



Lisa Marcello

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President/CEO, [Episcopal SeniorLife Communities](#)

Years in current role: 1

What are the biggest challenges you see in your industry currently?

The aging population is growing, leading to increased demand for senior services. The cost of providing quality service continues to rise — balancing affordability for residents, program members and their families while maintaining high-quality services is a constant challenge. We strive to meet the middle-income senior with affordable possibilities — developing and creating more options and services to close gaps in senior care. The senior living industry heavily relies on skilled and compassionate staff to deliver personalized care. There is a shortage of health care professionals, making it challenging to recruit and retain talent. We are focused on fostering a work environment where staff feel valued for the work they do.

What are you most excited about in terms of health care in Rochester in the near future?

Rochester has a strong health care community that fosters collaboration among various health care providers and organizations. This combined approach to care can lead to more integrated and coordinated services for our senior residents, ensuring a comprehensive and personalized approach to their health needs. I am excited for the opportunity for us to continue working together to offer solutions creatively and innovatively for seniors in Rochester.

What do you think are the biggest health care needs in Rochester?

Access to high-quality health care services and affordability. In 2022, Monroe County was home to 125,000 people over the age of 65; this number is projected to increase to 147,000 by 2030. As this cohort of seniors expands, there is evidence that many seniors will not have the resources to support stays in the housing for seniors or the assisted living options widely available today. Social isolation, a lasting impact of COVID-19, can negatively impact the health and well-being of seniors. It is essential to create opportunities for seniors to stay socially engaged, participate in activities, and interact with their peers to foster a sense of community and belonging.

What is one thing you would change about Rochester if you could?

I would develop an age-friendly infrastructure that promotes accessibility and inclusivity for seniors. This includes improving sidewalks, public transportation, and public spaces to accommodate mobility devices and encourage active aging. Poverty later in life is a major issue with Rochester's aging population. One in five residents over the age of 65 live below the poverty measure. We need to do better to meet the health, housing and needs of seniors living in our own neighborhoods.

How do you manage work/life balance?

Delegating responsibilities and empowering my team to make decisions allows me to focus on strategic leadership and high-level priorities. We are fortunate at ESLC to have strong board and program leadership and professional, compassionate staff who provide day-to-day support to our program members and residents. I am also incredibly grateful for all our trusted relationships and community partners who continually support ESLC in our work and who share our dedication to improving services to seniors in Rochester. I am a Rochester native and have devoted my career to serving the community with over 32 years in the nonprofit sector. In our free time, my husband, Mark, and I enjoy spending time on the water, golfing and gathering with the family — especially our granddaughter.

