

# LEADERSHIP THROUGH CRISIS

TAKING ON  
A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

 **BrightStar Care**<sup>®</sup>  
HOME CARE | MEDICAL STAFFING  
*A Higher Standard*



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# INTRODUCTION



**Nothing is more important than keeping our most vulnerable populations safe.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has put that priority to the test. We have met the unprecedented challenge and have shown how committed we are to helping franchisees provide the highest standard of care to their clients who trust them with the care of their loved ones.

In this eBook, you can see how we've been able to deliver A Higher Standard of care through a health care and economic crisis as the leading home health care franchise brand.

# ADVOCACY



As the COVID-19 pandemic grew increasingly severe across the U.S., BrightStar Care leadership and other members of the home health care industry came together to help ensure agency owners could operate their businesses as efficiently as possible.

Under the direction of Shelly Sun, CEO of BrightStar and its leadership team, the Home Care Association of America (HCAOA) Board of Directors and HCAOA members were engaged in a full-court press advocacy effort to have home care part of the health care worker exemption definition for sick leave and family medical leave mandates under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).

Nearly 25,000 messages were sent to members of Congress, as well as hundreds of letters being sent to the Department of Labor. The central message was how critical home care is in the health care continuum.

As a result of the advocacy campaign, home care was included in the FFCRA exemption.

BrightStar Care established an executive-level task force that included but was not limited to clinical expertise, business operations, marketing, technology and strategy to ensure all independently owned and operated BrightStar Care agencies, especially nursing and caregiving staff, were armed with the most up-to-date and critical information regarding COVID-19.

In addition, we created a centralized fulfillment center for their franchisees to equip all independently owned and operated BrightStar Care agencies and their staff with necessary personal protective equipment (PPE). This includes gloves, surgical masks, N95 respirator masks, face shields/goggles, hand sanitizer and gowns.





**In the end, the inventory initiative netted BrightStar Care nearly 100,000 N95 masks, 20,000 face shields, nearly a million gloves, 500,000 hand sanitizers and 10,000 goggles, among other supplies.**





BrightStar Care agencies' nurses and caregivers are on the frontlines providing in-home care and ensuring the most vulnerable populations can remain safe at home and out of hospitals. This is another way we are reinforcing our commitment to providing the highest quality of safety and care for clients and caregivers.

By keeping people at home, we are doing our part to ease the burden on the healthcare system and hospitals when they need it the most.

# TECHNOLOGY

Through our mobile plan of care technology, each BrightStar Care agency's professional caregiving staff are directly connected to Registered Nurses at all times.

Caregiving staff was trained to watch for signs that their clients' conditions may be changing due to a new illness or complication or an ongoing health condition. Upon observing these changes, they immediately logged this into the client's file, alerting the nurse in real-time. This was especially critical with the long incubation period associated with COVID-19.





We also made adjustments to our proprietary technology to provide screening questionnaires for caregivers and nurses to ensure they are fit and healthy to care for clients. If a staff member did not pass screening questionnaires, they would not be allowed to enter the client's home and provide care.





# TRAINING

Every locally owned and operated BrightStar Care agency follows The Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goals, including infection prevention, which minimizes the risks of disease transmission as seen in viruses like COVID-19.

Each of the preventative measures recommended by the CDC were already standard practice across our agencies, and all professional care staff completed stringent training administered by a Registered Nurse on topics critical to keeping clients safe such as infection control, proper handwashing and cough and cold etiquette. As a best practice, we followed both Joint Commission and CDC guidelines.





Due to the concerns over COVID-19, we took proactive steps to provide supplemental training to our BrightStar Care agencies for their caregivers and staff on the following topics:

- Hand hygiene standards
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) use (masks, gloves, etc.)
- Blood-borne pathogen standards and safety protocols
- Coronavirus overview from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

In addition to the existing programs and protocols in place, we developed a complete Respirator Program, education and safety training to ensure the highest levels of safety during this pandemic.





# PARTNERSHIPS



As essential businesses across the country adapted to social distancing standards, there were also opportunities for local BrightStar Care owners to help ensure the public's safety.

In Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, a local Ace Hardware owner was among seven companies that partnered with BrightStar Care franchisee Susan Whittelsey to perform pre-screening tests on employees who interact with customers. The goal was to reduce the spread of COVID-19 from employees to customers and other staff by checking to see if they have any symptoms of the virus, as well as any issues that may compromise their immune system.

This effort not only helps to ensure the safety and health of the customers and employees but also brings them peace of mind and keeps the local economy going strong.



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

While many in-home care agencies have experienced a dip in client usage, BrightStar is running at more than 99 percent of its pre-COVID-19 volume.

We credit this to the fact that we had the highest standards of care already built into our business model and that we have worked diligently to exceed those standards through our advocacy, infrastructure, technology, training systems and our ability to form partnerships with other essential businesses.



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