senior to stay in their home. We know that the need for healthcare assistance increases as we age, and most Seniors believe that they will be able to stay in their home and easily receive the quality healthcare assistance they would require. The question that arises is, given the labor shortages being felt in today's economy, will in-home care be available when needed, and will it be at the quality desired?

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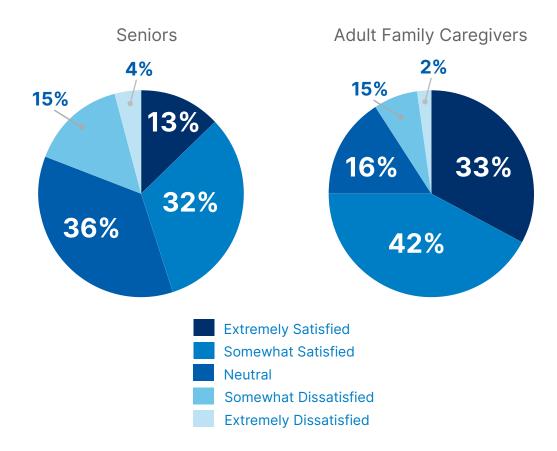
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What we learned this year is that the majority of Seniors surveyed have not had direct experience with in-home care and believe that these services will be available when needed, but have not yet put that to the test in actuality. The Adult Family Caregivers have had more experience with in-home professional caregivers most likely in support of their own caregiving role. The satisfaction felt from Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers for in-home care is consistent and positive.

### **Question 10:**

How comfortable are you with an environment where telehealth is an option for health management?



### Insight

In 2020, 40% of Seniors said telehealth would be a valuable service if offered in a Senior Housing facility. In 2021, 45% of Seniors say they are comfortable with telehealth as an option for health management.

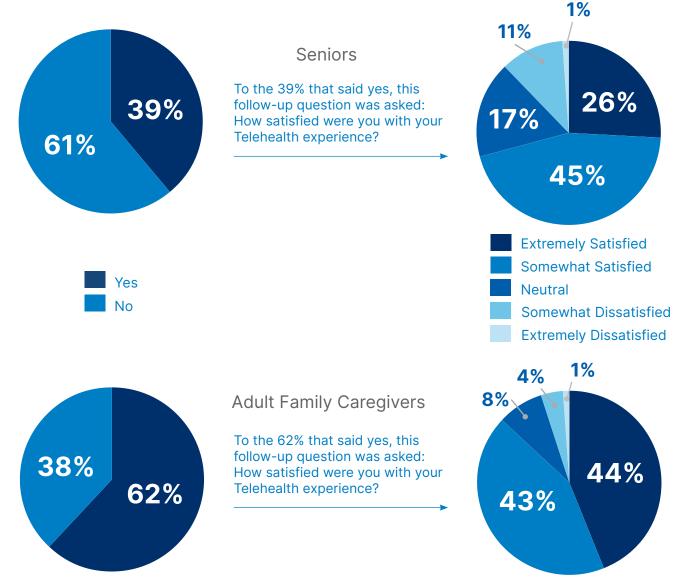
In 2020, 65% of Adult Family Caregivers said telehealth would be a valuable service if offered in a Senior Housing facility. In 2021, 75% of Adult Family Caregivers say they are comfortable with telehealth as an option for health management.



20 **DEVELOPERS** 

8 COLLECTIVE

### **Question 11:** Have you had firsthand experience with Telehealth?



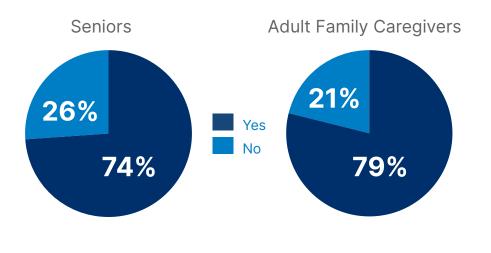
### Insight

Similar to our question about in-home care, more Adult Family Caregivers have had experience with telehealth than Seniors. The telehealth industry benefited from regulation changes brought on by the pandemic. As a by-product, Adult Family Caregivers could participate on telehealth calls with Seniors as a way to stay connected with their healthcare during the pandemic. The satisfaction numbers were positive from the Adult Family Caregivers; less so for the Seniors themselves. If the regulatory environment continues to support telehealth, the assumption could be that telehealth is here to stay and Senior Housing facilities will need to provide the means to make this happen.

