

Activity Suggestion: Town Hall Meeting

Participants: Residents, family members, facility staff and administration, Ombudsmen, and citizen advocates

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
- 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)

Purpose: There are many discussions about quality and excellence in long-term care, but too often we forget to ask residents what quality means to them. The town hall provides a forum for residents to discuss key issues that impact care and to provide direction to facility staff on how to incorporate the resident perspective in quality discussions.

Description: The discussion questions that follow will help to guide town hall participants in meaningful discussion. The discussion should be facilitated so that both resident members of the panel and those participating in the town hall meeting have time to speak and express their perspectives. The focus should be on residents, but there should be time allotted at the end for family members and/or staff to provide additional comments.

Additions or Modifications:

- Instead of one town hall meeting, hold a series of mini-town hall events on different topics related to Residents' Rights Month (e.g. autonomy, respect, dignity, exercising residents' rights).
- Use information from these discussions to get resident input for quality improvement processes.

Sample Discussion Questions

The following is a sample list of discussion questions that might be utilized by the facilitator to open up and guide the conversation. Use some or all of the questions. The facilitator might want to share each of the questions with the lead speakers ahead of time to allow them to prepare comments. Audience participants should also be given time to share their remarks.

What does quality look like in this community?

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

- What do you like about living here?
- What would make living here better?

From your perspective, what types of things are indicators that good care is being provided?

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

- Think back to when you became a resident of this health care center's community. What was one of the most important things that happened to you in your first 24 hours here?
- How does knowing the staff member that cares for you affect your care?

What makes a quality living environment?

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?