

THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN ON CLEANING PRODUCT AVAILABILITY FOR HEALTHCARE AND SENIOR LIVING

ABSTRACT: In order to deliver optimal cleaning performance, it's important for administrators of senior living and healthcare facilities to ensure that their environmental support teams have access to the right tools at all times. This requires a two-pronged approach. First, the safest and most effective hygiene technologies must be identified through research. Second, reliable suppliers must be located. In times of global uncertainty when shortages abound, it can be impossible to guarantee that appropriate cleaning chemicals will be available for your community at a fair price. Skillful supply chain management is more necessary than ever to control for these uncertainties.

SUPPLY CHAIN INSTABILITY IMPACTS HOUSEKEEPING OPERATIONS:

The global coronavirus pandemic of 2020-2021 hit healthcare, skilled nursing, rehabilitation and senior living facilities particularly hard – and the cleaning supplies they needed for infection prevention were not always readily available. In spring of 2020, when the first COVID-19 cases were identified in the United States, governments and public health officials began to recommend or require far-reaching social distancing measures, quarantines and lockdowns. Scientific consensus showed that appropriate hand hygiene and sanitation could control the virus's spread. The World Health Organization and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommended the use of certain cleaning products, causing consumer demand to spike. For example, sales of aerosol disinfectants increased by 148.3% and sales of multipurpose cleaner surged by 84.6% during the week ending March 28, 2020, compared with the same week in 2019.¹ And almost one year into the pandemic, Purell manufacturer GoJo Industries reported a remarkable 568% increase in hand sanitizer sales to \$1.5 billion year over year.²

The pandemic's effects on the manufacturing and transportation of goods compounded supply chain instability that already existed. And panic-buying and stockpiling of PPE and cleaning products made them increasingly difficult to obtain, leading to price gauging. In the face of unprecedented demand, some opportunistic suppliers and retailers increased the cost of their products by as much as 2,000%.³ Extra costs disproportionately impacted the well-being of the most vulnerable and the facilities dedicated to serving them. A survey of 278 nonprofit senior housing providers conducted by LeadingAge in October of 2020 showed that 69% identified themselves as being financially strained by the costs of PPE,

cleaning supplies and screening tools amid the ongoing pandemic.⁴

Now that supply chain issues have begun to ease, consumers and businesses alike face ongoing uncertainty about the cleaning products they are buying. Online pharmacy Valisure tested hand sanitizer from 168 brands and discovered that 17% of the samples contained detectable levels of the known carcinogen benzene. The FDA has focused on getting sanitizers contaminated with the poisonous alcohol methanol off the market. But in order to keep liquid hand sanitizer on shelves, the regulator set a temporary limit of two parts of benzene per million. In their test, Valisure found 15 different brands that contained benzene levels over that limit.⁵

In an uncertain future, facilities that serve at-risk populations in the healthcare and senior living industries must have consistent access to cleaning supplies. They must take measures that help control costs. And they must be able to ensure that all products used in their facilities are safe for employees, patients, residents and guests.

SUPPLIER SPOTLIGHT: DIVERSEY

Coreworks' preferred chemical supplier is Diversey, an industry leader in integrated cleaning. Over the course of 95 years, the Diversey brand has become synonymous with product quality, service, and innovation. With a focus on environmentally sustainable and efficient solutions, they offer a full range of patented chemicals and dispensing equipment for building care, floor care, fabric care and infection prevention.

COREWORKS' FORMULA: THE RIGHT PRODUCTS, ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Coreworks offers products and delivery systems for housekeeping, sanitation and laundry operations that are cost-efficient, reliable, innovative and tailored to the needs of individual clients. Through preferential relationships with trusted vendors, Coreworks' experienced supply chain management team consistently delivers best-in-class pricing and programming to serve healthcare and senior living communities around the country.

Researching cleaning chemicals and negotiating with suppliers is time-consuming. Outsourcing services like housekeeping can relieve administrators of this burden, freeing them up to focus on what they do best. Coreworks is a leading environmental services provider, with expertise in hygiene, infection prevention and cleaning solutions. Contracted partners gain access to Coreworks' comprehensive and aggressive program. This includes specially optimized cleaning chemicals for every area of a community -- from public hallways, common areas, restrooms and other high-touch areas to private residences and laundry. Coreworks' flexible solutions can scale to serve operations of any size. Premium products from names like Diversey and Purell deliver sanitizing power that exceeds expectations, ensuring that everyone who lives or works in a facility feels safe, no matter what happens.

ENSURING SUPPLY AND COST-CONTROL

Coreworks is part of Compass Community Living, one of the biggest players in senior living and rural healthcare across the nation. Because of Coreworks' size and their well-established relationships, suppliers prioritize their business. That enables Coreworks' sourcing team to ensure supply to their partners at all times, even when supply chains are stretched. Coreworks leverages operational efficiencies to offer better prices for cleaning chemicals and equipment.

Administrators who choose to independently operate housekeeping and laundry for their facilities must personally take responsibility for any problems that arise. That might mean hours on the phone with a supplier - or, when products are not available, it might mean purchasing substitutes off the shelf at a local retailer for a higher price or ordering untried cleaning chemicals found on the internet. Coreworks eliminates these disagreeable options from consideration. They offer their partners a robust support infrastructure to ensure that any difficulties are resolved quickly and painlessly. With a dedicated national account manager at each of their suppliers, and a network of local representatives, Coreworks' experienced in-house supply chain management team is available to help partners escalate when problems arise in order to deliver a speedy resolution.

Post-pandemic, cleanliness and hygiene are more important than ever. Administrators need to know that their teams have access to the cleaning chemicals they need at a fair price - even when global supply chains become disrupted. A partnership with Coreworks ensures that this is the case.

Works Cited:

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