### **Question 12:**

In a Senior Housing setting, do you think you would be comfortable with

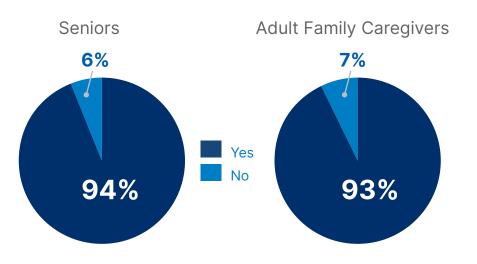
A. A Wearable Monitoring System (e.g., watch) for constant monitoring of key vital signs and contact tracing if required?



### Insight

We've seen a dramatic increase in acceptance of this type of technology over the past 12 months. In 2020, only 45% of Seniors felt a wearable device would be valuable if offered by a Senior Housing facility. In 2020, 65% of Adult Family Caregivers felt a wearable device would be valuable if offered by a Senior Housing facility. The increase in adoption of wearables could have a huge impact on facility operations and how buildings function in the future.

#### B. Emergency Call System to press for help?



### Insight

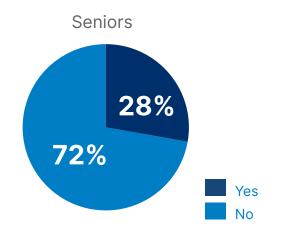
This technology was one of the top three technologies mentioned by both Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers as expectations in the residential pricing for Senior Housing. This technology is a must-have for a Senior Housing facility.



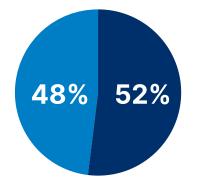
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#### *Direct* Supply

#### C. Cameras in the room to monitor, specifically for falls?



Adult Family Caregivers



### Insight

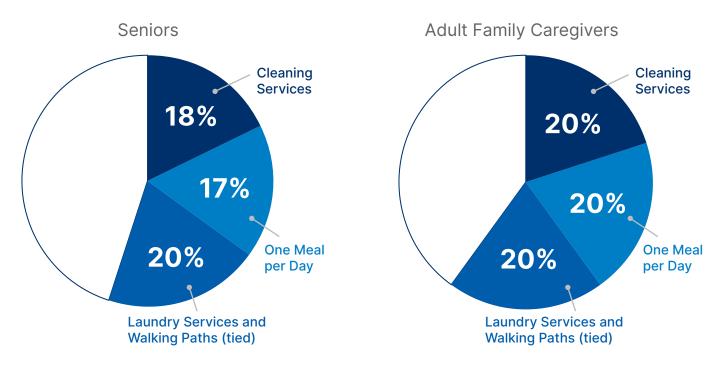
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The Senior Housing industry has a way to go in proving to Seniors that camera technology still ensures their privacy. There are some very advanced technologies on the market today with features that don't record all the time and don't keep recordings unless there is an incident. These types of technologies, while better accepted by the Adult Family Caregivers, still need to be explained well to prospective residents to help them understand their value. Continuing to communicate the benefits and complexity of the artificial intelligence behind the technology, and the dramatic improvement in outcomes, needs to be part of the conversation going forward to help advance the acceptance of these types of systems.

As we've seen in the two technologies mentioned previously (Emergency Call Systems and Wearable Devices), technology acceptance is happening rapidly among Seniors.

### **Question 13:**

What are the top three amenities you would want included in residential pricing?



