

# THE RESIDENT ADVOCATE

A newsletter for long-term care residents containing news and information on rights, care issues, and updates on national policy.

## IN THIS ISSUE

Community Building  
Increases Residents'  
Well-Being

You Have the Right to Vote!

Are You Staying Hydrated?

Flu Season and COVID-19  
Boosters

October is Residents' Rights  
Month

## You have the right to vote!



Mid-term elections are just around the corner. Federal regulations require long-term care facilities to support residents in exercising their right to vote. To find out more about your voting rights, visit our website.

[theconsumervoicework.org/issues/other-issues-and-resources/voting-rights](https://theconsumervoicework.org/issues/other-issues-and-resources/voting-rights)

000

## Community Building Increases Residents' Well-Being

Over the past few years, long-term care residents have been isolated from each other and the greater community due to restrictions stemming from the pandemic. Now that most restrictions have lifted, residents are eager to start building and engaging with their community again. That often occurs through activities or programs covering shared interests, and may include friends, family, other residents, facility staff, neighbors, and others living in the surrounding area. Community is vital to the physical and mental health of residents.

As a long-term care resident, you have the right to participate in activities of your choosing. Residents and staff can work together to host activities of interest in the facility, and residents can choose to participate in groups, meetings, and activities in the wider community.

### Ways to build community within the facility:

- Participate in your resident council. If your facility doesn't have a council, you can start one!
- Invite authors, politicians, community leaders, comedians, or musicians to come talk or perform
- Have themed dinners or afternoon tea parties
- Host a resident talent show
- Host an open house to invite the greater community to meet residents
- Invite the neighborhood children to come trick-or-treating on Halloween
- Curate educational experiences including classes and speaker events
- Create Resident Hero bulletin boards with information about residents so that residents can learn about each other
- Invite artists to lead workshops

### Ways to build community outside of the facility:

- Attend religious services or other community events
- Organize a trip to a play or museum or local event
- Plan a picnic for residents in a nearby park
- Make a group shopping trip with residents

For more ideas on building community, visit <https://theconsumervoicework.org/events/2022-residents-rights-month/activities>.



# Are You Staying Hydrated?



If you are not getting enough fluids, you may develop dehydration. Dehydration can cause serious health consequences.

## Common signs and symptoms of dehydration include:

- Extreme thirst
- Dry, sticky mouth and cracked lips
- Fatigue or weakness
- Less frequent urination
- Constipation
- Change in mental status or confusion
- Low blood pressure
- Rapid heart rate

## To prevent dehydration, you can:

- Drink liquids throughout the day, including before and during meals.
- Ask staff to keep fresh water near your bed or in a place that is easily accessible to you.
- Alert staff when you are experiencing symptoms of dehydration.
- Encourage your loved ones to bring your favorite beverages when they visit.

## October is Residents' Rights Month!



Inspiring **Unity** within  
**Our Community**

National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

The 2022 Residents' Rights Month theme - **Inspiring Unity within Our Community** - highlights how being part of a community increases residents' well-being. It emphasizes the importance of fostering meaningful community within the facility and encouraging residents' connection to their local community. Visit <https://theconsumervoice.org/events/2022-residents-rights-month> for more information and resources.

## Resident's Voice Challenge Poster Contest Selections



*Residents at  
Carrington Place  
in Matthews, NC*



*Residents at  
Robertson County  
Healthcare Facility in  
Mount Olivet, KY*

For more information and resources on how to advocate for yourself, visit [theconsumervoice.org](https://theconsumervoice.org), call 202-332-2275, or email us at [info@theconsumervoice.org](mailto:info@theconsumervoice.org).



The National  
**CONSUMER VOICE**  
for Quality Long-Term Care

## Flu Season and COVID-19 Boosters



It's officially flu season. The CDC recommends people at high risk, including residents of long-term care facilities, get flu shots. The FDA recently authorized an updated COVID-19 booster shot that protects against more strains of COVID-19. Long-term care facilities should ensure you can get your flu shots and COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. Visit our website for more information about the [flu](#) and [COVID-19](#).

[theconsumervoice.org/issues/other-issues-and-resources/covid-19](https://theconsumervoice.org/issues/other-issues-and-resources/covid-19)