

LONG TERM CARE COMMUNITY COALITION

Advancing Quality, Dignity & Justice

CONSUMER FACTSHEET: STANDARDS FOR NURSING HOME SERVICES

There are many standards which nursing homes are required to follow in order to ensure that residents receive appropriate care, have a good quality of life and are treated with dignity. The purpose of these factsheets is to provide relevant language from the standards and information that **YOU** can use to support your resident-centered advocacy.

Following are three relevant standards with descriptions excerpted from the federal regulations. On the next page are some points for you to consider when you advocate on these issues. [Note: The brackets below provide the relevant federal regulation (CFR) and F-tag (designation used when a facility is cited for failing to meet the requirement).]

I. NURSING SERVICES [42 CFR 483.35 F-725]

- *The facility must have sufficient nursing staff with the appropriate competencies and skills sets to provide nursing and related services to assure resident safety and attain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being of each resident, as determined by resident assessments and individual plans of care and considering the number, acuity and diagnoses of the facility's resident population in accordance with the facility assessment...*

II. SUFFICIENT STAFF [42 CFR 483.35(a) F-726]

- *The facility must provide services by sufficient numbers of each of the following types of personnel on a 24-hour basis to provide nursing care to all residents in accordance with resident care plans: ...licensed nurses;¹ and*
- *(ii) Other nursing personnel, including but not limited to nurse aides.*

III. PROFICIENCY OF NURSE AIDES [42 CFR 483.35(c)]

- *The facility must ensure that nurse aides are able to demonstrate competency in skills and techniques necessary to care for residents' needs, as identified through resident assessments, and described in the plan of care.*

¹ The regulations make provisions for a very limited exception to the requirement to provide licensed nurses on a 24-hour basis. See 42 CFR 483.35(e).

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Does the nursing home have enough staff on the floor to meet residents' needs in a timely manner? This includes...
 - Resident call bells responded to in a timely fashion.
 - Residents not being put into diapers because there are not enough staff to help them go to the bathroom.
 - Residents getting baths/showers at a time and frequency of their choosing.
 - Residents waking up and going to bed at a time of their choosing.
- Are staff finding and implementing options that most meet the physical and emotional needs of each resident?
- Are the assessment and care planning processes identifying and seeking ways to support residents' individual needs?
- Are those processes being implemented by care staff across shifts?
- Are staff informing residents and those they designate about the resident's health status and health care choices and their ramifications?
- Does the facility administration and environment promote actions by staff that maintain or enhance each resident's dignity?
- Do staff interaction with residents display full recognition of each resident's individuality? Is this occurring during different shifts and on weekends?
- Is the nursing home providing alternatives to drug therapy or restraints by understanding and communicating to staff why residents act as they do, what they are attempting to communicate, and what needs the staff must meet?
- Is the nursing home actively assisting residents with discharge planning services (e.g., helping to place a resident on a waiting list for community congregate living, arranging intake for home care services for residents returning home)?
- Are staff members assisting residents to determine how they would like to make decisions about their health care, and whether or not they would like anyone else to be involved in those decisions?
- Does the nursing home actively assist in making referrals and obtaining services from outside entities (e.g., talking books, absentee ballots, community wheelchair transportation)?

RESOURCES

WWW.NURSINGHOME411.ORG. LTCCC's website includes materials on the relevant standards for nursing home care, a listing of antipsychotic drug names and other resources.