



Upcoming Events

September

National Preparedness Month

National Grandparents Day

October

Residents' Rights Month

National Bullying Prevention Month

DID YOU KNOW



- Just over 1.4 million people live in nursing homes in the U.S.
- The average age of a nursing home resident is 79.2 years old.
 - 15% are under 65
 - 8% are over 95
- Nearly two-thirds of nursing home residents are women

— THE RESIDENT ADVOCATE —

Welcome to the first issue of The Resident Advocate, a newsletter for residents of long-term care facilities. It provides news and information on rights and care issues, plus updates on national policy. The newsletter is a product of the Consumer Voice, the leading national organization representing individuals receiving long-term care and services. Please share with your neighbor when you've finished reading this issue!

Revised Federal Nursing Home Regulations

For the first time since 1991, the federal rules governing the care and services in nursing facilities have been revised. New rules were published by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on October 4, 2016 to incorporate modern-day language, technological advances, and best practices. The revised regulations contain important consumer protections that were not included in the previous regulations. Examples include:

- Greater focus on residents' individual needs and preferences
- More comprehensive care requirements, including pain management, oral care, and behavioral health services
- Improved training for all staff
- Protections against evictions
- Improved protections against abuse and neglect
- Better protection of resident property
- Increased visitation rights



Don't Wait, Hydrate!

Dehydration occurs when there is not enough fluid in the body. It can lead to serious health problems if it is not addressed immediately. Common signs of dehydration include less frequent urination, constipation, extreme thirst, confusion, dry and sticky mouth, cracked lips, and feeling tired and weak.

Stay hydrated in your nursing home by following these tips:

- Tell staff if you have any dehydration symptoms
- Drink liquids before and with meals, as well as throughout the day
- Ask for help if you need fresh water or if you can't reach the water in your room
- During your care plan meeting talk about how to make sure you get enough to drink
- Ask staff and family to bring your favorite beverages





Be Your Own Best Advocate

By: Penny Shaw

I introduce myself as a nursing home resident of 15 years and more than 16,000 shifts. That's a ton of experience. I do a lot of self-advocacy, and that improves both my care and my quality of life. I know that all of you make requests of staff. Perhaps about your schedule, something that you want to eat, or something you want to do. I'm wondering if you are usually able to get what you want.

I have learned how to get most of what I want. My best suggestion is to ask the person who can fulfill your request, not always CNAs, nurses, or social workers. I assume you have some telephone access, as this is required by federal law. You also have the legal right to communicate freely inside your facility. So, talk to your unit manager about your schedule, call your kitchen manager or cook to order your food, and speak directly to your activities director about what you want to do, for example.

Find the person who can actually solve your concern, and I think you will be more successful. This newsletter will give you more ideas to advocate for and more tips. I wish you luck!

October is Residents' Rights Month



October is Residents' Rights Month! This year's theme is "It's All About Me: My Life, My Care, My Choices." During October, the Consumer Voice will highlight residents' rights, such as making your own schedule, choosing your activities, being treated with respect, and having your needs and preferences honored. Residents' Rights Month is a time to re-focus our efforts on providing choice, quality care, and quality of life for all residents. Plan to participate in this year's Resident's Voice Challenge by submitting your essays, poems, artwork, drawings, or videos related to the theme for Residents' Rights Month 2017. Use the following questions as inspiration for your entry:

- What are the kinds of choices you should be able to make?
- What factors contribute to the quality of life in your facility?
- What do you think it will take to bring about good quality care in nursing homes and other facilities?

Entries should be sent to the Consumer Voice, 1001 Connecticut Ave, NW, Suite 632, Washington, DC 20036 or can be emailed to info@theconsumervoice.org. For more information, call us at 202-332-2275 or visit our website at <http://theconsumervoice.org/events/residents-rights-month-2017>.



For more information, visit
www.theconsumervoice.org
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