

Bev Anderson—Social Services Director

With a new year upon us, I thought it would be nice to have a brief overview of the rights residents have living in a long term care facility.

To be treated with consideration, respect, and full recognition of personal dignity.

Individual choices such as sleeping patterns, food likes and dislikes, flexibility in bathing times, religious preference, clothing choices, and friendships must be respected.

The staff of the facility speaks courteously with the residents & calls residents by their preferred name, knocks before entering a room, and if the resident is able to respond, waits for a response & always preserves privacy

To receive care, treatment, and services which are adequate, and in compliance with relevant federal and state statutes and rules.

The facility must have the capability to provide the type of care that the resident needs. For example, a facility that does not have the capability to care for someone who is ventilator dependent should not accept a resident with a ventilator. The staff of the facility needs to be properly licensed to provide the treatment needed. Residents choose their personal attending physician, & they are informed of care & treatment needs that may need to be added or changed to their current plan of care. Residents are to be informed of the risks & benefits of those care needs and be provided the opportunity to refuse treatments.

To receive at the time of admission and during the stay a written statement of the services provided by the facility.

Charges not included in the facility's basic daily rate should be given to the resident. This may include such items as beautician services, cosmetics, and some personal care items, & residents must be informed in advance of any changes in the cost or availability of services. Residents may examine the results of the most recent state survey.

To receive respect and privacy in their medical care program.

Discussions of their health & treatments and any consultations shall remain confidential. Personal and medical records are kept confidential, and written consent of the resident shall be obtained for release of information, other than for the purposes of treatment, payment or a health care operation

To be free of any restraints & abuse.

Residents are treated courteously and professionally by facility staff. Acts of humiliation, harassment, threats or deprivation are examples of mental abuse. Chemical and physical restraints are not to be used to control or limit residents' mobility for convenience or for dealing with specific difficult behaviors.

To associate and communicate privately with others.

Residents may participate in social, religious & community activities of their choice; send and receive mail promptly and unopened, unless resident is unable to open and read personal mail; have access to a telephone where they may speak privately; have access to writing instruments, stationery, and postage; enjoy privacy in their rooms by having a partially closed door or drawn curtain to allow privacy from the staff and visitors as they pass in the hallways; and be alone at times when they wish with their spouse, family members, doctors, etc. Resident telephones and private bathrooms should not be used by unauthorized persons.

To manage his/her financial affairs.

In the event a family member manages the residents' financial affairs, the resident shall have reasonable access to their accounts.

To present grievances and recommend changes in policies and services, without fear of reprisal, restraint, interference, coercion, or discrimination.

Such grievances may include those with respect to treatment which has been furnished or not furnished. Prompt efforts are made by the facility to resolve resident concerns, and each and every resident has the privilege of contacting any outside person, agency, or group, without restraint or interference from the facility. A posting of outside agencies which residents/families may contact for advocacy or complaints is listed outside my office.

To participate in work & activities.

Upon their request, they may choose to perform services for the facility, such as folding towels & linens, baking & peeling potatoes. Residents have the right to choose activities, schedules & health care consistent with his or her interests, desires and personal or spiritual needs. Residents also have the right to retain, to secure storage for, and to use personal clothing and possessions, where reasonable.

To not be transferred or discharged arbitrarily from a facility.

Exceptions are due to medical reasons, the residents own or other's welfare and nonpayment for the stay, The resident shall be given at least five days' advance notice to ensure orderly transfer or discharge, unless the attending physician orders immediate transfer, and these actions and the reasons for them shall be documented in the residents medical record. All residents have the right to receive 30 days' advance written notice of intent to discharge or transfer them (unless it is an emergency discharge as outlined in federal discharge regulations). Included with the written advance notice must be information advising the resident of his right to appeal the intended discharge and a copy of the Hearing Request Form.

If you have questions about any of these, or would like a resident right booklet, please feel free to call me or stop by.

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