### Insight

**NOTE:** Senior and Adult Family Caregivers were asked to choose their top three amenities from the options which also included Fitness Program, Telehealth Room, Outdoor Game Space (croquet, pickle ball, etc.), Indoor Game Space (pool, pickle ball, etc.), Zoom room, Theater, Bar, Private Fitness Lessons, Salon, Pool and Walking Paths.

This list was drawn from previous years' surveys where Seniors and the Adult Caregivers shared what they wanted in a Senior Living community.

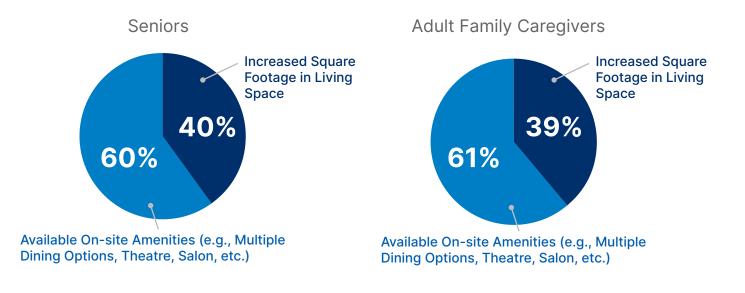
This question reflects a value statement, as the choices are presented in the context of the price a resident would pay for Senior Housing. It could be presumed that these items, chosen by both the Seniors and the Adult Caregivers, have become table stakes for a Senior Housing offering.

It is worth noting that the top amenities that were selected by both the Seniors and the Adult Family Caregivers were services, not infrastructure within the facility itself. More data is needed to determine the level of infrastructure expectations that Seniors or Adult Family Caregivers have.

It is interesting to note that for Seniors and the Adult Family Caregivers, "Bar" is at the bottom of both lists.



### **Question 14:** Which one would you choose in Senior Housing?

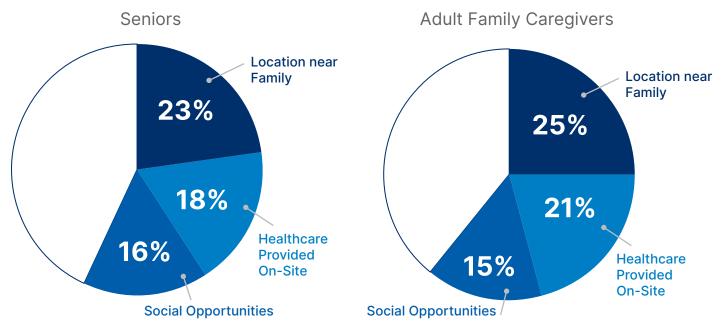


### Insight

We believe this data challenges developers to pay careful attention to the layout and adaptability of the Seniors' living space while creating appealing amenity areas within communities.

### **Question 15:**

[Once a Senior has decided to look at Senior Housing] What are the top three influences in selecting a specific residential option?



**NOTE:** Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers were asked to choose their top three from options which also included Safety & Infection Control Procedures, Location Near Current Home, Healthcare Resort/Spa Feel, Social Opportunities, Affiliation with Acute Care and Knowing a Fellow Resident.

### Insight

In 2020, we asked several questions about the impact of isolation and the perception of the need for socialization for Seniors. There was little concern about isolation from Seniors. However, it appears that once they make the decision to evaluate Senior Housing options specifically, the social opportunities offered by the various communities are one of the top three things that influence their selection.

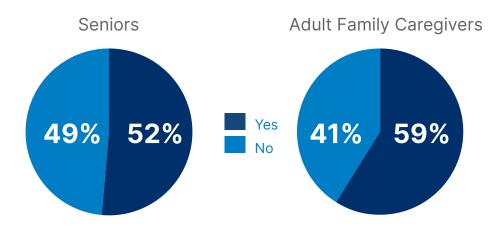
The importance of healthcare provided on-site to both Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers was a surprising new value expected in Senior Housing. Transitions are especially difficult for Seniors, so the availability of healthcare on-site at a facility and the elimination of transfers to hospitals or other facilities for care becomes a priority. It will be important for the Senior Housing industry to better understand these expectations from Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers going forward. This is also an opportunity to increase our industry's partnerships across the continuum of care to provide communities the healthcare required on-site.

