

Fitwel's New Senior Housing Scorecard Provides Industry Best Practices for Optimizing Resident and Employee Health

New standard for optimizing public health in assisted living, independent living, and memory care communities being piloted by industry leaders including Emshih Developments, Harrison Street, and Willow Valley Communities

NEW YORK (October 7, 2020) — Fitwel®, the healthy building certification system operated by The Center for Active Design (CfAD), today announced the launch of a pilot program to establish a Senior Housing scorecard for assisted living, independent living, and memory care communities, helping owners to optimize these essential properties to promote the health and wellness of residents and employees. Fitwel has secured participation from senior housing leaders including [Emshih Developments](#), [Willow Valley Communities](#), and [Harrison Street](#), a leading investment management firm exclusively focused on alternative real assets and its associated operators of senior housing communities, including [American Housing Senior Living/REDICO](#), [Dial Senior Living](#), [Engel Burman](#), [Retirement Center Management \(RCM\)](#), and [The Springs Living](#).

“The Senior Housing scorecard directly translates the strongest research into impactful design and operational strategies, yielding a tool that can both benchmark current assets and inform future capital and operations investments that promote health and wellness and mitigate the spread of infectious disease,” said Joanna Frank, President and CEO of CfAD. “The companies that are piloting this scorecard represent some of the most innovative names in the industry, with a diverse array of senior housing assets across the U.S. and Canada. We are grateful for their participation as we advance our goal of market transformation around health.”

Harrison Street has invested \$8.5 billion in over 220 senior housing communities since inception in 2005. In early 2020 Harrison Street was awarded CfAD’s prestigious Best in Building Health® Industry Leadership award due to the firm’s role in working with CfAD to spearhead the development of the Senior Housing scorecard. Two Harrison Street New York communities initially prototyped the scorecard, and their success has informed the broader pilot effort. Throughout the development of the pilot program, input was solicited from five of Harrison Street’s senior living operating partners, all of which are part of the initial roll-out.

Fitwel’s Senior Housing scorecard underscores the pivotal role housing plays in influencing health outcomes – at all stages of life – and provides practical approaches to positively influence living and working conditions. It also provides design and operational strategies impacting both residents and facility employees, highlighting opportunities to address some of the most common challenges of either living or working in this specialized, high-need typology.

Moreover, the scorecard includes robust public health strategies that are closely aligned with Fitwel’s recently launched [Viral Response module](#), developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to provide annual, third-party building certification of policies and practices informed by the latest public health research on mitigating the spread of contagious diseases. Users can use the Senior Housing scorecard and the Viral Response module in tandem to maximize their projects’ health impacts and increase efficiency within Fitwel certifications.

“The CfAD team’s openness and commitment to deeply understand this industry is a testament to their mission of building health for all. Given the pandemic, having a well-respected organization certify a building as healthy is an imperative that promotes greater levels of trust,

transparency and confidence among senior housing staff, residents, and families,” said Jill Brosig, Chief Impact Officer of Harrison Street. “This scorecard provides developers and operators with guidance and research to create healthier and safer communities for residents and better workplace environments for staff. This comprehensive scorecard includes both the essentials required in a well-operated senior housing community as well as strategies that will push the industry further. We would also like to express gratitude to our partners and operators who’ve dedicated time and feedback throughout the pilot process – their continuous work to enhance the standard of health and wellness at their communities is what makes Harrison Street an industry leader. We are thrilled to be among the first to launch both the Viral Response module and the Senior Housing scorecard across our communities.”

Hundreds of the more than 5,600 scholarly studies in Fitwel's research database were reviewed and translated to inform the development of the Senior Housing scorecard. Further, feedback from pilot users will help Fitwel further refine the product's applicability. The publicly available scorecard is anticipated for release in early 2021 – interested senior housing community owners can sign up [here](#) for early access to notifications and updates.

The wellness real estate industry has expanded exponentially as demand for environments that promote the health and wellness of occupants has continued to rise – representing a market value of \$134 billion in [2017](#), and projected to grow to \$198 billion by 2022. This demand is increasingly apparent in senior living communities, where optimized environments can play a significant role in quality of life, influence health outcomes and mitigate the spread of contagious disease among residents and employees.

The Fitwel Senior Housing scorecard aligns with commitments from senior housing owners and operators to continuously find ways to enhance physical, mental and social health within their communities. Certifying assets through Fitwel serves to demonstrate that commitment.

About Fitwel and the Center for Active Design

Fitwel is the world's leading certification system committed to building health for all[®]. Generated by expert analysis of 5,600+ academic research studies, Fitwel is implementing a vision for a healthier future where all buildings and communities are enhanced to strengthen health and well-being. Fitwel was created by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and U.S. General Services Administration. The Center for Active Design, a global not-for-profit organization, was selected as the licensed operator of Fitwel, charged with expanding Fitwel to the global market. To learn more about Fitwel, please visit: www.fitwel.org.

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