



# — 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

### May

- Older Americans Month

### June 15

- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

### October

- Residents' Rights Month

## DID YOU KNOW



## Communication is Key

- How you say something is as important as what you say
- Communication styles can either build bridges or create barriers
- Good communication helps build relationships and shows understanding

## Know Your Rights: Visitation

Receiving visits from family and friends is an important part of many residents' lives. It's a way to stay connected with your community. Federal law says you can decide who you want to see and when you want to see them. You also have the right to refuse visitors who you do not want to see.

Visits can be held at a time convenient for you and your visitor, including late at night or early in the morning; and must be permitted as long as you agree to the visit, and the rights of other residents are not infringed upon. You have the right to privacy with your visitors. Visits may not be denied or inhibited based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.

Your immediate family and other relatives cannot be denied access as long as you consent to the visit; and access to you must also be provided to any ombudsman program representative; a state agency representative, such as a state surveyor; your physician; or someone you have chosen to act on your behalf, or an agent with power of attorney.

Limitations can only be imposed on some visitors, and only if there is a reasonable clinical or safety concern. The facility is required to have policies regarding visitation rights that indicate what could be considered a reasonable clinical or safety concern, when it would be imposed, and to whom it would apply.

The facility can support your right to visitation by:

- Informing you and your visitors about your rights and responsibilities for the visit;
- Ensuring that private space is available for you to entertain visitors during the day and in the evening;
- Informing residents and their visitors of space that is available, such as the chapel, an activity room, or empty office; and
- Supporting a resident's right to choose whether or not to accept a visitor.

If you have questions or concerns about visitation, contact your long-term care ombudsman at [www.ltcombudsman.org](http://www.ltcombudsman.org).





## Being Prepared for Emergencies

Did you know there is a federal rule that requires your facility to be prepared for an emergency, such as a hurricane, fire, or flood? To be prepared for an emergency, your facility must:

- have in place emergency plans and policies;
- train staff in the plans and procedures, hold drills, and continually review the plan
- install and maintain an emergency power source, such as a generator, so your facility will have electricity during the emergency

Plans may be different for different types of emergencies. For example, sometimes it is safer to shelter in place instead of evacuate to a different location.

What can you do to prepare for an emergency situation?

- Ask the administration to share it's emergency plans with you and other residents
- Encourage the facility to invite first responders to visit and talk with the residents and families about being prepared
- Participate in the drills
- Make sure your emergency contact information is up to date in your records

If you need help finding any of this information, ask a staff member or your local ombudsman representative.

## October is Residents' Rights Month

For this year's Resident's Voice Challenge, we encourage you to pick up your pens, turn on your cameras or use a computer to show your writing or artistic skills! Create essays, poems, artwork, drawings, or videos related to the theme for Residents' Rights Month 2018 "Speak Up: Know Your Rights and How to Use Them."

Use the following questions as inspiration for your entry:

- What do you want people to know about you and how you like to receive care?
- If you could give one piece of advice to a new resident about exercising their rights, what would it be ?

Send your entry to Consumer Voice at 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 625, Washington, DC 20036 or [info@theconsumervoice.org](mailto:info@theconsumervoice.org). Find more information at: [theconsumervoice.org/events/residents-rights-month-2018](http://theconsumervoice.org/events/residents-rights-month-2018).



**SPEAK UP:**  
Know Your Rights  
And How To Use Them  
National Consumer Voice For Quality Long-Term Care

### Here is an example from a resident at Spruce Manor in Reading, PA:

*"Good care is when staff...  
smile,  
talk softly,  
stick up for our rights,  
explain things,  
are respectful when I have an accident,  
dig deep for patience,  
come right away,  
make me feel that someone cares  
about me."*



For more information, visit [www.theconsumervoice.org](http://www.theconsumervoice.org)  
Phone: 202-332-2275 Email: [info@theconsumervoice.org](mailto:info@theconsumervoice.org)