One of the longer lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will be the expected transparency, especially by Adult Family Caregivers, for how a facility is built, staffed and operated to keep their loved ones safe. Transparency was a key word in the 2020 survey, which we believe will continue into the future.



### **Question 16:**

Would you be open to changing your primary care doctor if health care was provided on-site at a Senior Care facility?



### **Question 17:**

Who would be your most trusted source for information about residential options? (These were open-field, text-based answers.)

Seniors

Adult Family Caregivers

- 1. Referral from Family and Friends
- 2. Speaking to a Current Resident
- 3. Primary Care Doctor

**1. Primary Care Doctor** 

- 2. Internet
- **3. Referral from Family and Friends**

### Insight

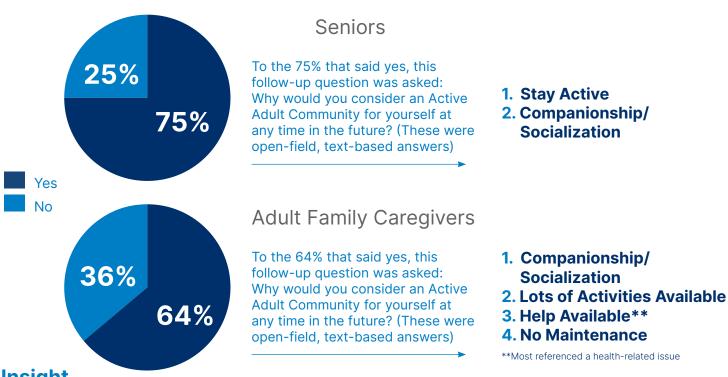
When asked to answer to this question in an open format, without prompted answers, both Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers said Primary Care Doctors are a highly regarded source of information as Seniors choose specific residential options. The question behind this answer is – are Primary Care Doctors an informed source about the specific residential options that might be best suited to a particular Senior? Does the Senior Living industry market themselves to Primary Care Doctors?

Note the strong desire by the Seniors to hear directly from current residents from a Senior Housing option they are considering. Do Senior Housing facilities utilize their residents in their marketing? Are there programming opportunities to bring the outside community inside (coffee shops, book clubs, arts/music offerings, etc.) that enable this type of high-touch marketing?

Other responses mentioned include Meeting with Staff, Tour of Facility, Government Sources (Federal, State and Local), Health Insurance Companies, Testimonials, Independent Reviews (AARP, BBB, etc.), Media/Marketing Materials.

### **Question 18:**

Would you consider an Active Adult Community for you, personally, at any time in the future?



#### Insight

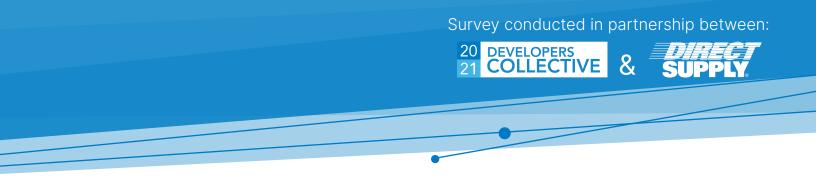
In looking at Senior Housing offerings and the market perceptions around them, this question was designed to provide insight into the sentiment generated from the Active Adult branding when separated from other types and referral names of Senior Housing (e.g., Skilled Nursing, Assisted Living, Independent Living). For the Senior population surveyed, 55% indicated they would consider Senior Housing when defined as Active Adult Community, Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care or Skilled Nursing/Rehab and 75% of these same Seniors said they would consider an Active Adult Community when separated from the other types.

Here is one candid comment provided in the "Why" text based answers:

Why is the perception of Active Adult Communities so much more appealing to all these individuals ages 45-95?

