October 2, 2018

Congress Passes Natural Disaster Preparedness Bill

Congress passed the "Worst-Case Scenario Hospital Preparedness Act" which aims to strengthen emergency preparedness for nursing homes and other providers. The bill was introduced last December after deadly hurricanes hit Florida and Puerto Rico. "Maintaining a high standard of inspection, upkeep and disaster preparedness, especially in places like in my home state of Florida, reduces the future loss of important facilities that many seniors and veterans in my district rely on," Rep. Daniel Webster (R-FL), who co-sponsored the bill with Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI), said in a statement. Consumer Voice will be reviewing the bill. For more information, read the article in McKnight's.

New Federal Law Regarding Credit Freezes for "Protected Consumers"

The Federal Trade Commission and the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection posted a blog about new federal law provisions regarding credit freezes. Beginning September 21, 2018, a new federal law allows some financial caregivers to request a security freeze (also called...
a credit freeze) on their loved one’s behalf. The new law is meant to help protect “protected consumers” - an incapacitated person with an appointed guardian or conservator - from financial exploitation and scams. A person acting on behalf of a protected consumer can freeze or unfreeze a protected consumer’s credit by providing to the credit reporting agency a court order (naming you guardian or conservator) or a valid power of attorney. Read the blog post here.

Legislation Would Alter Ban on CNA Training

Rep. Sean Duffy (R-WI) has introduced legislation that would change the so-called certified nursing training lockout. The existing laws, which have been in effect since 1987, state that nursing homes lose their ability to train CNAs for two years if they are operating under a waiver for coverage by licensed nurses, they have been subject to an extended or partial extended survey, they have been assessed civil monetary penalties over $10,000, or they have been subject to imposition of a denial of payment, temporary manager, or termination. This bill would rescind the ban on training for facilities that have been assessed penalties over $10,000, but which have demonstrated that they have corrected the deficiencies for which the fine was imposed. Providers say that eliminating training programs for these facilities threatens quality of care and exacerbates the existing workforce shortage. Consumer advocates have concerns about the ability of those facilities to adequately train staff on quality care practices. For a copy of the bill, click here.

It’s Residents’ Rights Month!

This week marks the beginning of a month long celebration of residents’ rights. Spend time this month honoring residents living in all long-term care facilities, including nursing homes, sub-acute units, assisted living, board and care and retirement communities. Plus, take time to focus on individuals receiving care in their homes or communities.
The theme for Residents' Rights Month 2018 is "Speak Up: Know Your Rights and How to Use Them." The theme emphasizes the importance of residents being informed about their rights; being engaged partners in achieving quality care and quality of life; and feeling confident in speaking up about what is important to them.

Be sure to check out the fantastic entries we have received for the Resident' Voice Challenge; our resources on this year’s theme; and activity suggestions. Plus, let us know how you plan to celebrate. Send details and photos to info@theconsumervoice.org.

Spotlight on Resources

Residents of nursing homes have rights that are protected by the federal Nursing Home Reform Law. The law requires nursing homes to “gently and protect the health, rights of each resident,” and encourage individual dignity and self-determination. Many states also include residents’ rights into state law or regulation.

Resident’s Rights Fact Sheet

Consumer Voice and the National Ombudsman Resource Center have a multitude of resources available online covering a wide range of long-term care topics. Visit the Consumer Voice and NORC websites to explore all the available resources. Check out this week’s highlighted resource:

 Residents' Rights Fact Sheet
About The Voice

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Consumer Voice is the leading national voice representing consumers in issues related to long-term care, helping to ensure that consumers are empowered to advocate for themselves. We are a primary source of information and tools for consumers, families, caregivers, advocates and ombudsmen to help ensure quality care for the individual. Consumer Voice’s mission is to represent consumers at the national level for quality long-term care, services and supports.

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