Ombudsman Programs Empower Residents Through Multi-Facility Council Meetings

The National Consumer Voice Conference October 21, 2010

Florida’s Long-Term Care OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM
Our 2 cents is no small change
Session Objective

✶ How do district-wide resident meetings enhance individual resident councils?
✶ How do ombudsmen plan meetings in areas with different challenges?
✶ What do resident council leaders learn from each other and take back to their facility council?
Meeting Benefits

- Sharing best practices and ideas
- Encourages Culture Change - power in numbers
- Empowers residents by promoting person-centered care
- Provides forum for updates on important changes (legislative issues, regulatory changes, etc.)
Getting Started

- Select target audience/area
- Locate meeting space
- Select date/time
- Plan meeting structure/topic(s)
- Develop invitation letter
- Prepare handouts/giveaways
- Invite guest moderator/speaker(s)
Raffle Ideas

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Volunteers – The Program’s Backbone

Ombudsmen donate their time because they want to make a difference and help people. These meetings are rewarding because residents and ombudsmen work together to make a positive change.
Getting Started

Coordinate/engage the volunteers:

- Distribute invitation letters to residents, families and facilities
- Plan decorations, food/snacks
- Maintain RSVP list, participant list
- Set-up/clean-up
- Greeters/name badges/photographer
Elements of Successful Meetings

- Every resident has an opportunity to share/give a report from their council
- Residents are interacting and learning from one another
- Residents are gathering information to take back to their council
- Residents feel free to speak openly with each other
Pulling it All Together

- Prepare meeting agenda and welcome letter
- Arrange the meeting room in a way that residents are facing each other
- Plan an alternate space for facility escorts for a separate “break-out session”
- Allow “social time” for residents and ombudsmen
- Be prepared with topic questions to prompt meaningful discussion
**Promote Change Through Communication**

- Send a summary of the meeting comments and recommendations to residents, facilities, families, media
- Include a reminder about the next meeting
- Provide information about ombudsman public meetings, town hall meetings, etc.
Considerations

✦ How far will residents have to travel to get to the meeting location I selected?
✦ Will the facility provide transportation or arrange for it?
✦ Will resident comes with an escort if they need assistance?
✦ Will the meeting time interfere with facility meal or medication times?
Considerations

- Will the meeting space accommodate the number residents, escorts and volunteers expected?
- How many residents attending will have wheelchairs or walkers?
- How often should I schedule these meetings and in what locations so that all councils in my area can participate?
- What type of handouts will be distributed to assist council leaders in taking all the information back to their council?
Community Involvement

- Media
- Families
- Legislators
- General public
- Local celebrities
Resident Feedback

topic questions
“What do you like most about your facility?”

- “We are offered a choice of meals: main an entrée and alternatives.”
- “Department heads meet with us to discuss our concerns.”
- “CNAs help us on the spot.”
- “Residents are involved in planning activities.”
“What do you like least about your facility?”

- “The slow response to call bells.”
- “The rules and regulations frequently change.”
- “We don’t feel free to talk, even at resident council meetings.”
- “People walk in our rooms without knocking or don’t wait for a reply before walking in.”
“How are residents involved in decision-making at your facility?”

“As the Resident Council President, the regional manager meets with me to discuss council concerns. I am proud to represent the residents.”

“We vote on issues and make decisions at our council meeting.”

“We meet with the administrator to review the forms put in the suggestion box.”
“How does your resident council promote change?”

“By encouraging all residents to participate in council meetings and ensuring that our views are expressed each month.

“By reminding everyone of residents’ rights and that we have choices.”

“By encouraging each other to be persistent in seeing that our recommendations are implemented.”
Give an example of residents’ rights in action at your facility.

- “Residents decide when they will socialize and do not have to follow the staff schedule.”
- “Showers increased to 3x/week, per resident requests.”
- “Administrative staff make more frequent rounds through facility.”
- “CNAs received training updates.”
Make it Fun!
A Resident’s Poem
Vision for the Future

- Florida Resident Council Association
- Residents will have online access and be able to communicate by accessing the ombudsman website

http://ombudsman.myflorida.com
Making Changes Together

“The voice of one is but a whisper, the voice of many becomes a roar that is heard by all.”
THANK YOU

For more information, please contact Florida’s Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program toll-free 1-888-831-0404

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http://ombudsman.myflorida.com