#### "We all want the perception of activity, joy and life!"

As an industry it's time we helped the words match the offering.



### ANOTHER CUT AT THE DATA

We reviewed the data from the 2021 Senior Survey from a gender perspective. These results represent the areas where there are statistically significant preferences between those that identified as one gender or another.

**Male Seniors** – Medication Management is the top technology they want to be included in residential pricing. Laundry Service is the top amenity they want to be included in residential pricing. Location near home is influential in selecting a specific residential option.

**Female Seniors** – Emergency Call System is the top technology they want to be included in residential pricing. Salon and Cleaning Services are important amenities to be included in residential pricing. Social Opportunities were most influential in selecting a specific residential option.

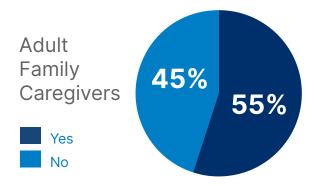
**Male Caregivers** – Air Quality is an important technology they want to be included in residential pricing. Fitness Programs are an important amenity to be included in residential pricing. Location near home is influential in selecting a specific residential option. They are more willing to agree to their Senior changing Primary Care Doctors if Healthcare was provided on-site at a Senior Housing Facility.

**Female Caregivers** – Fall Detection/Prevention and Medication Management are the top technology systems they want to be included in residential pricing. Cleaning Services is the top amenity they want to be included in residential pricing. Social Opportunities are most influential in selecting a specific residential option.

### THE VIEW FROM OUR YOUNGER SENIORS

The next series of questions was asked of the Adult Family Caregivers (age 45-69) for them to answer regarding their personal perceptions and circumstances.

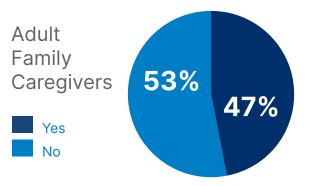
### **Question 19:** Are you currently contributing financially to your Senior's daily living costs?



### Insight

We ask this question to help understand the engagement and motivations of the Adult Family Caregivers. Our data showed that male caregivers were 17 points more likely to say "yes" to this question than female caregivers.

**Question 20:** Are you personally considering another residential option in the next five years.



### Insight

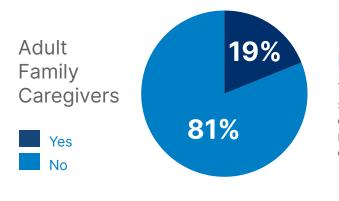
Our data showed that male caregivers were 14 points more likely to consider another residential option in five years versus female caregivers.







### **Question 21:** Do you believe you will need to sell your residence to retire?



#### Insight

This question was asked to shed light on the financial circumstances those nearing retirement age will face when considering Senior Housing.

### LAST WORD

Of the Seniors in the care of the Adult Family Caregivers surveyed, 17% currently live in Senior Housing (defined as Active Adult Community, Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care or Skilled Nursing/Rehab). When the Adult Family Caregivers of these Seniors were asked if they would choose Senior Housing for their Senior, 82% still said yes.

3% of the Seniors directly surveyed currently live in Senior Housing. When these Seniors were asked if they would choose Senior Housing for themselves, 100% still said yes.

### Insight

Both Adult Family Caregivers who have a Senior in Senior Housing and Seniors currently living in Senior Housing are stratified with their housing decision.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the perspective of Seniors and Adult Family Caregivers of Senior Housing. Seniors see Senior Housing as a way to maintain their independence, Healthcare and Senior Housing are inextricably linked and the Healthcare benefits of technology cannot be ignored.

Consider these insights when marketing to prospective residents and their caregivers, or planning for renovation or new construction projects in Senior Living.

### Senior Housing Survey

The analysis of these survey results was conducted by Direct Supply to extract insights for the Senior Housing industry. While the Senior Care industry evolves at a faster and faster pace every year, Direct Supply is dedicated to finding the latest insights and sharing them to help bring what's next to Senior Care.

Learn more and reach out anytime at **DirectSupply.com**.