Rights of Long-term Care Residents

What are the rights of individuals living in a Long-term Care Residence?
If you are a resident of an adult care residence or nursing home, you have certain rights and protections. The facility must list these rights and provide all residents with a copy. It is your right to:

- Be informed of available services and charges associated with those services
- Be informed of your medical condition
- Voice grievances or suggest changes in the facility without fear of punishment or retaliation
- Make decisions about your finances and medical care
- Manage your personal affairs
- Manage your own money or choose someone you trust to do this for you
- Be free from mental and physical abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Have confidential treatment of your personal and medical records
- Be treated with dignity, individuality, and privacy
- Not perform services for the facility
- Participate in social, religious, and community activities of your choice
- Use your personal clothing and possessions as space permits
- Receive advance notice and reason for transfer or discharge

Steps To Resolve a Problem
If you have a complaint, problem, or think your rights have been violated, you may want to follow these steps to resolve the situation.

1. **Clarify the problem.** When did the problem occur? Is anyone else aware of the problem? Has the problem been documented appropriately?

2. **Attempt to resolve the problem.** Usually, the best place to resolve a complaint is within the facility itself. Find out if your facility has a grievance procedure for receiving and responding to complaints. Most facilities encourage you to use the grievance procedures already in place.

3. **Identify the right person to approach with your concern.** You may need to talk to the Administrator, Resident Care Director, or a physician to communicate with someone about your problem. It is important that you tell someone a problem exists, otherwise, the proper parties are not fully informed about your concerns.

4. **Approach the proper staff person and explain your situation and your expectations.** You need to state the problem clearly and obtain a commitment from that person on when he or she plans to provide a response. Discuss possible solutions and let the staff know what you expect or consider to be a satisfactory response. Set a time when you can talk with them later to discuss progress.

If a problem remains unresolved, you may want to contact the local Long-term Care Ombudsman. Complaints concerning resident abuse, neglect, or the misappropriation of a resident’s personal property should also be filed with your local Adult Protective Services program.

For more information, contact
Long-term Care Ombudsman
Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging
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Tel: 804-343-3000 • TDD: 804-343-3008
Internet: www.seniorconnections-va.org