

Tech Tools

HOW AI AND OTHER ADVANCES ARE PROPELLING RESIDENT CARE FORWARD

In recent years, medical records systems brought efficiency to health care centers like Luther Manor. Later, smart vital machines advanced care. In 2024, Luther Manor adopted one of technology's most recent advances --- artificial intelligence.

"It's not like the AI that we know with Google, but it's the AI services that help us at Luther Manor take a bird's eye view of what to pay attention to," said Mary Horvath.

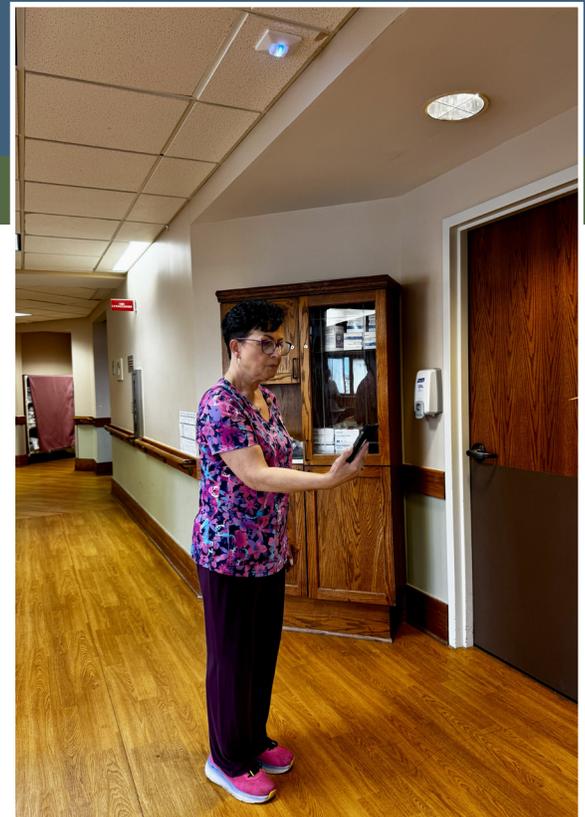
This tool helps clinical staff members like Chimere manage the responsibilities of short-term stay rehabilitation, one of the busiest places on campus.

THE USE OF AI IN THE HEALTH CARE CENTER

One damp morning in April, Chimere checked on "Helen," who had fractured her foot. Surgeons had attached an external fixation, or metal frame, to the outside of the foot for support during the healing process. Chimere observed that the external fixation had shifted. After identifying that the skin was warm to the touch and beginning to discolor, Chimere suspected an infection.

Meanwhile, Chimere's day grew busier with admissions, discharges and more residents to evaluate.

"It's busy back here (the 2900 hall of short-term care). You have the most admissions and the most discharges. Yesterday we had one discharge, two admissions and sent two people to the hospital," Chimere said.



Mary, a certified nursing assistant, responds to an alert on her phone from a resident needing assistance.

Making efficient use of time is essential. In 2024, Luther Manor added AI-assisted modules to Point Click Care, their electronic medical records system. The upgrade expedites Chimere's tasks, especially during admissions. Providing prompts as she enters information on a patient, the system quickens the pace. For example, if a patient answers yes when asked if they smoke, the system will automatically guide Chimere through a smoking evaluation to determine the person's smoking habits and predict possible agitation from withdrawal.

While juggling the day's admissions and discharges, Chimere needed to swiftly address what was later confirmed as



After completing an evaluation of a patient on the short-term rehabilitation floor, Chimere, licensed practical nurse, uses her laptop to enter notes in Luther Manor's electronic medical records.

an infection in Helen's foot. She entered the results of her evaluation of Helen in PCC, information that is read by nurses on other shifts, the nurse practitioner, and the medical director. Similar to auto-correct on a smartphone, AI assistance also works as a communication tool.

"It helps you articulate a little bit better what's going on with the resident," she said.

Following this communication, the medical team decides whether a hospitalization is needed or if the change in condition can be managed by the nursing staff. Ultimately, Chimere sent Helen back to the hospital for treatment. Chimere's training and judgment led to the identification of Helen's infection. However, in other cases, AI can help with the early detection of a patient's change in condition. While doing patient evaluations and entering information into PCC, recommendations pop up on her screen.

"When you're doing your skilled evaluations, it will prompt you on what to look for and what to do. You can catch it (a change in condition) before it happens," Chimere said.

In effect, the update can work as an early alert system that can lead to quick interventions, possibly preventing further decline and helping avoid hospitalization.

OTHER TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

Additionally, in the short-stay rehabilitation unit where Chimere works, the nurses and CNAs support each other with the help of a new call light system. Luther Manor added this system

to all areas of the Health Care Center. At the beginning of their shifts, Chimere and the other nurses and CNAs pick up smartphones, a part of the system. When a resident presses their call button for assistance, an alert pops up on the phones while a light turns on above the resident's door. Previously, CNAs were assigned to particular residents. If a call light went on and that CNA was busy with another resident, the first resident would need to wait. Now, when an alert flashes across the smartphones, anyone who is out of eyesight of the light but available can answer the alert on their phone.

Third Eye, a telehealth system, is another update. Used on weekends and at night across campus, physicians respond virtually within a few minutes of a call being placed by a Luther Manor nurse. The system relieves Luther Manor's doctor and nurse practitioner who previously remained on call during all off hours.

When Helen returned to Luther Manor Rehabilitation following treatment at a local hospital, she wore a wound bag over her foot, providing extra protection against infection. Chimere welcomed her back during readmission and entered her new information into PCC. Updated recommendations for her care appeared on Chimere's screen. A new day had begun in the rehabilitation unit, and with the help of a few new tools, it runs just a bit more efficiently.