



— THE RESIDENT ADVOCATE —

The Resident Advocate - a newsletter for residents of long-term care facilities containing news and information on rights and care issues, plus updates on national policy. Please share with your neighbor when you've finished reading this issue!

Upcoming Events

February

- Black History Month

March

- Women's History Month

May

- Older Americans Month

Theft and Loss: What Can I Do About It?

Theft or loss of belongings, money, or other property is a significant concern for many residents. Federal law says that residents have the right to use personal belongings, and that they have the right to be free from exploitation or misappropriation of property.

Misappropriation of resident property means deliberately using the resident's property without permission. Exploitation means taking advantage of a resident for personal gain through use of threats, intimidation, or coercion. Some examples of misappropriation include:

- Theft of money or belongings
- Identity theft
- Unauthorized or coerced purchases on a resident's credit or debit card, or
- A resident who gives money to staff to provide ongoing care, or after the staff member made the resident believe that they were in financial crisis

Long-term care facilities must take reasonable steps to ensure that resident property is kept safe from theft and loss. They must have policies and procedures for preventing and responding to theft, misappropriation, and exploitation. The facility cannot ask or require residents to waive potential facility liability for losses of personal property.

Take steps to prevent your belongings from getting lost or stolen by:

- Marking all personal items and take pictures of valuables,
- Keeping a copy of the inventory list created by staff and update it as needed,
- Asking the facility about their policies for protecting personal belongings,
- Ask the facility for a secure place to lock up valuables.

If you are the victim of theft or loss, what can you do?

- Report the loss immediately to appropriate staff at the facility
- Notify local law enforcement
- Contact your local long-term care ombudsman

DID YOU KNOW



- A care plan is a strategy and plan for how staff will help a resident.
- Care plans are to be based on resident needs and goals.
- Care plan meetings should occur every three months, or sooner if needed.
- You have the right to be involved in your care plan meeting.

Preventing the Flu and Infections



Residents in long-term care settings are especially vulnerable to viruses (colds and flu) and healthcare-associated infections. It is important to do everything you can to prevent or stop the spread of both, which can lead to other health issues down the road.

Protect yourself by washing your hands often, staying current on vaccines and flu shots, getting enough sleep, and drinking plenty of fluids. Tell staff immediately if you have pain or start having fever or chills.

Remember, the best way to stop the spread of any virus or infection is to always **wash your hands!** And insist that all staff wash their hands before providing hands on care!

Care Leaves Us Happy!

Residents at Heartland Skilled Nursing Facility in Wauseon, Ohio shared their thoughts on care and what makes them happy. They wrote their ideas down on leaves and attached them to a tree. Some of their thoughts include: outdoor gardening, enjoying music and singers, being able to talk to staff, spending time with family, making new friends, being treated with respect, going on field trips, going out to eat, participating in chit chat groups, answering call lights on time, respecting private time, being sincerely listened to, and enjoying quiet time while sleeping. This tree was part of the 2017 Resident's Voice Challenge, "It's All About Me: My Life, My Care, My Choices."



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 The National
CONSUMER VOICE
for Quality Long-Term Care
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