

2009 Residents' Rights Week Activity Sheet

Activity Suggestion: **Area-wide Resident or Family Council Meeting**

Targeted Group: Resident and/or Family Councils

Purpose:

Family councils can play a crucial role in voicing concerns, requesting improvements, supporting new family members and residents, and supporting facility efforts to make care and life in the facility the best it can be. Bringing together multiple resident and/or family councils from an area will encourage dialogue among and between the various council members about what life is like in their respective facilities, issues or programs they may be working on, and common issues and concerns.

Action Steps and Supplies:

- Location to hold meeting (facility dining hall or other common area with the capacity to hold 40+ people)
- Flyers and/or letters to invite and inform people about the meeting (see below for suggestions on recruiting members)
- Discussion questions to be used during the meeting (see sample discussion questions included)
- A facilitator to keep conversation going
- Head table or podium for resident speakers
- Microphone for resident speakers and/or audience (depending on size of room and audience)
- Refreshments

Description:

The individual council participants could come together to discuss issues and share strategies for resolving concerns, working together, etc. For the first meeting, the convener or facilitator should develop an agenda for moving the meeting along.

The Area Wide council could meet regularly, i.e., quarterly, or how ever often the group decides to meet, in a centralized location. This could be a facility, a library or other community building.

Council members could be encouraged to participate in national campaigns such as the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes Campaign (go to www.nhqualitycampaign.org for more information).

Additions or Modifications:

1. Host an area wide event once a year to bring residents together.
2. Recruiting members
 - a. Send out a letter to all Resident Council Presidents in the area you are hosting the meeting (it could be a county, a town or a larger area) explaining the Area wide Residents council and invite them to attend.
 - b. Send out a letter to the Administrator asking them to send a Resident representative to the meeting. Ask them to provide transportation and provide a snack item.
 - c. For a Family council follow the same plan by sending a letter to the President of the Family Council. You do not need to send a letter to the facility about the meeting.

Sample Discussion Questions

Following is a sample list of discussion questions that might be used by the facilitator to open up and guide the conversation. Use some or all of the questions to start discussion.

What are Residents' Rights and Why are they Important?

Facilitator note: If the question above doesn't spark conversation, try some of the bulleted questions below.

- How do they benefit residents?
- How do they benefit staff?

From your perspective, what Rights are most important?

Facilitator note: If the question above doesn't spark conversation, try some of the bulleted questions below.

- What does it mean to be treated with respect?
- How important is privacy to you?
- Define Dignity

How do you Voice your Opinion on issues that are important to you?

Facilitator note: If the question above doesn't spark conversation, try some of the bulleted questions below.

- What is the food like here? What would make your dining experience more enjoyable?
- What kind of activities are there to get involved in? What kinds of activities do you wish were offered?
- What do you do if you have a concern about your care?

Systemic issues:

Facilitator note: If the question above doesn't spark conversation, try some of the bulleted questions below.

- What issues do you have that are hard to solve in your facility?
- What issues do you find reoccur frequently?
- If you could talk with an elected official about living in, or having a family member living in a LTC facility, what would you tell them about your experience?
- How can we improve LTC facilities in the future?